

Greater Baltimore Temple

NEWSLETTER

2909 Bloom Road, P.O. Box 690, Finksburg, MD 21048

Tel: (410) 861-8387, Web: [www. Baltimoreemple.org](http://www.Baltimoreemple.org), E-mail: info@baltimoretemple.org

MAY to AUGUST 2024

Srinathji Patotsav

Sunday, May 5, 2024



4:30 pm – Bhajan and Darshan
6:30 pm – Aarti followed by Mahaprasad
Please deliver samagri before 4 PM

Sponsorship

Mukhaya Manorathi: \$1,001
Maha Prasad Sponsor: please call
Sevak Manorathi: \$151
Manorathi: \$101
Sevak: \$51

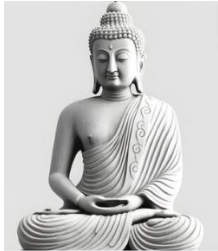
Contact: Priti Parikh 410-876-0365, Bhanuben Patel
410-833-1330, Rupal Shah 410-203-1953

Mahavir Swamy Bhagwan

Pranaprathishtha

25th Anniversary Celebration

Saturday, May 11, 2024



Program

2:30 pm - Gathering & Receiving Jain Sangh
3:00 pm – Invocation & Jain Music
Cultural & Religious Program: Mahavir Swamy
Pachkalyan Mahotsav Story
5:30 pm – Aarti & Mangal Divo
6:00 pm – Swamy Vatsalya Dinner
Contact: Nikhil Sheth 443-904-4661, Kanan Shah
443-6760-6611, Bhupendra Mehta 410-241-0673 &
Sadhana Shavdia 410-952-7526

Srimad Bhagwat Katha

by Shri Jagdishbhai Trivedi

Sunday, May 12th to

Saturday, May 18th, 2024



Katha Times: Sunday & Saturday 4:00pm to 7:00pm
Monday to Friday 5:00pm to 7:30pm
Shri Krishana Janmotsav on Thursday
Puja will start one hour before the Katha.
Followed by Aarti & Mahaprasad

Sponsorship

Mukhya Yajman \$1,001 (Everyday puja)
Saha Yajman: \$501 (Four-day Puja)
Pratidin Sevak \$101 (One day puja)
Mahaprasad Sevak (One day puja)
\$501 for Saturday & Sunday
\$251 for Monday to Friday
Sevak \$51

Online Donation at:

<https://baltimoretemple.app.neoncrm.com/forms/29>

Email at info@baltimoretemple.org

Maha Sudarshana Homan

Sunday, May 19, 2024

10:30 am - Shri Ganesh Puja followed by
Navagraha Puja & Havan/ Homan
12:30 pm – Aarti
Havan/ Homan family sponsor: \$ 101
Enjoy Lunch at the Temple Cafeteria.

Maha Lakshmi Homan

Sunday, June 16, 2024

10:30 am - Shri Ganesh Puja followed by
Navagraha Puja & Havan/ Homan
12:30 pm – Aarti
Havan/ Homan family sponsor: \$ 101
Enjoy Lunch at the Temple Cafeteria.

**23rd Annual Graduation Puja
for 2024 High School, College &
Postgraduates**

Sunday, June 15, 2024

4:00 pm



All 2024 Graduated are invited to celebrate their graduation with their family & friends at the Greater Baltimore Temple. There is no charge to attend the graduation puja.

Please visit the temple website to register.

Program

See attached page 10 for details.

GBT – Tamasa Mallik Scholarship Award for High School Seniors

Apply by May 25th. Visit

www.baltimoretemple.org and scroll down the main page for application link, or scan QR code to apply.



Navagraha Homan

Sunday, July 14, 2024



10:30 am - Shri Ganesh Puja followed by Navagraha Puja & Havan/ Homan
12:30 pm – Aarti

Havan/ Homan family sponsor: \$ 101
Students only (under 16): \$ 51

Enjoy Lunch at the Temple Cafeteria

**Grand Murugan Krithigai
Abhishekam**

Sunday, July 28, 2024



10:30 am – Abhishekam and Alankaram

11:30 am – Devotional singing & cultural program

12:30 pm – Aarchana, Aarti & Mahaprasad

Sponsorship

Grand Sponsor: \$ 501

Maha Prasad Sponsor: \$ 251

Sponsor: \$ 151

Abhishekam and Archana \$ 51

Maha Kumbhabhishekam

August 9 to 11, 2024



Program details will follow in the flyer.

Sponsorship

Grand Sponsor: \$1,001

Maha Prasad Sponsor: \$251

Sponsor: \$151

Donor: \$51

Archana: \$31

Volunteers

If you would like to join our volunteers' group, please send your name, cell phone number and email address to

info@baltimoretemple.org

or text Pankaj Grover at 410-419-0336

Disclaimer

We reserve the right to change dates and details of any program. Please review the latest updates on the Temple Website and Facebooks page.

Sri Srinivasa (Balaji) Kalyanam
Grand Celebration
Saturday, August 24, 2024



9:00 am – Sri Venkateswara Abhishekam,
Archana & Aarti
11:30 am – Kalyanotsavam, Bhajans, Cultural Program,
Aarti & Mahaprasad
Sponsorship:
Grand Sponsor: \$1,001
Maha Prasad Sponsor: \$251 (Total \$1,001)
Sponsor: \$101
Abhishekam & Archana: \$51

Raksha Bhandhan Celebration
Sunday, August 18, 2024



Group Archana at 11:30am

Sisters & Brothers are invited to meet at the temple to
celebrate Raksha Bandhan.

Archana: \$21

Enjoy lunch at the temple cafeteria.

Remote Archana or Abhishek Request

We are providing remote Archana and Abhishek.

Please email your request to
info@baltimoretemple.org or
call temple at 410-861-8387

Shri Krishna Janmashtami
Monday, August 26, 2024



Temple will be open 9am to 12:30pm
& 5pm to 12:30am

10:30 am – Shri Radha-Krishna Abhishek
6:00 pm – SriNathji Abhishek & Aarti
8:00 pm – Pravachan, Bhajans & Kirtans
10:00 pm - Raas Garba
12:00 mid-night Sri Krishna Janmotsavam followed
by Aarti & Prasad
Mahaprasad for individuals not fasting will start at
7:30pm

Sponsorship

Mukhaya Manorathi \$1,001
(Will have an honor to be a Vasudeva
to carry Bal-Krishna)
Mahaprasad Sponsor: \$251 (Total \$1,001)
Puja sponsor: \$151,
Abhishek \$31 & Archana \$21

Donation

If you would like to contribute, please mail your
donation or visit the temple website at
www.baltimoretemple.org or scan the following QR
code from your cell phone **photo app**.



RECURRING MONTHLY EVENTS

1. Hanuman Chalisa – 1st Saturday of the month – May 5th, June 2nd, July 7th & Aug 4th
2. Sri Lalitha Sahasranama Archana - 1st Friday of the month – May 3rd, June 7th, July 5th and Aug 2nd
3. Murugan Abhishekam Krittika Nakshatram – May 8th, June 7th, July 2nd, July 29th and Aug 26th
3. Jain Bhavana – June 16th, July 21st and Aug 18th
4. Sri Satyanarayana Puja - Purnima – May 22nd, June 21st, July 21st and Aug 19th
5. Sri Ganesh Abhishekam - Sankasthi Chaturthi – May 26th, June 25th, July 23rd and Aug 22nd

PRIEST SERVICES

Priest services are available for Pujas and ceremonies at the temple and at outside locations. Please visit the temple website at www.baltimoretemple.org and click under Services and fill in the form to request a service or email to info@baltimoretemple.org. Also, call temple at 410-861-8387 or Pandit Joshiji at 443-791-1727 or Pandit Muraliji at 443-762-6128 Or Pandit Narsimha at 410-907-1209 to discuss with priest.

Welcome to

Pandit Prashanth Narsimha

Our eagerly anticipated New Priest is finally here.

Prashanth Ji, our young, energetic new Priest, after a long interview & visa application process, finally arrived on Feb 23rd. 2024. He comes from Bengaluru (Bangalore) where he worked for Sree Veeranjanya Swamy Temple for close to 10 years. Prashanthji hails from a Family of priests. He has committed himself to helping us expand the kitchen services for the weekend as well as being active in the Prayer Hall on weekdays. He is equally interested in sharing his knowledge of Hindu Scriptures & meaning behind the Pooja rituals with young & old. Our Paricharika Priest speaks English,

Kannada, Tamil, Telugu & Hindi. Greater Baltimore Hindu and Jain Temple Board requests all the devotees to welcome Prashanth Ji to GBT. Help our new priest, to make Baltimore his new home for a very long time to come. Welcome aboard.

