



Twin Cities Muslims

Learn about beliefs, practices and rapid growth of 182,000 Muslims and 155 mosques in the **Twin Cities**.

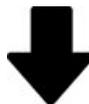
**In-depth
Report
below**

Five TAKEAWAYS for leaders of Twin Cities churches:

- 1** Now 182,000 Muslims in Twin Cities, half Somalis
- 2** Most Somalis are refugees
- 3** Now 151 mosques in Twin Cities
- 4** Muslims gaining, Christian losing
- 5** Jesus is best bridge but also biggest barrier

Report prepared July 2017 by ChurchFacts

Scroll down for report



Muslims in the Twin Cities

TAKEAWAY 1 - Now 182,000 Muslims in Twin Cities, half Somalis

There are now approximately 182,000 Muslims in the Twin Cities, which by percentage is five times more Muslims than in the United States as a whole: 5% of the population here, 1% nationally, and 25% worldwide. If present trends continue, Islam will become the world's dominant religion in this century.

Approximately one-third of Muslims in the Twin Cities are *devout* in their faith, and two-thirds are *cultural only* (don't regularly pray five times a day, or go to Friday mosque, or memorize much of the Quran, or abstain from alcohol and tobacco, etc.). Approximately half of Muslims here are Somalis and half are from 47 other countries.

TAKEAWAY 2 - Most Somalis are refugees

An **immigrant** is someone who chooses to resettle from another country and follows a legal process for residency and eventual citizenship. A **refugee** is someone who has been forced to flee his or her home country and is granted asylum in the United States on humanitarian grounds through international agreements, resettlement agencies and sponsors, bypassing U.S. immigration quotas for that country. A refugee has the same rights and responsibilities as a US citizen except for voting. After five years, a refugee can apply for citizenship.

Most Somalis in the Twin Cities are refugees, or children of refugees, who came here after years in refugee camps at the Kenyan border. Most speak three or four languages: Somali (native), English (here), some Arabic (religious) and some Swahili (Kenyan camps) and/or other languages.

First Somali refugees arrived in the Twin Cities in 1993. There are now approximately 83,000 Somalis in the Twin Cities.

Somalis have come here primarily through compassionate services of Christian resettlement agencies

such as Lutheran Social Services, Catholic Charities, Minnesota Council of Churches and World Relief (now Arrive Ministries, an affiliate ministry of Transform Minnesota).

Somali culture is more tribal than national, identifying by clans and status, like Europe centuries ago, each with its own rules and rulers (sultans, chiefs and warlords). Somalia is a poor country stricken by political strife, war and famine. It didn't have an official written language (Somali) until 1970, and literacy rate is still only 38%. Virtually all Somalis are Sunni Muslims.

Some reunification is occurring here as families and clans, separated by the camps and/or immigration process, are now trying to find each other, often moving from one city to another to establish more permanent resettlement.

Nearly all Muslim marriages are arranged by parents. Men can marry Christian and Jewish women, and some, even in the Twin Cities, have more than one wife ('legal wife' and up to three additional 'Sharia wives'), allowed under Sharia law if the man can afford it.

Approximately one-third of Somali women in the Twin Cities are single mothers, separated from their husbands by death or flight from Somalia, or in the camps, or in immigration process, or because of multiple wives in different locations.

First generation Somali refugees are almost always drawn into local mosques, and they tend to become more devout in their faith in the Twin Cities than they were in Somalia, but the second generation tends to become more secular.

TAKEAWAY 3 - Now 151 Mosques in Twin Cities

The first Twin Cities mosque was formed in 1967. By 2000, there were 44 mosques here. Today there are 151. Ten percent of the mosques are former church buildings.

A mosque is to a Muslim what a church is to a Christian, but even more, because the mosque is not only the center for religious interaction but also the center for social interaction and jurisprudence. It is the hub of Muslim community. Particular mosques serve particular constituencies, by sect (as Sunni or Shiite), or by place of residence or work, or by clan or status.

There is no main organization, headquarters or hierarchy within Islam. Most mosques are independent entities run by its own board and/or imam (similar to pastor). Any imam or group of Muslims can form a mosque at any time and any place. Average mosque affiliation (similar to membership) is about 1,200, but average weekly participation is less than 350 and annual budget only about \$100,000. Attendance at the largest mosque in the Twin Cities (Bloomington) is about 2,000. Half of all mosques have no full-time paid staff.

Mosques are places for daily ritual prayer and Friday sermon and for training and fellowship. Unlike churches, there is no music in the mosque.

Also unlike churches, Muslims usually don't go to mosque as families. Women and children don't pray or listen to the sermon in the same space as men; they are in the rear behind a curtain or veil. The husband may go to a mosque close to work, and the wife and children may go to a mosque close to home. Men attend mosque more regularly than women.

