

“It Starts with Me”

Communities are strongest when they bring together a diverse set of voices, perspectives and backgrounds. (St. Albert Social Master Plan)

Community & Social Development is featuring a series of ‘snapshots’ intended to help you learn more about the people in our community and workforce who risk exclusion.



These Snapshots are not all-encompassing and may not include all people who risk exclusion. How a group of people identify themselves will expand far beyond a snapshot. Also, each of us could identify with more than one group, and our individual personalities make each person unique.

Religious Beliefs

St. Albert is a diverse community. According to [Statistics Canada's 2011 National Household Survey](#):

- 71.2% of the St. Albert population reports a religious affiliation, and
- St. Albert residents report an affiliation with over 17 organized religions.

People with religious beliefs may or may not belong to a formal religious organization or group. Religious beliefs include spirituality and other deeply held convictions, such as aboriginal spirituality.

Religious beliefs are protected by [the Alberta Human Rights Act](#). Even if it is not the intention to discriminate against religious beliefs, the Alberta Human Rights Act requires that religious needs are accommodated.

Be Curious, Be Kind. Ask Questions, Learn More.

Whatever your own religion, faith, or spirituality, it is OK to be curious! The best way to learn more is to have a respectful conversation with somebody that has a different religious or spiritual affiliation than you.

You can start by asking:

- Do you believe in a God or another deity?
- Do you go to a place of worship, such as a church, mosque, synagogue, or gurdwara?
- What misconceptions are there about your faith?
- Are there important days or holidays that you celebrate?
- How does your faith affect your daily life?

Many places of worship welcome people of all faiths to attend their services. You do not have to compromise your own beliefs to attend a service or to have a respectful conversation about another religion.

What is happening in our community?

- The [Edmonton Interfaith Centre for Education and Action](#) provides education programs on the many religions found in Greater Edmonton.
- The [St. Albert Community Cultural Kitchen](#) meets every second Tuesday to demonstrate how to make a cultural food item.
- Contact your school board to learn about Faith-based programs and clubs.
- [Informalberta.com](#) and search 'faith' or 'churches'

To Learn More:

World Interfaith Harmony Week – February 1-7. United Nations' [World Interfaith Harmony Week](#) aims to promote harmony between people with all faiths or no faith.

- This week, you are encouraged to think about the common values between religions.
- Visit [worldinterfaithharmonyweek.com](#) to find interfaith events happening nearby, or to find tips on how to hold your own interfaith event.
- [Alberta Human Rights](#) to learn more about Protected Areas and Grounds under the Alberta Human Rights Act
- Check out [St. Albert Library Reads on Religious Beliefs](#)
- Community & Social Development, City of St. Albert – [Diversity and Inclusion](#)
- Article 18 of the [United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)

Acknowledgements:

[Equity & Inclusion Lens Handbook](#) - City of Ottawa and CAWI