Nikhil Sheth

Appreciation message to

Sonal J. Mehta Verma, Immigration Attorney

In early 2023, GBT Board decided to hire a new priest with cooking skills as well. Part of the discussion involved hiring someone who is already in the US v/s hiring someone from India on an R1 Visa. As Sonalji had been very helpful to GBT and its two current priests for their Citizenship & Green Card application, we opted to contact Sonalji at Verma Cortes LLC.

In a delightful 45–60-minute conference call, she educated us about the process of R1 Visa application. For the last one year, she has most professionally guided us through the data gathering phase, application phase, followed by the visa Interview phase. Prashanth Ji, our new priest is here due to steady guidance & excellent professional help from Verma Cortes LLC. a prominent Immigration law firm in Rockville, MD. Thank you Sonalji. We are Grateful to you & Verma Cortes LLC Staff for all the help.

Nikhil Sheth

Presidential Message

Greetings. As I step down from being GBT President, I would love to share some of my reflections of 2023. The newly renovated Naganna Community Hall was inaugurated in April 2023. Many thanks to the Naganna Family for their generosity. On October 1, 2023, we completed one year of the new kitchen operations at the Temple. Our share of challenges in Launching kitchen & expanding the services were mostly well managed. We are poised for further expansion of the kitchen services. Coming out of the covid pandemic part of Covid, our November 2023 Annual Fund-Raising Dinner collected little over \$100,000 in pledges & collections. This has been one of the

most gratifying grass roots supports we have seen.

More than any individual event, the most gratifying lesson for the Board has been Increased Devotee Participations. Our combined team of volunteers & priests have successfully led to organized religious and cultural programs. Devotees of all ages have responded with their presence, participation & donations. 'Thank You'. We are very grateful. Arrival of a new priest will certainly help to take it to the next level. I plan to stay on the Board for the balance of my term. Under Atulbhai's Leadership, GBT will continue to work towards expanding the services for devotees. We are counting on your support. Thank you.

With warm Regards.

Nikhil Sheth, Past-President

PAST EVENTS AT THE TEMPLE

Lord Ayyappa Puja

Lord Ayyappa puja was performed at our temple on Saturday, December 16, 2023 and it was a well-attended event. The puja started by invoking the Lord's name, carrying the idol around the temple and chanting mantras. This was followed by Abishekam to the Lord and singing and dancing by the children, which was a sight to see. The decorated idol of Lord Ayyappa was then placed on a raised platform with 18 steps/padi decorated with flowers. After that, all the families participated in the lamp puja. The priests performed the padi puja that symbolizes the 18 holy steps. The function concluded with the children lighting the lamps on the 18 steps followed by Bhajans and Aarti. The volunteers prepared delicious lunch for everyone.

Geetha Ramarathnam

Makar Sankranti/ Pongal Cultural Program

Makar Sankranti/Pongal cultural program was celebrated on January 14th with over 50

participants showcasing their talents in singing, dance, and various musical instruments. This program was well attended by over 225 attendees. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all the music teachers, parents as well as participants for their wonderful performances. Special thanks to Donika and Bhavesh Patel for coordinating the program as well as doing Emcee for the program.

Thanks to the GBT cafeteria team for providing a special Pongal lunch to all. This was a well-organized and well received program. Greater Baltimore Temple's cultural team continues to plan more such programs in upcoming months.

Sanjeev Gholap

Ram Mandir Inauguration Celebration

Greater Baltimore Temple celebrated Ram Mandir Ayodhya Inauguration on January 21st 2024. This has provided a great opportunity to all devotees to participate in this historic day for all Hindu communities across the globe. Despite of cold weather and recent snow accumulation, devotees showed great enthusiasm by not only attending but actively participating in the program. Temple was well decorated with "Shri Ram" banners and devotees wore the Saffron scarf with Shri Ram written on it.

The highlight of the evening was the participation of more than 40 kids from "Raganidhi School of Music". Such great singing by all students together created a divine atmosphere. Peak of the event when all singers performed a very melodious chanting of "Hanuman Chalisa". This was followed by classical performances Muvva Kuchipudi Dance School's students performing dance drama on Ramayana followed by Aparna Gurumurthy's performance of Bharatnatyam dance on Ramayana. Thanks to Geetha Raja for the wonderful Emcee for these performances.

The cultural program was followed by the Shobha Yatra of Ramlalla. Every attendee witnessed energy and devotion. Many thanks to the GBT cafeteria team and all volunteers who helped to coordinate for the making and serving food for over 375 devotees.

Our temple received the Holy Akshata from Ayodhya, which were distributed to all as Prasad. GBT also collected Akshata from all devotees, which were collected in a Holy Kalash for further delivery to Ramlalla in Ayodhya. This kalash reached Ayodhya and was respectfully handed over to the priest in Ayodhya on February 11th 2024. Thanks to all devotees who contributed to the Akshata Kalash.

This was a most memorable event that all devotees witnessed at the beginning of the year 2024. This was only possible because of the participation of performers, our bhajan group and most importantly our donors/supporters. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all volunteers who helped in all possible ways to make this a pleasant experience for devotees/attendees. All programs were live streamed on the temple's YouTube channel as well as Facebook page. We would like to continue providing a platform for all art forms and all talented young artists and will continue to bring you such quality programs in coming months.

Saraswati Puja

Greater Baltimore Temple organized a program on February 18th to celebrate Vasant Panchami along with Saraswati Puja. Our temple would like to provide an opportunity to all kids and the younger generation to perform Saraswati Puja to worship the "Goddess of Knowledge". This puja is performed every year on Vasant Panchami by Balvihar class, however, our temple decided to extend the same options to its all devotees.

The program started with Saraswati Puja under the guidance of our priests. All students along with their parents performed the Puja in the most traditional way.

Another highlight of the program was devotional singing by "Indian Classical Music School of Columbia", who provided a great experience to all devotees. It was a great musical treat to watch and listen to these budding talents. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs. Dhara Bakshi and all the students/parents for their seva to Goddess Saraswati, Dhaiwat Maharaja who accompanied on Tabla as well as doing excellent Emcee for the event. This was followed by the Sunday bhajan program followed by Arti and Maha Prasad. Thanks to our own cafeteria for serving delicious food to more than

175 attendees.

Sanjeev Gholap

Maha Shivaratri

Greater Baltimore Temple Celebrated Maha-Shivaratri in grand fashion on March 8th, 2024. This was the second big program in the year 2024, Ram Janmabhoomi Celebration on Jan 21st and now Maha-Shivaratri Celebration.

The event was marked by various landmarks, The event was attended by more than 500 devotees, the temple kitchen/cafeteria team (with volunteers help) prepared Mahaprasad for over 500 devotees, program started on time and all the activities ran smoothly for all four kalas (Prahara) of Shivaratri, more than 65 kids/students offered their seva to Shiv Shambu via the cultural performances, our temple was decorated beautifully along Mahashivaratri theme, and participation of many devotees in Rudra Abhishekam. In addition, the event was supported by donations and the program was watched online by several devotees via temple's YouTube and Facebook channel.

After First kala puja and Rudra Abhishek completed all devotees participated, Raganidhi music school's student performed various songs including Pancharatnam mukta, Shiva Panchakshara Stotra, Shambhu Mahadeva, Vande Shankara, Shiv Shiv Bhava. It was an excellent display of devotion and singing which was well appreciated by all the audience. This was followed by excellent Bharatanatyam dance performances by students of Guru Aparna Gurumurthy, and by Students of "Taal Academy of Dance. Both of these dance schools performed wonderful Bharatanatyam performances. This was followed by a major attraction of the evening: the Dances by Muvya Kuchupudi Dance School. Students dressed in Lord Shiva and Parvathi costumes presented a captivating Shiv Tandavam. Dhaiwat's emceeing was excellent as usual, which impressed the audience.

On behalf of Greater Baltimore Temple's Board, we would like to thank all students and parents for such a wonderful program.

Sanjeev Gholap

Outreach and Interfaith Committee **Winter Activities 2024**

The committee had a busy schedule. In January committee member Ram Sanka gave a talk on Hinduism to a "Seekers" group at St Paul's United Church of Christ in Westminster which was well received.

