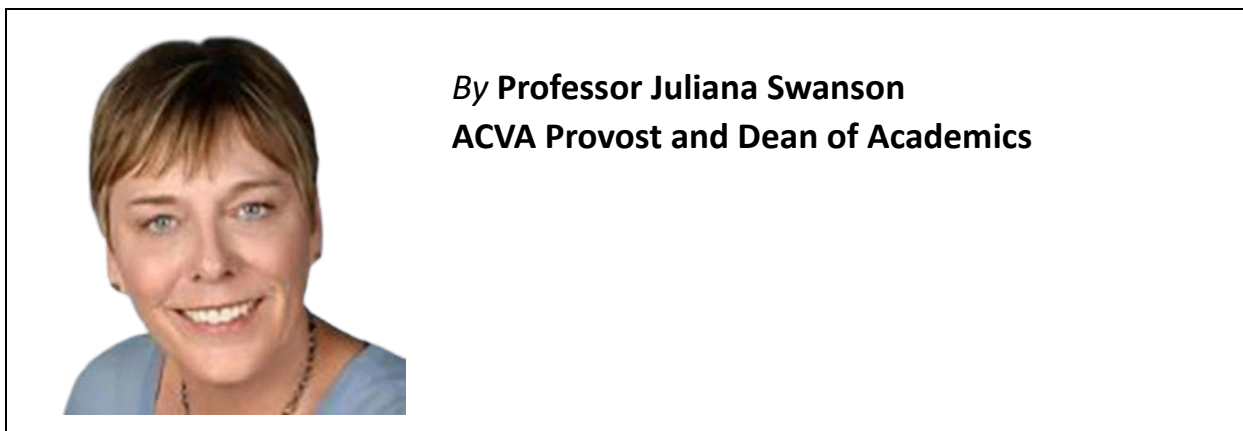


ACVA Newsletter 2025-07 – Holy Days



Holy days

July 25 to August 23: Śrāvaṇa Maas - The Holiest Vedic Month Dedicated to Lord Shiva

Śrāvaṇa Maas, also known as the Shravana month or Sawan, is the fifth month in the Vedic lunar calendar. It typically begins in mid-to-late July and ends by mid-to-late-August. The month of Shravana is very important for the Indian sub-continent as it is related to the arrival of the southwest monsoons.

The dates of *Śrāvaṇa Maas* vary regionally due to different lunar calendars. North India follows Purnimanta, which begins and ends around the Full Moon, meaning that *Śrāvaṇa Maas* will occur from July 11 to August 9 this year. South and Western India use the Amanta lunar calendar, which begins and ends with the New Moon, meaning that it will occur from July 25 to August 23 this year. Himalayan regions including Nepal observe the Solar Calendar, meaning it will occur from July 16 to August 16.



According to the Amanta calendar, the New Moon in July will open the festival of *Śrāvaṇa Maas*. This is the holiest of all months in the Vedic calendar. It commemorates the victory of Lord Shiva, who drank the poisonous *halāhala* which sprang from the *Samudra Manthana*, the epic churning of the great ocean performed by the gods and demons in search of the nectar of immortality. This is an allegory about the vicissitudes of life, and the ultimate victory of light over dark.

In *Śrāvaṇa Maas*, Lord Shiva overcame Yama, the Lord of Death, after which Shiva transformed into Mritunjaya. This is a tale about the eternal and immortal spark of divinity within all of us. Lord Shiva's consort Sri Parvati is also celebrated during *Śrāvaṇa Maas*. According to legend, she wanted to gain Lord Shiva's attention. Thus, she performed intense austerities, including fasting on Mondays during Sawan (Sawan Somwar). Her practices were eventually successful and resulted in her marriage to Lord Shiva in this same month.



During *Śrāvaṇa Maas*, the universe is rejuvenated by the mystical *Shiva Tattva*, the highest, purest, transcendental essence of nature, which purifies body, mind and spirit through various rituals like fasting (on Mondays), mantra japa, prayer, pujas, holy baths, and offerings to the ancestors and the deities. In some parts of India, the New Moon in Shravana month is also known as Hariyali Amavasya, the jubilant festival of greenery that takes place during the rainy season in honor of Lord Shiva and Parvati Devi.

Om Namah Shivaya! Happy Sawan to all!