TAKEAWAY 4 - Muslims gaining, Christians losing

Since 2000, in the Twin Cities, more than 6,000 people have converted to Islam, but only about 175 Muslims have converted to Christianity. (These approximate counts are converts who have stayed with the faith; about 75%, both ways, return to their original faith or lack of it. Ex-Muslims are called MBBs, Muslim Background Believers.)

Even though the conversion rate is far greater for Muslims than for Christians, conversion is not a strong driver of Muslim growth in the Twin Cities. The strong drivers are immigration and birth rate.

Twin Cities churches have failed miserably in evan-

gelism among the 182,000 Muslims – a veritable mission field – that God has interspersed into our local neighborhoods and work places.

TAKEAWAY 5 - Jesus: best bridge, but also biggest barrier

Muslims love Jesus. They believe he was born of the Virgin Mary ... performed miracles ... lived a sinless life ... proclaimed the word of God ... is alive in heaven now ... will return to earth ...

This is more than can be said of Muhammad, who was born of human father and mother ... a good man but sinner ... died ... buried in Mecca.

But even with many mutual beliefs, there is one almost insurmountable barrier between Muslims and Christians: Muslims believe Jesus is a prophet; Christians believe Jesus is divine (trinity). This critical difference goes to the very core of Islam, that there is only one God. Muslims believe that Christians worship three or four Gods: Father, Son, and/or Holy Spirit and Mary. To Muslims, this is gross idolatry, the worst sin, the unforgivable sin if one dies in this state of shared allegiance.

Generally, Muslims believe the Old Testament and Gospels, but they believe these scriptures have been so corrupted over the centuries by Christians and Jews – like re-making Jesus into God – that they are no longer trustworthy. That's why God gave the Quran to us, through the angel Gabriel and Muhammad, they say, to correct those errors and henceforth keep God's word pure for all future generations, given in precise Arabic, without debate over inclusions or translations, the final word of God, never to be changed.

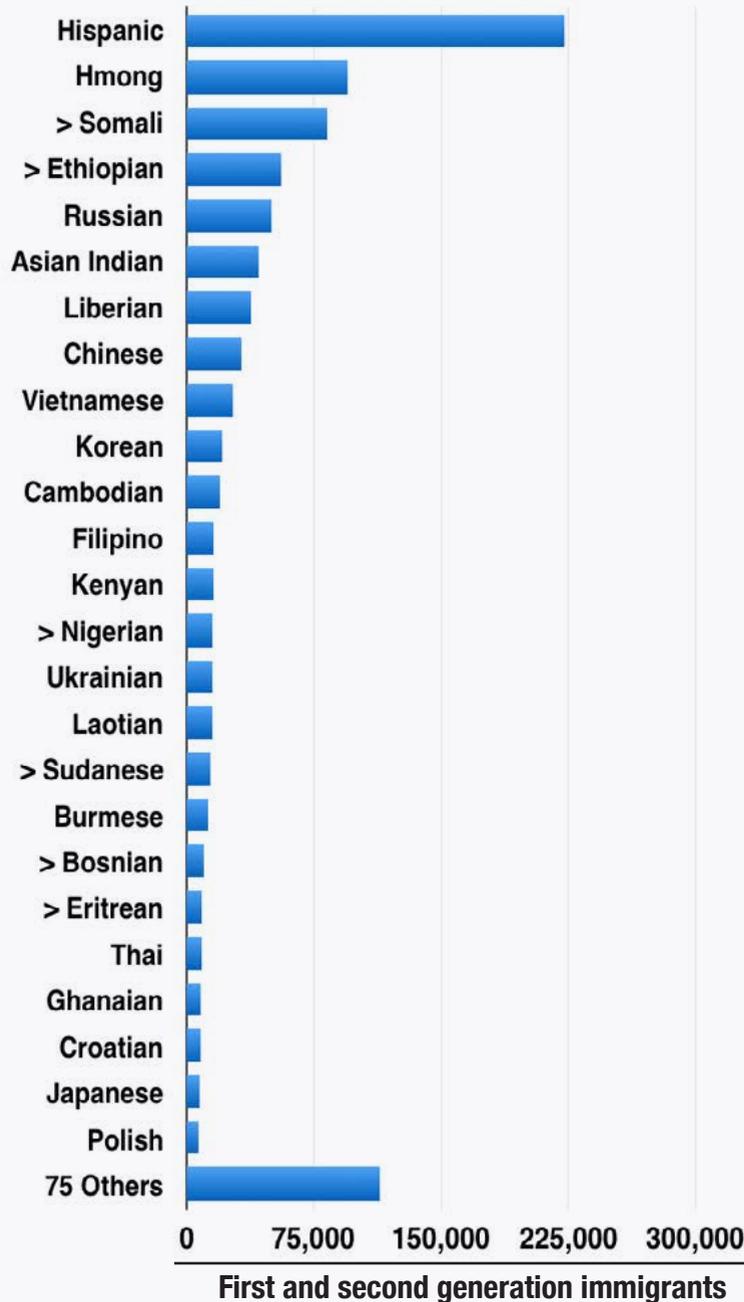
They believe the purpose of the Quran is to confirm the essential message of monotheism taught by all the prophets. They say that Jesus is not co-equal with God ... that even our scriptures say God knew things about the future that Jesus didn't know ... that Jesus submitted to God ... that Jesus prayed to God. They believe God alone grants salvation, without need for any helper.

Unless otherwise noted, all Twin Cities statistical data in the following charts are from City Vision

Immigrant Groups in Twin Cities

Chart 1
Twin Cities Immigrants by Country of Origin

> means large Muslim population



No ex-Muslim churches now or foreseeable future

In the Twin Cities, there are:

- 328 Hispanic churches
- 96 Hmong churches
- 66 Liberian churches
- 47 Russian churches
- 39 Ethiopian churches

In total, there are 967,00 first and second generation immigrants in the Twin Cities, and more than 900 churches in the Twin Cities to serve these specific immigrant groups.

But no Somali churches, even though there are more than 83,000 Somalis here.

Why? (1) Because nearly 100% of Somalis are Muslim, (2) there are so few converts to Christianity, and (3) persons involved in starting a church for ex-Muslims would be targets for physical attack by Muslim extremists.

There are no traditional churches of any kind in the Twin Cities for Muslims who convert to Christianity. They meet in small groups in homes.

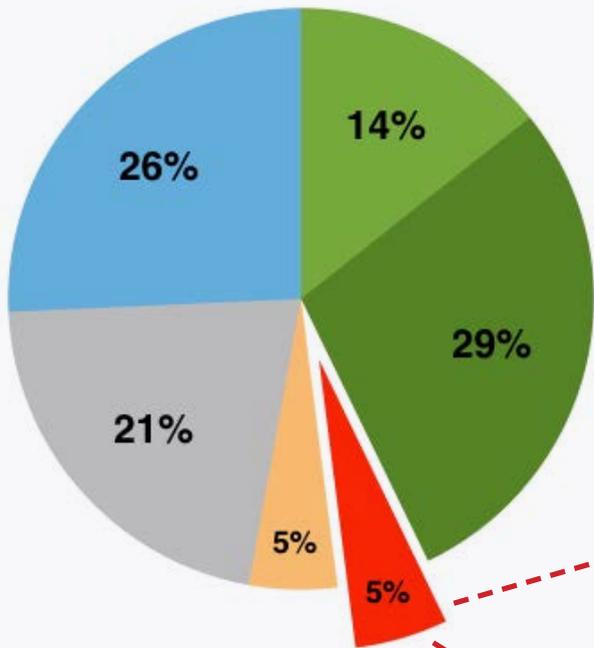


Click above (when connected to Internet) to see **video** produced by Minnesota Historical Society

Muslims in Twin Cities

Chart 2

5% of Twin Cities Population is now Muslim



Muslims are still only a small percent of the population, but they are having an over-size influence. They are the fastest growing and most aggressive group.

- Catholic
- Protestant
- Muslim
- Other religions
- Nones
- Other / Unknown

83,000 Muslim descendants from Somali
99,000 Muslim descendants from 45 other countries

Chart 3

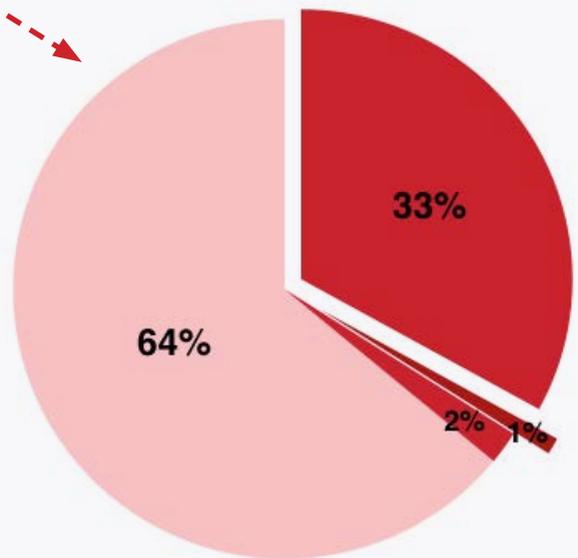
36% of Muslims are Devout 64% are Cultural Only

In the United States, a major national survey shows that the average mosque has 1,248 participants (members) and 353 Jum'ah (Friday worship) attendance. Church Scout observers see no reason to think the ratios are any different in Twin Cities mosques.

In the Twin Cities, there are 151 mosques and 185,000 Muslims, so we would expect 1,225 average attendance (185,000/151) – almost identical to national – if all local Muslims were devout.

However, since national attendance is only 29% (353/1,225) we can deduce similarly that only about a third of Twin Cities Muslims are devout. The percent of Muslims in the Twin Cities who are converts and militants is very low.

Therefore, it appears that about 64% of Muslims in the Twin Cities are **Cultural Muslims**, born into the faith, acknowledging the faith, and part of the faith community, but not actually practicing the faith except for special occasions.



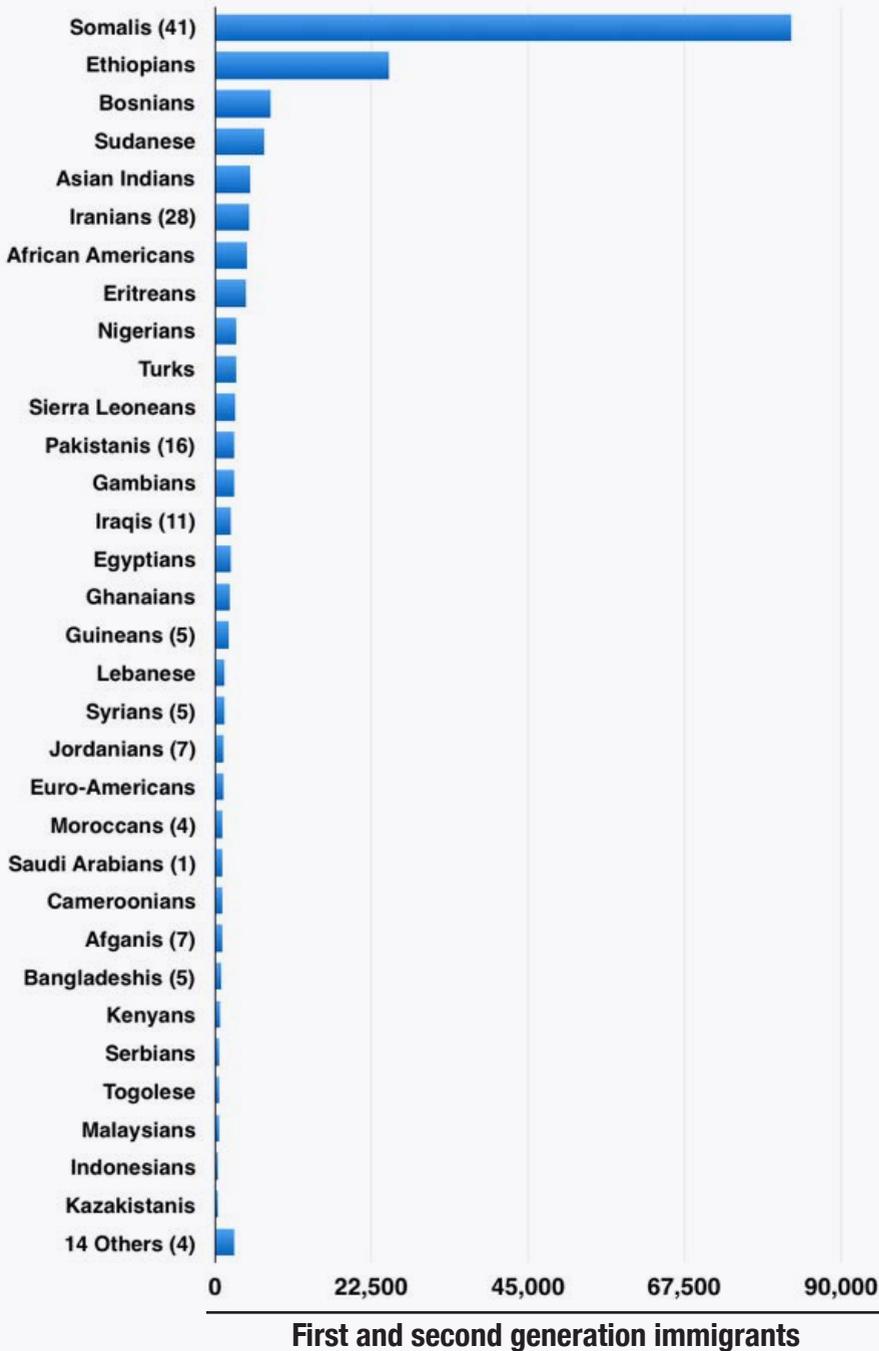
- Devout
- Converts
- Militant
- Cultural

Twin Cities Muslims by Ethnic Group

Chart 4

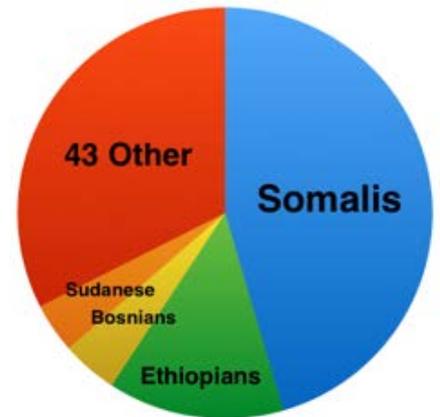
Twin Cities Muslims by Ethnic Group

Number in parentheses is known Christian converts



182,000 Muslims in Twin Cities

47 ethnic groups



Twin Cities Resettlement Agencies

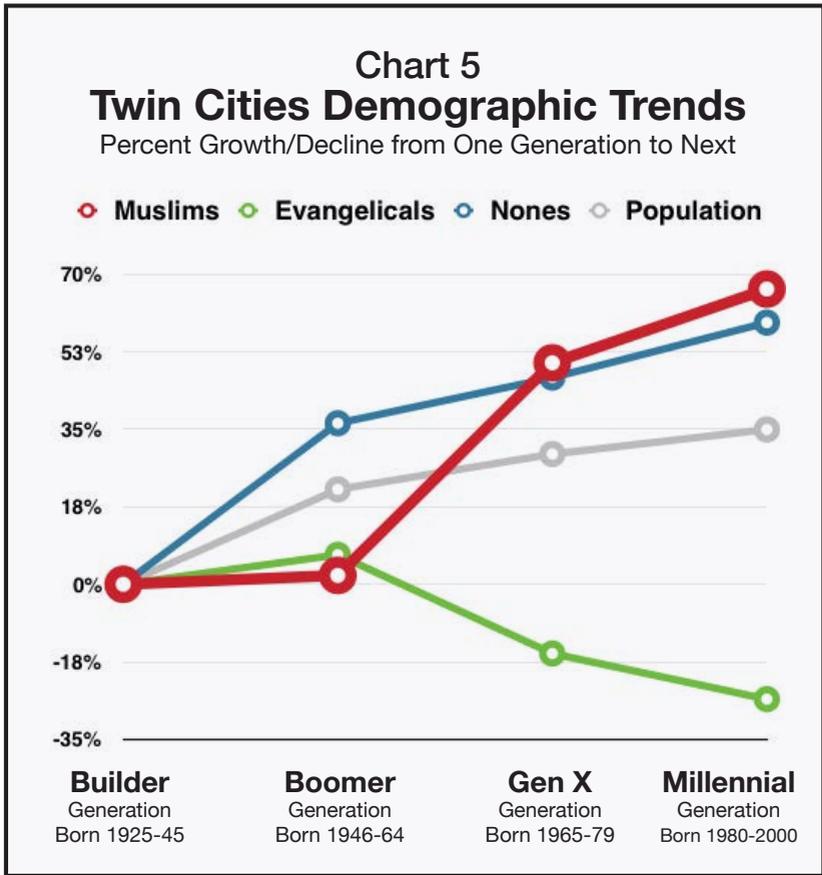
- Catholic Charities
- Lutheran Social Services
- Minnesota Council of Churches
- Arrive MN
- International Institute
- Jewish Family and Children's Services of Minneapolis



The largest concentration of Muslims in Twin Cities is in the Cedar-Riverside area of Minneapolis.

Riverside Plaza (above) has nearly 5,000 residents, mostly Somalis.

Muslim growth / Christian decline



Troubling trends for Christian leaders

The charts on this page are the most troubling for Twin Cities pastors, staff and church boards.

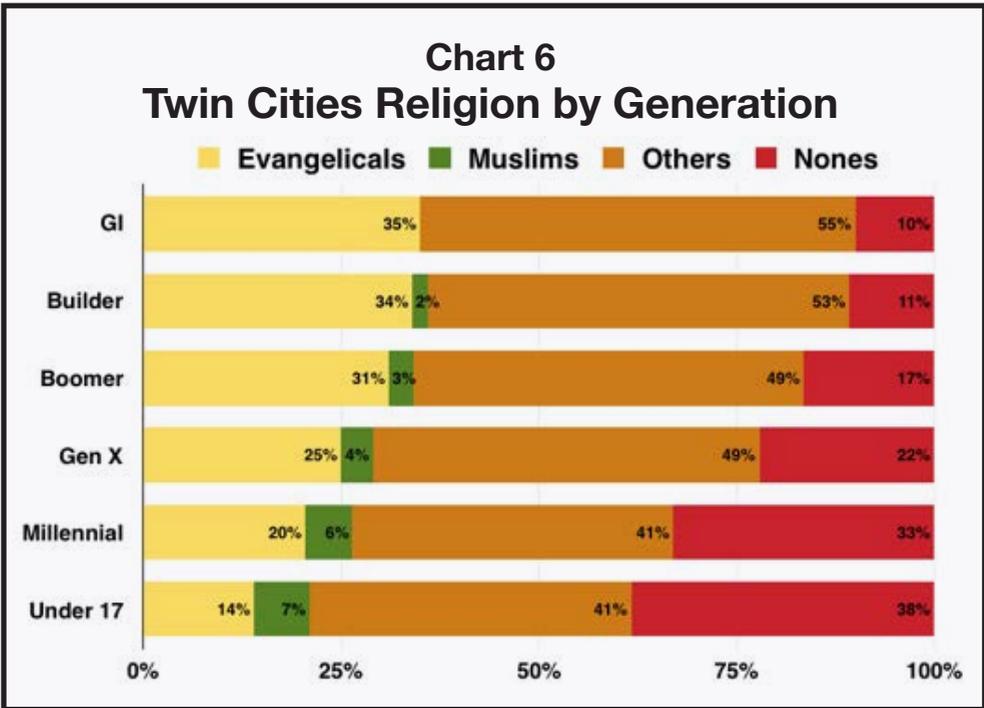
Not only are Muslims and Nones **growing** rapidly, but evangelicals are **declining** rapidly. Catholics and non-evangelicals are declining even faster.

Every generation since the Boomers is getting less Christian as Nones and Muslims capture increasing shares of Twin Cities population.

Briefing 7 explains demographic shifts

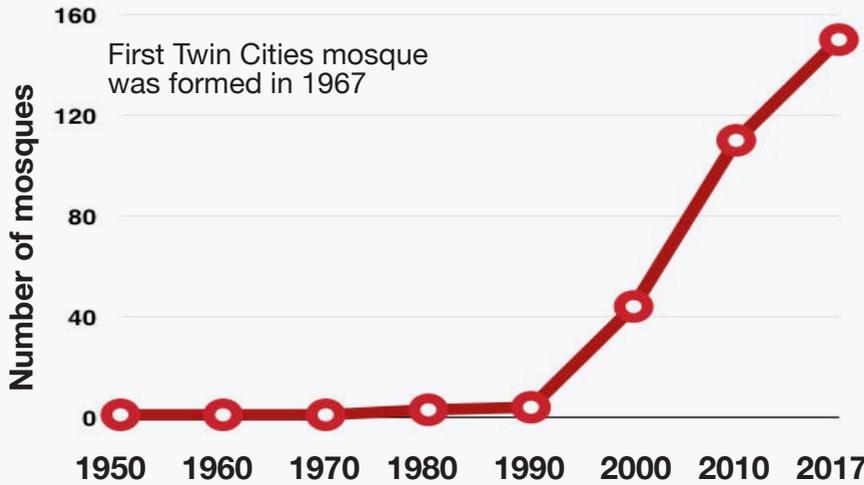
The chart at right is from Church Scouts **Briefing 7** which analyzes data showing how evangelicals are losing ground in the Twin Cities.

The purpose of **Church Scouts** is to provide important data, observations and strategies to help reverse the trend.



Twin Cities Mosques

**Chart 7
Twin Cities Mosques by Year**



For better public acceptance, mosques are often called Islamic Centers, Islamic Institutes, Cultural Centers, etc.

Average Mosque Participants: 1,200

Average Mosque Attendance: 350

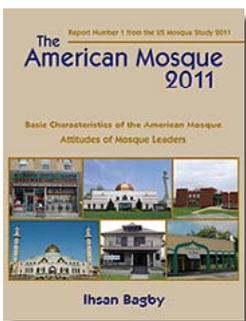
10% of former church buildings in Twin Cities are now mosques

Largest Mosques in Twin Cities

- **Al Foroque Youth and Family Center** (2,000 attendance), former Christian school, 8201 Park Avenue, Bloomington
- **Islamic Community of Bosniacs** (1,500 attendance), former church building, 668 Broadway NE, Minneapolis
- **Darul Uloom Islamic Center** (1,000 attendance), former church building, 977 5th Street East, St Paul

**Chart 8
Mosques by City**

Minneapolis	86
St Paul	21
Burnsville	5
Eden Prairie	5
Bloomington	3
Columbia Heights	3
Blaine	2
Brooklyn Park	2
Fridley	2
Minnetonka	2
Apple Valley	1
Brooklyn Center	1
Chisago Lake	1
Coon Rapids	1
Eagan	1
East Bethel	1
Edina	1
Golden Valley	1
Inver Grove Heights	1
Maple Grove	1
Maplewood	1
Osseo	1
Plymouth	1
Richfield	1
Rosemount	1
Roseville	1
Shakopee	1
St Anthony	1
Stillwater	1
Woodbury	1
TOTAL	151

