

2026 Grand Pongal Celebration – A Festival of Harvest and Togetherness

The Grand Pongal Festival 2026 is a vibrant celebration of gratitude, prosperity, and togetherness. As the Sun begins its northward journey, we welcome a new season of growth while honouring the deep cultural roots of the Nagarathar community. Pongal, the festival of overflowing sweetness and joy, reminds us to thank nature, share blessings, and celebrate life.

Rooted in Tamil Nadu's agricultural heritage and nurtured in New Zealand's multicultural landscape, Pongal embodies tradition, continuity, and belonging. Families and friends gather to honour the land, cattle, rain, and sun, celebrating the values that define the Nagarathar identity.

One of the core values of the Nagarathar community is generosity, expressed through sharing food and blessings with family, friends, and the wider community. This is beautifully reflected in Thirukkural 1018:

"கொடுத்து விருந்து புறந் தின்று வாழ்வார்
கொடுத்தொழுக்கம் குன்றக் கெடும்."

*"Great are those who offer food to guests and partake only after giving;
withholding generosity leads only to decline."*

Through the ritual cooking of Pongal, festive meals, and communal celebrations, this value comes alive, reminding everyone that true prosperity is measured not by what we keep, but by what we share.

Event Overview

Date: 17th Jan 2026, Saturday

Location: Terapunga Room, Wesley Community center, Sandringham.

Agenda

- 09:30 AM – 10:30 AM Pongal Preparation & Celebration
- 10:30 AM – 10:40 AM Children Prayer song
- 10:40 AM – 10:50 AM President's Speech
- 10:50 AM – 11:00 AM Community Service Award Distribution
- 11:00 AM – 11:30 AM Cultural Program - Kids and Adults Group Dance
- 11:30 AM – 12:00 PM Financial Solution Speaker: Simi Sethu, Kripa Finance Ltd.
- 12:15 PM – 1:15 PM Lunch
- 01:30 PM – 03:00 PM Games for Kids & Adults
- 03:00 PM Wrap-up

Important Instructions

- RSVP Details:
39 individuals have RSVP'd, including 29 adults (13+) and 10 children (12 and under).

- Food Arrangement: South Indian Lunch
- Emergency Contact: Meenakshi GaneshRaj - +64 2041412838 & Solai Ramu - +64 0223819299
- Directions: Map and directions are available here: [Wesley Community Centre](#)
- Games for Kids and Adults: For each category (Men, Women, Children, Teens), we plan to conduct games depending on the time available. We hope to include all the games so everyone gets a chance to participate and enjoy.

Men

1. Uriyadi

- Players are blindfolded and given a stick.
- They must break the hanging pot within the given time.
- No removing the blindfold.
- One chance per player.
- The player who breaks the pot wins.

2. Kite Flying

- Each team requires 2 players.
- Kites will be provided.
- Kites must be flown within the designated area.
- Cutting another kite or flying the highest wins (as decided by organisers).
- Dangerous flying is not allowed.

Women

1. Tug of War

- Teams must have an equal number of players.
- No sitting or lying down during the game.
- The team that pulls the rope past the center line wins.
- Best of one or three rounds as decided.
- Referee's decision is final.

2. Seven Stones (Lagori)

- One team throws the ball to knock down the stones.
- After knocking down, the team must rebuild the stones.
- Opposite team tries to hit players with the ball.
- If all stones are rebuilt, that team wins.
- If all players are out, the opposite team wins.

Children (Under 10 Years)

1. Ring Toss

- Players stand behind the marked line.
- Each player gets fixed number of rings.
- Rings must be tossed onto the bottles/pegs.
- Maximum successful rings wins.
- No crossing the line.

2. Fill the Bottle

- Players use a cup/spoon to fill the bottle.
- Water must be taken from a fixed container.
- No spilling on purpose.
- First player to fill the bottle to the mark wins.

Teen(Under 18 Years)

1. Lemon & Spoon Race

- Lemon must be balanced on the spoon.
- Spoon should be held in the mouth/hand (as decided).
- If the lemon falls, the player must restart from the point.
- First to reach the finish line wins.

2. Pot Pot (Hit the Pot / Balloon Burst)

- Players are blindfolded.
- Player must hit the pot/balloon with a stick.
- One attempt per player.
- No guidance after the game starts.
- Player who hits the pot/balloon wins.

Donations and Contributions

- Planned Donations: TBA
- Excess Items Management: TBA

Photography & Videography

We sincerely thank the following volunteers for capturing the event:

- Photography: Thirunavukkarasu(Thanneer) Vairavan & Arvind Vairavan
- Videography: GaneshRaj Subramanian

Important Information for Non-Members

We are delighted to extend a warm invitation to everyone. We welcome all to participate and kindly request that those planning to attend RSVP in advance to assist us with preparations.

Event Cost (This is applicable only for non-members of NZNNS):

If RSVP'd: \$10 per adult member (aged 18 and above)

If not RSVP'd: \$15 per attendee (including children and adults)

Fund Collection: TBA

Conclusion: TBA