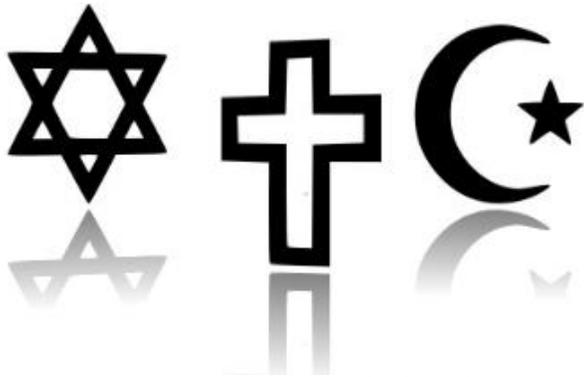




## SELF-GUIDED TOURS:

# Abrahamic Faiths: Judaism, Christianity and Islam



*Fort Edmonton Park is located in Treaty 6 territory, as well as the traditional lands of the Métis people.*

**How to use this guide:** This guide shares some of the compelling stories about the history of Christian, Jewish and Islamic groups in the Edmonton area and acts as a starting point for you to explore at your own pace. It also provides suggestions of buildings to visit and questions to ask costumed staff.

## 1846 Fort- Politics and Religion

*In the 1830s, the Hudson's Bay Company invited Protestant missionaries to the West to bolster its reputation in Britain, while also countering the growing influence of the French Catholic missionaries. Thus Robert Rundle, a 29 year old Wesleyan Methodist, arrived at Fort Edmonton in the autumn of 1840 to begin his ministry.*

**First Missionaries to Edmonton:** Rundle was not the first missionary to visit the fort: in 1838, two Catholic missionaries named Modeste Demers and Francois-Norbert Blanchet of Lower Canada (now Quebec) were en route to the Oregon territory via the Saskatchewan River system. During their brief stay at Fort Edmonton, Demers & Blanchet performed many weddings and baptisms. How do you think the Missionaries' aims differed from the Hudson's Bay Company's?

**Wesleyan Methodists:** The Reverend Mr. Robert



Rundle was an adherent to the reformist teachings of John Wesley. The goal of Wesleyan Methodists was the 'sanctification' of themselves – to live a righteous life so as to avoid not only Hell, but all sin entirely. Rundle

often complained of perceived excesses of the Catholic Church in his journals and letters, and referred to the fort as a 'hotbed of Popery' in a letter to his supervisor. What do you think the Catholics thought of his teachings?

**ASK AN INTERPRETER** why the Hudson's Bay Company might have desired to keep missionaries out of this region prior to 1838. Ask about Reverend Rundle's pet cat and his reputation.

**BE SURE TO VISIT** [Rundle Chapel](#) (#9) and [Missionary Cross](#) (near #20, and by the Pond Picnic Site)

## 1885 Street- Settling the West

*As the Canadian government encouraged western settlement, it was often the Missionaries that found themselves as intermediaries between First Nations and newcomers. There were often rivalries between missionaries, as each denomination sought to set itself up first in an area.*

**Catholic Missionaries:** The Oblates of Mary



Immaculate were a missionary congregation active in the Alberta area. Father Albert Lacombe was a member and he founded the St. Albert mission in 1861. It was here he oversaw the

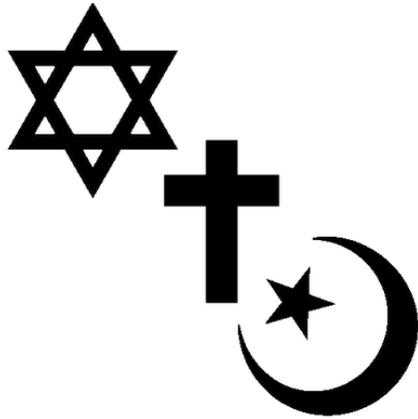
construction of a grist mill and Alberta's first bridge. He advocated for Francophone settlement in the West and worked hard for French educational rights. Other Catholic missionaries in this area included Father Hippolyte Leduc and Bishop Vital Grandin. In what ways are these Catholic missionaries remembered in Alberta?

**Methodist Missionaries:** In 1871 George McDougall established a permanent Methodist mission in Edmonton. After Robert Rundle's departure decades prior, the area had been mostly influenced by the Roman Catholic Church. George's son John also became a missionary, and grew up speaking fluent Cree. He married Abigail Steinhauer, the daughter of a Cree missionary. How do you think their locale affected their marriage ceremony?