In February the committee donated much needed personal items and other essential supplies to Eastside Family Shelter in Baltimore County. Their volunteer coordinator gave an extensive tour of the facility which offers temporary housing and rehabilitation to the homeless. Also, in February, committee members including Kakali Sarkar, Ankur Patel and Geetha Raja hosted 15 Girls Scouts from Towson and their families on a tour of our temple and a talk on Hinduism. They enjoyed the visit and ended with a wonderful lunch in our cafeteria. The committee is currently busy preparing for their first soup kitchen service at Westminster United Methodist Church in downtown Westminster in Carroll County which serves a hot meal to the homeless every Friday. Our first service date is Friday March 29, 2024. Many area churches participate in this soup kitchen and Greater Baltimore Temple is enthusiastic in joining this community service to the needy in Carroll County.

All this is possible only with the continued support of the temple Board of Trustees and the support of fellow devotees.

Geetha Raja

Temple Cafeteria/ Kitchen

The cafeteria has been performing consistently well due to increased participation by dedicated volunteers. The new POS system is user friendly and easy to use. The past few months have seen cooks/volunteers cooking various cuisines and devotees enjoying the same. The days on which Bal Vihar is scheduled has seen consistent traffic in the cafeteria where parents & students have enjoyed the cooking by the volunteers. Our priest Prashanthji has arrived from India and hit the ground running and is actively assisting with cooking and managing the kitchen. In the coming months, we anticipate that he will be able to independently work in the kitchen and prepare meals during busy days with the help of dedicated volunteers. Our team handling the kitchen arrangements is hopeful that we will be able to increase the sales and volume of the kitchen substantially in the coming year. The temple is grateful to the volunteers for becoming more involved with volunteering and cooking duties. Without your assistance, the kitchen cannot be successful. The temple thanks you and hopes that we will continue to see an increased involvement on the part of volunteers to assist and cook in the coming months.

Pankaj Grover

GBT Membership Renewal

We are committed to celebrating religious Festivals, cultural programs and providing a community space for socializing. As a loyal devotees, your annual support for our temple is critical. Please renew your membership by sending \$121 by mail or online by scanning the following QR code from your cell phone photo app.



The Greater Baltimore Temple
2909 Bloom Road
P O Box 690
Finksburg. MD 21048

Please Deliver Immediately
Time Sensitive Material
Return Service Requested

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Frederick, MD
Permit No. 2036

Sunday Bhajan - Kirtan & Mahaprasad

Appeal of Bhajan Singers: The Greater Baltimore Temple would like to invite and encourage talented singers and musicians to actively participate in the bhajans held on all Sunday evenings from 5:00 pm to 6:15 pm, followed by dhun and Aarti at 6:30 pm. Singing bhajans as a group can help to quieten the mind so that the heart can open to the divine, allowing us to taste the blissful reality. It is a participatory spiritual practice in which everyone is encouraged to sing and express their inner joy. Attending Bhajan is also a form of meditation, brings peace and tranquility to the individuals and their family. Please consider joining with your family and children. Children will keep this memory in years to come! Groups or individuals interested in singing for a specific deity or an assortment of deities can feel free to come up with their own list of bhajans to sing. Families and friends interested in organizing bhajans in memory of their beloved ones can also think of organizing special pujas followed by singing bhajans during this time slot.

Mahaprasad: Sponsor a Sunday's or religious festival's mahaprasad to celebrate a birthday, an anniversary or religious festival with the family, friends & devotees. On Sunday, when we do not have any Mahaprasad sponsor, we are encouraging a Preeti Bhojan, where several devotees bring in various food items and everyone enjoys the Preeti Bhojan. Interested individuals and families can reach out to the Bhajan & Mahaprasad coordinators Gita Maharaja 410-967-1860, Pankaj Grover 410-419-0336, Kanan Shah 443-676-6611 or Pandit Joshiji or Pandit Muraliji by calling temple - 410-861-8387 or email at info@baltimoretemple.org

Publisher: Greater Baltimore Temple, Contact: Atul Patel, Please send your suggestions & comments to info@baltimoretemple.org

