



SHANTI FUND

January 4, 2023

Dear Well Wishers and Friends of Shanti Fund:

Volunteers of Shanti Fund wish you all a bright, prosperous, and peaceful new year. By now most of you must have received the 2023 Shanti Fund Peace Art Calendar.

January 30th is Gandhi Punya Tithi and one way to keep his peaceful coexistence message alive is to replicate his daily morning and evening multifaith peaceful prayer services. Volunteers of Shanti Fund have been observing for many years these services, first five years with the Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan at the Indian Consulate in NYC (2005 to 2009) and from 2010 to 2020 at the HLD Building in Hauppauge, where the Gandhi Statue is gracing the Plaza Level. 2021 Punya Tithi was shifted to the Consulate with presenters only and broadcasted on Facebook and Zoom. 2022 Punya Tithi at the last minute, due to Covid strain changed from the Consulate to Zoom. This year we are returning to the HLD Building in Hauppauge.

Considering the continuing worldwide tragedies, each of the dozen or so faiths has been requested to have the youth present their faith prayer messages of PEACE. It is important that we all encourage the next generation by our respectful presence on this solemn occasion.

Since at the government facilities no one is allowed to charge an admission fee or do fund raising, Volunteers of Shanti Fund have relied on the generosity of few to host all these events at the HLD Building without any charges for almost two decades. Volunteers will continue the same tradition at this venue. **Please RSVP at your earliest to make this event as memorable as in the past. In case of inclement weather, we can reach out to you if you have an RSVP.**

Trusting your presence and generosity,

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On behalf of the Volunteers of Shanti Fund



A memorial named Raj Ghat is dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi in Delhi, India.

It is a black marble platform that marks the spot of Mahatma Gandhi's cremation.

Most, if not all, visiting dignitaries pay their respect upon arrival in New Delhi, India.

Enlightenment & Peace thru Education

Perspective

On **January 9, 1915** Gandhiji returned from South Africa to India and people of India welcomed him as a Mahatma. People and government of India celebrated with merriment these 100 years of Mahatma Gandhi's return to India. An annual glorious Indian Diaspora event known as **Pravasi Bharatiya Divas** celebrated at different venue in India for couple of days around January 9th from 2005 to 2015. In 2015 it was celebrated in Gujarat, the state where Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born on October 2, 1869. More specifically it was held at the newly built state capital of Gujarat appropriately named Gandhinagar. From 2015 onwards it is celebrated every other year.

Gandhiji first went to England to study law. After acquiring Barrister degree he returned to India to practice law. Destiny had different plan. Businessmen from South Africa solicited his help for legal representations. He sailed to South Africa and found very quickly how badly he was treated because of his skin color. His conscience, education, faith and moral convictions took him to an unprecedented nonviolent activism in South Africa on behalf of native people and Indians.

After 22 years of activism in South Africa, he returned to India on January 9, 1915. In India he took upon the British Empire with many different nonviolent movements to secure independence for people of India. Ultimately, British granted the needed freedom and independence to India but the nation was partitioned resulting in untold atrocity, carnage and destructions. He is remembered as one who secured freedom of India without firing a bullet but could not save himself from bullets on January 30, 1948.

His mantra of nonviolence helped many world leaders to achieve admirable goals, be it Martin Luther King, Jr. securing civil rights for black people in USA, Vaclav Havel of Czechoslovakia to rebel against communism, or Nelson Mandela fighting apartheid regime in South Africa.



Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi paying homage to Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat



Buddhist Monks are performing prayers at the Samadhi of father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi