

Janmashtami
Commemorative Service Reading
Script

Script Explanation

The script gives the standard wording for a commemorative service, such as cell phone announcements, welcome, etc. It is arranged with each item on a separate page, so that the script may be printed (or duplicated if you're using the hard copy) and each page inserted in your notebook. You will have to choose and insert the prayers. There are four needed — opening and closing prayers for the meditation and for the reading service — just as for a Sunday service. You will also have to insert the reading, either your own or one taken from the appropriate volume of prepared readings.

Titles: On the top of each page is the title — for example, "Flower Ceremony" or "Welcome." They are in larger, bold font. These are merely markers and not to be read.

Red Font: These notices are also in larger, bold font. They indicate something you need to do, such as pranam, or insert something, either the reading or a prayer. They are not to be read.

Prayer addresses: Generic prayer addresses are given for all prayers. In this script the address is always Lord Krishna. You may want to change this to something like Beloved Lord Krishna, Bhagavan Krishna, etc. You may also use other appropriate addresses, such as Divine Mother, Heavenly Father, O Spirit, etc.

Order of Service: There are three copies of the Order of Service (a sequential list of the events of the service). The first is for your use as a reader. The second is for the kirtan leader. On that copy the chants are highlighted in **yellow**. The last copy is for the ushers. Print them off (or duplicate them if you're using the hard copy). Keep your copy and give the other two to the appropriate people.

Lighting of the Candles: Read the introduction first and then light the candles.

Light the Incense: First light the incense and then read the information provided.

Length of Readings: Reading times vary from five to a little over ten minutes, averaging about seven minutes. If you do your own reading, try to keep within this range.

Cell Phone Reminder (6:59)

Our service will begin in a few moments. To maintain an atmosphere of quiet devotion, please take a moment now to turn off all cell phones. Thank you.

Pranam

Opening Prayer — Meditation

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father...Mother...Friend...Beloved God
Jesus Christ...Bhagavan Krishna...Mahavatar Babaji
Lahiri Mahasaya...Swami Sri Yukteswar
And our Guru Paramahansa Yogananda
Saints of all religions we bow humbly before you all.
Lord Krishna (or other appropriate address)

Insert Prayer

Aum...Peace...Amen

We will now have a chant followed by our meditation. The meditation will end at 7:50 and the service will begin at 8:00.

Closing Prayer — Meditation

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father...Mother...Friend...Beloved God
Jesus Christ...Bhagavan Krishna...Mahavatar Babaji
Lahiri Mahasaya...Swami Sri Yukteswar
And our Guru Paramahansa Yogananda
Saints of all religions we bow humbly before you all.
Lord Krishna (or other appropriate address)

Insert Prayer

Aum...Peace...Amen

This concludes our meditation. The commemorative service will begin in ten minutes.

Pranam

Order of Service

(Reader)

Opening prayer

Welcome

Chant

Meditation: 3 minutes — end with harmonium

Reading

Light the incense

Flower offering (Chanting *Aum Krishna*)

Meditation: End with harmonium

Closing prayer

Closing remarks

Order of Service

(Kirtan leader)

Light the candles

Opening prayer

Welcome

Chant

Meditation: 3 minutes — **end with harmonium**

Reading

Light the incense

Flower offering (**Chanting *Aum Krishna***)

Meditation: **End with harmonium**

Closing prayer

Closing remarks

Order of Service

(Ushers)

Light the candles

Opening prayer

Welcome

Chant

Meditation: 3 minutes — end with harmonium

Reading

Light the incense

Flower offering (Chanting *Aum Krishna*)

Meditation: End with harmonium

Closing prayer

Closing remarks

Cell Phone Reminder (7:59)

Our service will begin in a few moments. To maintain an atmosphere of quiet devotion, please take a moment now to turn off all cell phones. Thank you.

Pranam

Lighting of the Candles

We begin our service with the lighting of the candles.

Opening Prayer — Service

Please stand for the opening prayer.

Heavenly Father...Mother...Friend...Beloved God
Jesus Christ...Bhagavan Krishna...Mahavatar Babaji
Lahiri Mahasaya...Swami Sri Yukteswar
And our Guru Paramahansa Yogananda
Saints of all religions we bow humbly before you all.
Lord Krishna (or other appropriate address)

Insert Prayer

Aum...Peace...Amen

Please be seated.

Welcome

Welcome to our commemorative service. Tonight we celebrate Janmashtami, the birthday of Bhagavan Krishna. Janma means birth, and astami means eighth...a reference to Krishna's being the eighth child of Devaki and Vasudeva.

The birthday of a great soul, such as Lord Krishna, is a momentous spiritual occasion on which the vibrations of his blessings are stronger than on other days of the year. Devotees who attend these celebrations with the right attitude will reap spiritual benefits and will find their highest resolutions strengthened.

We will now have our opening chant, which will be followed by a short meditation..

Insert Reading

Light the Incense

The rising fragrance of the incense symbolizes the fragrance of the devotion that we offer on the altars of our souls.

The flowers that we have brought symbolize devotion to God and Gurus. The donation symbolizes loyalty to their work in appreciation of the spiritual riches attained through their grace.

Flower Ceremony

We will now make our offerings. As we do, we will chant “Aum Krishna.” Remember that the sincere and concentrated invocation of the divine incarnation by devotional chanting will help one to feel the master’s blessings and receive his spiritual help. As we chant, we will come forward to the altar, one at a time, to offer our flowers and donations. Since the flower is an offering to the master, it is placed in front of the portrait with the blossom toward the picture. The donation is placed in the basket to the right.

When you come forward, you may kneel and offer a silent prayer to the master as a manifestation of the Eternal Spirit.

I will go forward first followed by the kirtan group. Then you will come forward, following the instructions of the ushers.

After everyone has come to the altar, we will have a short meditation which will be followed by our closing prayer.

Closing Prayer — Service

Please stand for the closing prayer.

Heavenly Father...Mother...Friend...Beloved God
Jesus Christ...Bhagavan Krishna...Mahavatar Babaji
Lahiri Mahasaya...Swami Sri Yukteswar
And our Guru Paramahansa Yogananda
Saints of all religions we bow humbly before you all.
Lord Krishna (or other appropriate address)

Insert Prayer

Aum...Peace...Amen

Closing Remarks

This concludes our service for this evening. If you wish, you are welcome to pass once again in front of the picture and *pranam* to Lord Krishna as you leave in silence.

Pranam before the picture.