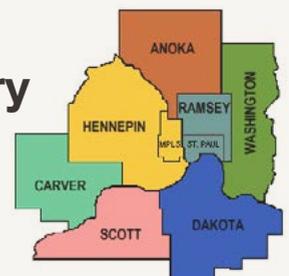


Click image at left (when connected to Internet) for wealth of information from Muslim sources about mosques in United States

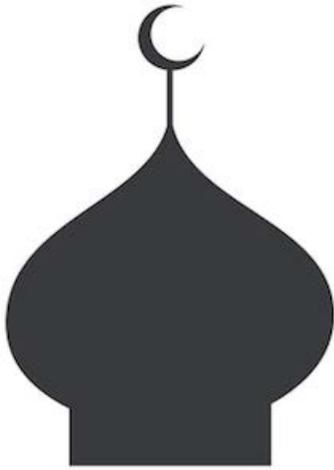
Click image at right for locations of local mosques, prayer spaces, schools, restaurants and markets

Muslim Directory

Twin Cities Metro MN



Mosque Leadership and Administration



No central organization

In Islam there is no main organization, headquarters or hierarchy.

Each mosque is an independent unit run by its own board and/or imam. However, much like protestant churches, some mosques choose to affiliate with an organization, such as the Association of W. Deen Mohammad (13% of U.S. mosques), Islamic Society of North America (11%) or Muslim American Society (3%). Two-thirds of mosques are not associated with any organization.

Any imam or group of Muslims can form a mosque at any time and any place.

There are denominations within Islam (like Catholic and Protestant within Christendom). Over 90% of Muslims in the Twin Cities are Sunni.

Imams

Half of mosques have no full-time paid staff. An imam is like a pastor, usually part-time in smaller mosques.

Two-thirds of imams were born outside of the United States. Half of imams have at least a BA in Islam obtained in Egypt, Saudi Arabia or other country abroad.

Main qualifications for an imam:

- Good voice in Quran recitation
- Good knowledge of Quran and Islamic tradition
- Good teacher, leader and motivator
- Ability to speak in language of community
- Ability to raise funds

Imams lead the formal prayers and give the Friday sermon.

Increasingly, imams in the Twin Cities are becoming more professional and assuming greater responsibilities, following the pattern of Christian pastors.

Boards

The Board of Directors/Trustees run the administrative aspects and the Imam runs the religious and educational aspects. In two-thirds of mosques, the board has final decision-making power.

In half of mosques, leader of the mosque is the President, not the Imam.

Mosques are under-financed, with median budget less than \$100,000 per year.

Activities

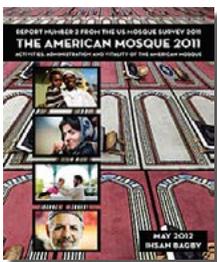
Mosques engage in numerous activities (percent offering these programs):

- Friday prayers and sermon (100%)
- Social and group gatherings (93%)
- Islamic studies classes (83%)
- Interfaith activities and/or open house (79%)
- Conduct all five daily prayers (77%)
- Community service and social justice (44%)

There is no music in mosques.

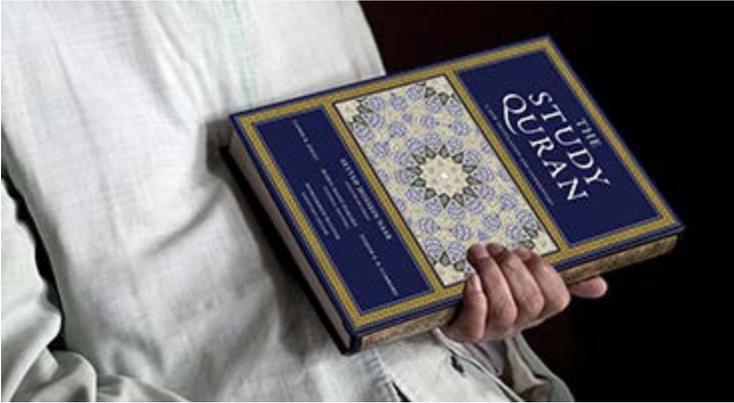
Week-end schools for children and Quran memorization classes are also important educational activities in many mosques.

There are four private K-12 Muslim schools in the Twin Cities.



Click image at left (when connected to Internet) for wealth of information from Muslim sources about leadership and administration of mosques in United States

Muslim beliefs about Muhammad and Quran



Muhammad: God's final prophet

Muhammad was born in 570 AD in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, orphaned at an early age and raised by an uncle. At age 25 he comfortably married a wealthy 40-year old merchant. He later married other women, permitted under Sharia law, and had seven children.