**ASK AN INTERPRETER** about Rev. McDougall and the theft of the sacred Manitou stone, and other impacts the missionaries had on First Nations culture.

**BE SURE TO VISIT** [McDougall Methodist Church](#) (#28) which has pictures of many Edmonton-area Missionaries and Church workers. Visit the house of Métis interpreter [Peter Erasmus](#) (#40). Peter was a guide and close friend to the McDougalls.

# Thank you for visiting Fort Edmonton Park!



*Did you find this helpful?  
Please give us feedback and  
fill out a comment card.*

#### Photo Credits:

Rev. Robert Rundle – <http://www.rundlesmission.org/robert-rundle.html>

Father J.B. Thibault – P.A.A. A2921

Father Albert Lacombe – Glenbow Archives NA-518-2

Rabbi Hyman Goldstick – P.A.A. 73.449

Al-Rashid Mosque – City of Edmonton Archives A98-55

## 1905 Street – Meeting Spiritual Needs

With the railway coming to Edmonton in 1891, the population boomed. New churches and temples were needed for the growing population, and for the new religious faiths arriving in the city, including Judaism, Anglicanism, and Ukrainian Orthodoxy.

**Anglicanism in Edmonton:** In 1909 a group of recent British immigrants who worked for Swift's meat packing house met in a space above a store in North Edmonton for weekly services. In 1910 the group proposed that they form a separate parish. The Anglican Church of St. Michael and All Angels was built in North Edmonton and the first service held on November 11, 1910. In what strange spaces have you found quiet or loud moments of spirituality?

**More Denominations:** Lutherans had their first church service here in 1893 and members of the Moravian church came to Edmonton in 1894. The main Protestant denominations at this time were Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational. In smaller towns it was difficult to find clergy, so in 1925 the three joined to form the United Church of Canada.

**Judaism:** Abe Cristall was the first Jewish person to come to Edmonton in 1893. He encouraged Jews from his native Bessarabia to come and by 1901 there were 17 Jewish Edmontonians. By 1911 there were almost 200. In 1906 Cristall helped form the Edmonton Hebrew association which hired Rabbi Hyman Goldstick (pictured). In 1912, the foundations were laid for the Beth Israel Synagogue. For the Jewish people here it was important to preserve their culture. How important is your culture to you and in what places do you celebrate it?



**ASK AN INTERPRETER** at [Tent City](#) (#51) what congregation they belong to.

**BE SURE TO VISIT:** [Anglican Church of St. Michael and All Angels](#) (#53) [St. Anthony's Church](#) (#58), a Catholic church. Compare and contrast the differences between the two churches and the two faiths.

## 1920 Street- Keeping the Faith

The 1920s were a decade of adjustment to postwar realities. Immigrants continued arriving via rail and brought with them their customs and religions. The Jewish population continued to increase and new religious groups, like Muslims and Bahá'í, came to Edmonton, helping to create the rich multicultural city we have today.

**Expanding Jewish Population:** H.B Kline, an Edmonton Jeweler, was one of the founders of the Beth Israel Synagogue and the Talmud Torah School, which in 1933 was the first Hebrew day school in Canada. The Talmud Torah School was funded by weekly donations. The first Kosher butcher shop opened in 1922 and a tax of one cent per pound was initially levied on kosher meat to raise the funds for the School! What other unique stories of religious fundraising do you know?



**Islam in Edmonton:** Edmonton's Muslim community, primarily Lebanese, did not have many resources, but dreamed of building a mosque. They convinced Mayor John Fry to give them land and accepted donations from store owners on Jasper Avenue. There was great support for the mosque from people of Jewish, Christian and Muslim faiths and when the dream was realized in 1938, gratitude was extended to members of all three faiths. Social events, such as dinners, were held in the basement. Why do you think there was such support from other religious groups?

**ASK AN INTERPRETER:** At [The Al Rashid Mosque](#) (#79), ask what an Imam is and about the first Edmonton Imams. Ask why the mosque looks like a Ukrainian church.

**BE SURE TO VISIT:** [Kline's Jewellery](#) (#71) and look for evidence of the storekeeper's faith. Stop by [The Ukrainian Bookstore](#) (#68) which was a community gathering place and sold Ukrainian Catholic and Ukrainian Orthodox literature.