



Yasodhara Ashram
YOGA RETREAT & STUDY CENTRE

2024
Annual Review

Guided By The Light



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President's Message

2014-2024 - LOOKING BACK

Looking back over the past 10 years of holding the presidency of Yasodhara Ashram Society, I am struck by two things: the adaptability of this organization, and the support from our extended community.

Since 2014, we have undergone:

- a destructive fire that led to rebuilding the new Temple of Light
- change of leadership from Swami Radhananda, and her passage into Light
- the global pandemic that caused us to close our doors and reimagine possibilities

When the Temple burned, we received the most donations ever, which made rising from the ashes possible.

Thank you.

When Swami Radhananda became ill, you supported her with Light and care; and supported me in my new role with generosity and kindness.

Thank you.

During the pandemic, you were there - patiently learning with us as we started online classes. You gave generous donations and offered Karma Yoga to keep this sacred place afloat. It was clear how much the Ashram means to you and created the feeling that we are all in this together.

Over the past ten years, 2014-2024, we were able to accomplish some tangible long term goals, too, such as installing heat pumps and snugly fitting windows in both the Barn and Guest Lodge, and making Siva Hall accessible to accommodate friends with diverse needs.



The Teachings and this community want to live on.

A main area of focus now is dialoguing with younger generations, inviting them to integrate into teaching, into creating administrative and organizational efficiency, and adding wonderful skills and fresh thinking to update and adapt.

The cohort of direct disciples are Elders and mentors. As we enter 2025, we once again step into the unknown, building on a foundation of trust and care, a desire to pass along what has helped us.

"Let the Divine take care of everything," Gurudev Sivananda said to Swami Radha 70 years ago.

That Energy is behind it all.

With deep gratitude to our teachers and lineage - Gurudev Sivananda, Swami Sivananda Radha and Swami Radhananda.

And to all of you, thank you.

Swami Lalitananda

SWAMI LALITANANDA



This is Yasodhara





SWAMI RADHA



SWAMI RADHANANDA



SWAMI LALITANANDA

We are honoured to live and practice on the ancestral and unceded territory of the Sinixt (Lakes) and the Ktunaxa (Kutenai) people, whose Oral Histories have connected them to this land since time immemorial.

Tucked into the majestic mountains of southeastern British Columbia, Yasodhara Ashram offers a sanctuary where people from diverse identities, backgrounds and ages are invited to explore the path of self-inquiry and experience the depth and healing potential of yoga.

The Ashram's roots reach back to the 1950s, when Swami Sivananda Radha journeyed to India to study with her guru, Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh. As a determined immigrant with few resources, she followed her inner call with remarkable courage, bringing the spiritual teachings of yoga to a Western context. Her legacy lives on in the daily life and practices of the Ashram, continuing to inspire all who come here seeking clarity, purpose and transformation.

SPIRITUAL LINEAGE

In the Yasodhara spiritual lineage, Swami Radha remains a powerful source of inspiration, forging a path for generations of women leaders. Her deep generosity and insight continue to shape the Ashram's life through her writings, teachings and the enduring example of her courageous journey.

Swami Radhananda carried this lineage forward from 1993 to 2014 with grace and vision, offering transformative teachings and guiding the Ashram community through a time of deep growth.

Today, under the guidance of Swami Lalitananda, the Ashram continues to honour this sacred legacy while evolving to meet the needs of our time. As Spiritual Director, Swami Lalitananda nurtures the vitality of our tradition - this year initiating four dedicated teachers - each deeply rooted in Swami Radha's teachings and committed to carrying them forward.

Alongside our spiritual work, we also serve as stewards of [Timeless Books](#), preserving and publishing essential texts that support personal inquiry, reflection and transformation. In the works - a revitalization plan and a cookbook!

See our video [What is An Ashram?](#)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Our Board of Directors continues to provide invaluable leadership, guidance and support, ensuring the Ashram's vision and mission thrive in alignment with its core values.

Directors: Swami Lalitananda - President;

Swami Samayananda - Vice-President/Secretary; Gordon Matchett - Treasurer;

Directors: Alicia Pace; Paris Marshall-Smith; Rebecca Dale; Swami Matananada



Sacred Stewardship

CONSERVATION, MITIGATION & GENERATION

Yasodhara Ashram's infrastructure work in 2024 focused on maintaining essential systems, improving accessibility and adapting to changing climate for increased resilience with a focus on heating/cooling and air quality. Our efforts are grounded in care for the land, safety for our residents and guests and the

long-term sustainability

of our buildings and systems.



