

**Hindu Temple and Cultural Society of USA Inc.**  
**Sri Venkateswara Temple (Balaji Mandir) and Community Center**  
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### Varalakshmi Vratam:

Varalakshmi vratam is a special Hindu prayer to Goddess Sri Varalakshmi (Mahalakshmi) – the consort of lord Vishnu who is the abode of auspiciousness, prosperity, and wealth. Lakshmi is symbolic of eight forces, Wealth, earth, learning, love, fame, peace, pleasure, and strength, collectively known as Ashtalakshmi. Since she is ever ready to grant boons to Her devotees, she is referred to as ‘Varalakshmi’. Varalakshmi vratam is celebrated on the Friday before the full moon day in the month of Sravan (August-September). This vratam is observed by married women (sumangalis) for the welfare of their family.

There are a number of legendary stories about the significance of Varalakshmi vratam. It is believed that Lord Siva Himself recommended this puja to Goddess Parvati, when She wanted to help the womenfolk on earth. Another legend says that a person by name Chitranemi was cursed by Sri Parvati, when he was partial during a refereeing job in a game between Lord Siva and Sri Parvati. Chitranemi got rid of this curse when he watched the Varalakshmi vratam with great attention. Legend also says that this vratam was conveyed by sage Suka to Shaunaka and others.

It is also a tradition to read the story of Charumati, a woman who respected elders and loved her family. Attracted by her devotion, one day, Goddess Lakshmi appeared in Charumati’s dream. In the same dream Charumati chanted the following sloka in praise of The Goddess and also did Pradakshina to her. **[Padmalaye padmakare, Sarvalokikapujite; Narayanapriye devi, Supreeta bhava sarvada]**. Goddess Lakshmi blessed Charumati and advised her to perform Varalakshmi vratam. When Charumati and her friends performed the Vrata, they were showered with riches following the completion of each pradakshina. Following this event, Varalakshmi vratam became an annual event in many households.

In our temple in Bridgewater, New Jersey, on the Varalakshmi vratam day, this Puja is conducted by our priests both in the morning and the evening. Women who want to observe this vrata are led through the religious proceedings by our priests. Priests also read Valalakshmi vratam story to the participants. When this puja is performed at home, Goddess Varakakshmi is invoked in a kalasa and the worship is conducted in a traditional way. Special stothras are also chanted in praise of Goddess Varalakshmi.

Varalakshmi vratam in our temple includes Lakshmi Ashtottara Sata Nama puja with gold coins in the morning and Sahasranama puja to Lakshmi gold coin mala adorned by Lord Sri Venkateswara in the evening.

May the blessings of The Lord Sri Venkateswara and Sri Mahalakshmi be with you and your family.

HTCS