Greater Baltimore Temple

BAAL VIHAR



From Bal-Vihar's humble origins more than 23 years ago of just a handful of kids to its now current level of more than 50 kids, Bal-Vihar has blossomed significantly and has continued to grow substantially. Students from the ages of 4 to 14 are eligible for enrollment and can enroll in Bal Vihar 2023-2024 program by signing up here <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1yt1CR73sWEhQNa8B0SvPGuYKL-7-UR0ZWThuGpYUijM/edit>

Application and Payment details can be found here - <https://www.baltimoretemple.org/education/>

The most recognizable attribute of this success is you, the parents, who devote their time & effort in nurturing our children with so many facets of volunteering. As you are well aware, the Indian Community comprises of highly successful first- and second-generation parents who have fortitude, diligence, professional and financial success par excellence, and the gusto to provide the best for our children. This core has allowed us to join hands at BalVihar in order to provide a unique blend of our positive Identity, a sense of Community, and a touch of our Hindu religion and the various Languages. Unlike in India, where the mainstream breathes Hinduism, our children grow up in a diverse U.S. Community. Because of this, we need to teach our children what it means to be Hindu. Bal-Vihar is comprised of a vibrant group of children and parents with an ever-evolving curriculum that varies according to age. It includes Shlokas and prayers, an introduction to gods, meaning of Hindu symbols, the history of India through the stories of saints and leaders, the epics Ramayana and Mahabharata, and the overarching Vedic values, principles, and practices of the Hindu religion. Children also learn and enjoy performing pujas and celebrating festivals such as Diwali, Holi, Vasant Panchami and many others. This not only inculcates them with the pride & joy of celebrating Hindu festivals, but also gives them a meaningful and religious perspective behind them. Thus, the annual day program is simply a joy for children and a source of pride for Bal-Vihar parents. It is a show case of the students have learned through songs, dramas, and dance, and is a must see for our entire community. Bal-Vihar program offers learning opportunity for various Indian languages such as Hindi, Gujarati, Telgu, Sanskrit, Tamil and Marathi. While we continue to strive in providing a secure, meaningful, and enriched environment with a flair for religion and language to our children, we also request you to please spread the word to your friends and urge them to avail of this unique platform of nurturing the lives of these youngsters during the "formation" years of their lives. You can visit the temple's website to get additional information.



TAMASA MALLIK MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Calling all High School Graduates!

TAMASA MALLIK MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

The GBT & Mallik family has established a scholarship in memory of Tamasa Mallik in recognition of her outstanding leadership and selfless service to the community. The scholarship will be awarded to one student graduating from high school and going to college this fall. It will be awarded at the Annual Graduation Pooja on Saturday, June 15th-2024, at Greater Baltimore Temple. The application and details are available at the GBT web site and at the Temple.

All students graduating from high school are encouraged to apply at the earliest (Deadline May 25th-2023).

Application to apply for TAMASA MALLIK MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP is available on GBT's website.



ANNUAL GRADUATION POOJA AND CELEBRATION

SUNDAY, JUNE 15TH 2024

All 2024 High School and College Graduates (Undergraduates & Postgraduates) are invited to celebrate their graduation at the Greater Baltimore Temple. GBT has been conducting the Annual Graduation Pooja for several years now. We pray for our graduates and celebrate their success. A distinguished speaker is invited to address the graduates. All graduates are encouraged to attend with family and friends. Graduates who attended previously are welcome. Please call one of the organizers or the priests and give the name and contact information of the graduates. There is no charge for the pooja. Donations to GBT are always welcome.

4:00 PM – Registration and Welcome of Graduates

4:30 pm to 5.30 pm – Pooja

5:30 PM to 06:45 PM – Celebration and GBT Tamasa Malik Memorial scholarship award.

7:00 PM to 7:45 pm – Celebration Dinner with Graduates (\$10 per person attending graduation Puja)

Please contact: Geetha Raja (410-825-6414), Meeta Raikar (410-321-0503), Deepti & Raj Razdan (410-560-0597), Kali Mallik (410-252-4865), Hem and Saroj Shukla (410-667-6796), Lilly Engineer (443-622-3264), Sanjeev Gholap (240-381-6122) or Pandits Joshiji or Muraliji (410-861-8387), for participation and details.

Deadline for participation: Sunday, May 27th 2024.