Highlights

Repair & Maintenance

Our Repair & Maintenance team supported comfort, accessibility and safety through a range of key projects:

- Renovated accessible washroom and installed a new entrance ramp at Siva Hall
- Installed electricity and a hot water tank at the Tent Site wash house
- Completed roof repairs at the Shop and cleaned the Temple roof
- Demossed multiple roofs across the property
- Replaced aging boardwalks and handrails for improved safety
- Addressed heating, cooling and air quality by adding fans in the kitchen and exploring heating solutions for Siva Hall and cooling for the Temple

Water & Waste Water

We continued vital upgrades and assessments to ensure a reliable and sustainable water system:

- Replaced and upgraded the well pump to extend its life
- Maintained chlorination system and repaired water main breaks
- Initiated a project to supply well water for garden irrigation and increase capacity for fire safety to be completed in 2025.

Fire Safety & Incident Response

We are proud to have received FireSmart Canada Community Recognition this year. To further reduce fire risk, we:

- Organized FireSmart work bees around Mandala House, Parvati, Many Mansions, Barn, Shop and the Guest Lodge
- Held a full-community evacuation drill to practice emergency readiness
- Continued forest fuel mitigation with the Lands Group
- Advanced recycling and climate action efforts
- Began installing additional garden irrigation and extending water access to the north end of the Ashram to support fire suppression efforts; project scheduled for completion in 2025.





FOOD FLOW

In 2024, care and creativity flourished in the Food Flow Team. The fruit season in the Kootenays was severely impacted by an early-year deep freeze, causing widespread bud damage and reducing cherry yields to just 20–25% of a typical crop. However, the season brought a silver lining with an abundant and thriving blueberry harvest. Long-standing orchard stewardship paid off, with well-maintained fruit trees yielding a strong apple and pear harvest in apple sauce production.

New offerings like microgreens, Ashram-blended teas, and water kefir added nutritional

diversity and value.

The year also saw meaningful growth in sustainability and local partnerships. Cartwheel Farm, an eco-conscious supplier using an electric van, delivered food directly to the Ashram, helping reduce emissions and costs.

The Bee Team managed four active hives, successfully rescuing one hive from collapse and harvesting honey from another.

Together, these efforts reflect a vibrant, resilient food ecosystem grounded in care, innovation and community.

FOOD FLOW HIGHLIGHTS



56,000
meals prepared



435 lbs
of salad greens



14,456 lbs
of carrots



191 L

133 bags
of tea



1032 lbs
of blueberries

4
active bee hives



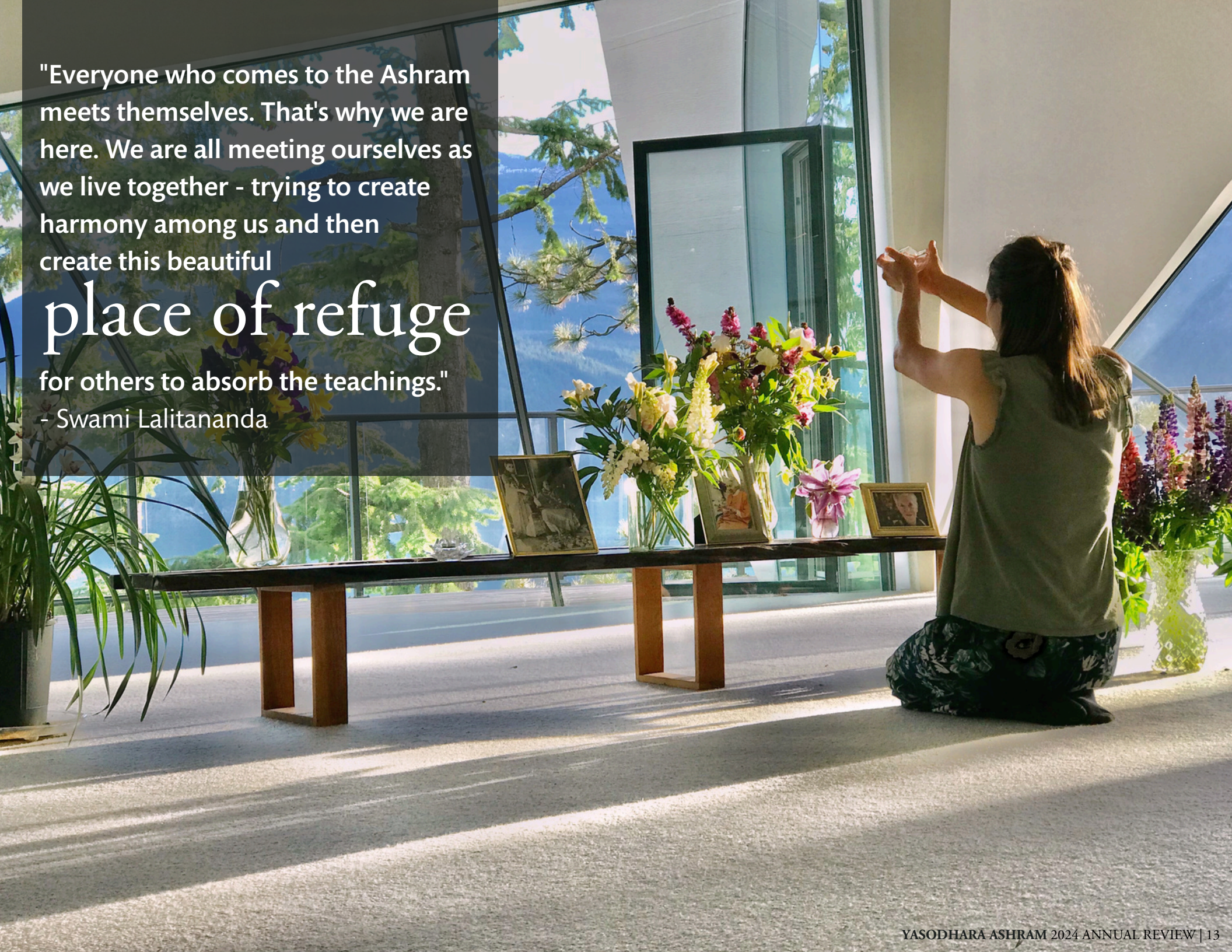
\$64,775

Equivalent Retail Value of
Garden & Orchard



Paths of Connection

"Everyone who comes to the Ashram
meets themselves. That's why we are
here. We are all meeting ourselves as
we live together - trying to create
harmony among us and then
create this beautiful
place of refuge
for others to absorb the teachings."
- Swami Lalitananda



In 2024, we celebrated a milestone in leadership - Swami Lalitananda's 10th year as president of Yasodhara Ashram. Her reflection - in our celebration for her - reminded us that the power of Presence, Choice and Love lies in our willingness to accept and live these qualities, both individually and as a community.

Rooted in the enduring Light of our lineage, we continued to open space for inner transformation, while embracing the evolving nature of stewardship.

With gratitude for those who have carried the teachings and hope for those stepping forward, we strengthened the weave between generations - trusting that the Light will continue to shine through all who are called to serve.



We began the year once again by opening our doors to 14 Yoga Development Course (YDC) participants, guiding them through a profound period of transformation from winter into spring. This immersive course remains the cornerstone of our teachings, continuing to attract those ready to deepen their spiritual journey.

Our 5 Day Guided Retreats saw significant growth, with 119 participants - a 15% increase from last year's 104. Many were first-time guests seeking rest, reflection and a deeper connection to their inner lives.

Now in its fourth year, our self-guided Restorative Retreats drew 47 guests, with 49% visiting the Ashram for the first time. The continued popularity of these retreats highlights the importance of silence and personal space in today's noisy world.

↑
15%
increase of participants
for 5 Day Retreats

Nearly half of
47
Restorative Retreats Guests
were new to the Ashram



Our Yoga Journey welcomed 26 participants across the year, surpassing 2023's total of 17. This offering continues to draw those longing for extended spiritual immersion in the teachings.

We offered three Teacher Certification and Recertification programs in Hatha Yoga, Kundalini & Dreams, and Hidden Language Hatha Yoga, with 17 participants - a steady number reflecting our commitment to nurturing teachers of Light.

In a heartfelt return to in-person outreach since 2019, Swami Lalitananda offered workshops in Ottawa/Wakefield and Montreal, warmly welcoming 57 participants over four days.

Swami Samayananda also reconnected with community through three days of workshops in Calgary, gathering with 47 participants. These gatherings were powerful reminders of the deep resonance and joy that come from meeting face-to-face, sharing the teachings, and strengthening our bonds across the country.

Our European outreach, led by Swami Sukhananda, welcomed 203 participants across England, Sweden, Germany, Eire, and Hungary—a 34% increase from the previous year. Notably, 35% of those attending were introduced to the Teachings for the first time, reflecting both the growing interest in Yasodhara Yoga and the continued power of these practices to reach new hearts and minds.

34%

Increase in European Outreach





KARMA YOGA

In 2024, we warmly welcomed 32 karma yogis into our Two Month Karma Yoga program, with 66% joining the Ashram for the first time.

Eight Karma Yogis contributed their experience in the Pathways Program. (In total 23 karma yogis have successfully completed Pathways commitments of varying lengths, giving a total of 16 years of selfless service since this program began during the pandemic.)

An additional seven participants engaged through our Hybrid Karma Yoga Program, offering greater flexibility and expanding access to those seeking to integrate service and spiritual practice into their daily lives.

ONLINE OFFERINGS

Our online offerings engaged 282 participants in 2024. While this represents a decrease from 425 in 2023, it highlights a rebalancing between digital and in-person participation as the Ashram continues to offer multiple pathways to the teachings.

The 10-month Peace of Mind for Professionals course led by Swami Sukhananda brought seven participants together. Our free information sessions continued to be a valuable gateway to the Ashram, drawing 415 sign-ups and playing a key role in raising awareness and encouraging on-site registrations.



YEAR IN REVIEW: CELEBRATING PROGRESS AND INSPIRATION

Celebration: Commemorating Swami Lalitananda's 10th Year of Leadership

[A special live satsang](#) and on-site celebration marked a decade of Swami Lalitananda's inspiring guidance, with heartfelt well-wishes from around the world. Her leadership continues to light the path for the Ashram community and all who connect with her.

Blog/Podcast: Amplifying Voices: Sharing Insights, Stories, and Teachings Through Our Blog and Podcast

Our blog and podcast platforms continued to thrive, offering a space for diverse writers to share their personal insights and reflections. The podcast "My Time with Radha" featured Katie Taher in deep, meaningful conversations with teachers who shared their personal experiences with Swami Radha.

Website: Revitalizing Our Online Presence: Website Updates for Enhanced Accessibility and SEO

We undertook a significant backend update to improve the website's SEO performance and make content management easier. Additionally, the front-end of the website was refreshed with a larger, more readable font, ensuring a better experience for visitors.

Launches & Newsletter: Successful Program Launches and Reintroducing Our Annual Newsletter to Keep the Community Connected

The early launch of our on-site programs proved to be a success, drawing enthusiastic participation. We also brought back our annual newsletter, serving as a vital tool to keep the Ashram community informed about events, updates and upcoming opportunities.

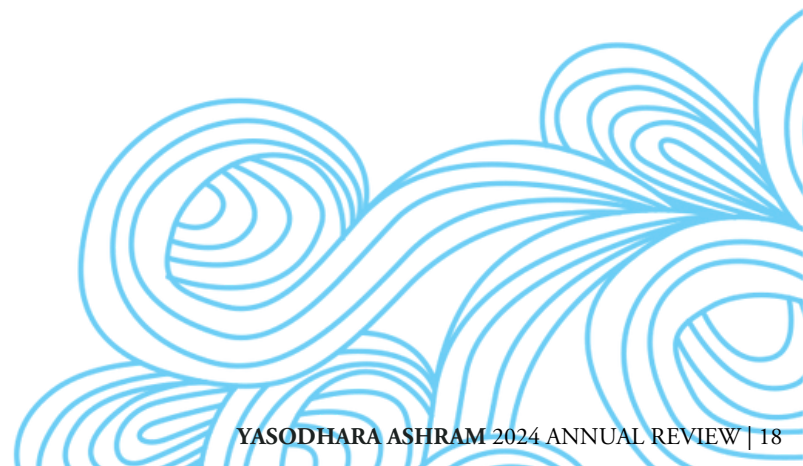
Co-Stewardship: Building Bridges Across Generations To Sustain the Ashram

The Co-Stewardship Project is an emergent collaboration between the Ashram resident elders and the next generation of teachers, students and friends of the work in which we, together, care and plan for the Ashram's future.

In 2024 we held seven in-person gatherings, creating space to get to know each other; practice together; listen and learn about the functioning of the Ashram; and generate ideas about the Ashram's future. On average, each gathering was attended by 12 youngers and three elders.

This year we also saw 18 teachers from the co-stewardship cohort actively involved in teaching at the Ashram.

In late fall, a multi-generational, nine-member Co-Stewardship Steering Committee was formed, to create structure and focus for the gatherings of 2025. The goal of the Co-Stewardship Project is to plan for a sustainable transition, create pathways for knowledge transfer, ascertain what support is needed and identify new models to offer support.



A close-up of a white flower with five petals and a yellow center, set against a blurred background of a sunlit forest. The sun is visible through the trees, creating a bright, hazy atmosphere. The text "By The Numbers" is overlaid on the right side of the image, framed by two horizontal lines.

By The Numbers

2024 was another strong financial year for the Ashram, ending with an operating surplus of \$270,000 - more than double the surplus of 2023. This marks the fourth consecutive year with an operating surplus, providing much-needed funds that will be available in 2025 for capital projects.

Increases in donations and investment income were the main source of enhanced profit. A generous bequest from a longtime Ashram friend raised our donations income to \$431,000, a significant increase from \$323,000 the year before. We are deeply grateful for our community's care and generosity. Messages of hope and gratitude from youth enlivened our fundraising efforts this year.

Programming (including on-site and online offerings) remained steady with a slight increase to \$744,000, while investment income rose to \$185,000 from \$66,000. Karma Yoga and residency fees rose to \$201,000 from \$176,000.

Once again we raised \$11,000 for the Ashram's Indigenous Reconciliation Fund that we donated to three Indigenous charities in gratitude for being on this unceded land and with the intention to help balance past injustices.

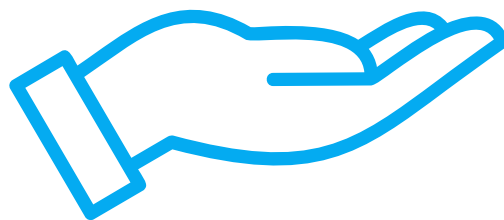
On the expense side of the ledger, we had a \$100,000 increase in expenses - primarily in the areas of Human Resources and Food Service due to inflation and services required to meet the needs of our guests, facilities and residents. Administration costs also increased by \$30,000 due to the write off of bad debt and a new agreement with The Association for the Development of Human Potential to act on our behalf in the United States.

On the plus side, we changed our credit card processing company, resulting in a decrease in fees by 47% to \$15,000. Profits from previous years were used toward such capital projects as a new pump at the Temple well for fire protection and garden irrigation; boardwalk replacement with the addition of new handrails to ensure safer walking paths; roof replacements, a washing machine and completion of the accessible washroom in Siva Hall.

Implementation of a change in our accounting policy to start depreciating long term assets resulted in an overall deficit of \$185,000 for the year. This does not represent an actual cash loss and is simply an accounting procedure.

[2024 Financial Statements & Notes to Financials](#)

\$431,000
Donations



LIGHTING THE WAY AHEAD

While the world around us seems increasingly chaotic and insecure, one thing we can do is determine our own values and ideals and stand up for them. So even in the midst of unsettling change, we know where we are going... →

- Swami Lalitananda



We can also gather with others of similar mind. It is one of the powers of community. The Ashram offers refuge to step back from the day-to-day stresses and to find out what you think, what you feel, and to ask, What direction is needed in my life right now?

We really don't know what will happen globally, though there are some distressing trends. But at least we can know ourselves and act from that inner clarity.

Part of being in the over-70 crowd is knowing, as my mother used to say, that the road ahead is shorter. Which can be awakening. The final act. What is unfinished? What needs to be done?

It is also helpful for the elders among us to be among younger people who are looking at a longer timeline.

How can we create the world we want for our future generations?

In many ways the Ashram is an experiment. We focus on individual spiritual practice to access the harmony and peace within ourselves, and then extend it out with heartfelt care to others. Where the rubber hits the road is the reality of living together, which is wonderfully revealing of our limitations, and excellent for showing us what we still have to work on.

**You could be part of this community.
Yasodhara Ashram.
A refuge in the storm. A place to grow.**

It just takes alignment, commitment and surrender.

Or you can shine the Light wherever you are, each in your own way, offering your rare and special gifts.

My wish is that you pause, gain access to that inner Light and ask for guidance on the way ahead. I hope, too, that you find others who support your direction.

Together in knowing ourselves and living our ideals, we can make a difference.

Hari Om
SWAMI LALITANANDA





Yasodhara Ashram
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SINCE 1963

We are a Canadian charity
and active learning centre.