One night, when he was 40, while praying in a cave, the angel Gabriel appeared and told him to 'recite' (memorize precisely the messages Gabriel would relay to him from God). Sporadically Muhammad continued to have these revelations until shortly before his death at age 62.

Muslims believe that God gave these messages to confirm the teachings of monotheism preached by Adam, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and other previous prophets. These messages are God's final word to mankind before Judgment Day, and Muhammad is God's final prophet.

Muslim misunderstandings

Muslims do not understand Christianity any more than Christians understand Islam. Most don't know differences like Catholic, Protestant, or born-again.

Generally, they think that all Westerners are Christians, and don't like Muslims. With this generalization, they think that Christians are sinful (Hollywood) and greedy (capitalism). Most Muslims think that Mary is part of the Trinity and are appalled by the phrase "Mary, mother of God."

Quran: God's final holy scripture

Muhammad could neither read nor write. He memorized and then repeated the messages from Gabriel to his companions who also memorized them and then put them into writing. Eventually, by the time of his death, scribes had compiled all of the recitations into the single volume we know today as the Quran (Koran). An English paraphrase is online at www.clearquran.com.

Muslims believe that the Quran itself is a miracle – and proof that it's from God – because an illiterate man could not produce such beautiful Arabic literature.

Muslims believe the Books of Moses, Psalms of David and the Book of Jesus (Injil) in their original form and content, now largely lost because of changes and corruption by Jews and Christians over time and now so full of errors that they are no longer trustworthy. The primary corruption of the Bible is the re-make of Jesus from sinless prophet into God, the Trinity.

That's why God gave the Quran to Muhammad, to correct the errors and henceforth to keep God's word intact – in Arabic only, no translations – exactly as Gabriel brought it from God.

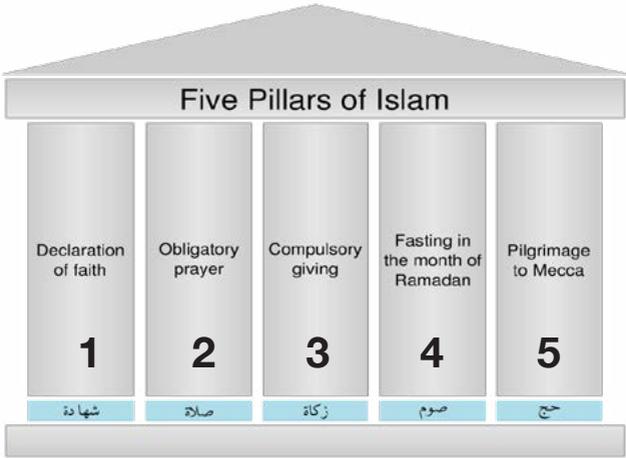
Precise scripture quotation and memorization is extremely important in Islam. Millions of Muslims have memorized the Quran (about 600 pages in Arabic) in its entirety.

More devout in Twin Cities

Many immigrants and refugees who were **secular Muslims** (didn't go to mosque) in their home country become **devout Muslims** after arriving in the Twin Cities because of their need to associate with a mosque for ethnic cohesion and community in a foreign culture.

In the mosques, they are taught and pressured by imams to become more fundamentalist in their faith.

The Five Pillars



Five Pillars of Islam

Declaration of faith	Obligatory prayer	Compulsory giving	Fasting in the month of Ramadan	Pilgrimage to Mecca
1	2	3	4	5
شهادة	صلاة	زكاة	صوم	حج

1 Shahada: Faith
Shahada is this declaration of faith: *“There is no god but God and Muhammad is the messenger of God.”* Saying this in Arabic in the presence of a Muslim is what makes one a Muslim. It is like the sinner’s prayer for salvation in Christianity. Muslims repeat it often.

2 Salat: Prayer
Salat is the Islamic ritual prayer, consisting of five daily prayers at set hours of the day and a special time of prayer at a mosque at Friday noon. The prayers never change and are recited while facing in the direction Mecca. Each prayer is preceded by ceremonial washing and accompanied by a series of set positions including bowing with hands on knees, standing, prostrating and sitting in a special position. A Muslim may perform their prayer anywhere, but a mosque is preferable because it allows for fellowship.

3 Zakat: Charity
Zakat is charitable giving based on accumulated wealth (customarily 2.5% of assets, similar to Christians’ 10% tithe of income). It is the personal responsibility of every Muslim to ease the economic hardship of others and to strive towards eliminating inequality.

4 Ramadan: Fasting
 Except for certain health exceptions, Muslims must abstain from food and drink from dawn to dusk during the holy month of Ramadan and be especially mindful of their sins and look to Allah for forgiveness.

5 Haji: Pilgrimage
 Every able-bodied Muslim who can afford it is obliged to make a pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca at least once in their lifetime.

Muslim beliefs are formulated as the Five Pillars of Islam

There are the five basic religious duties in Islam which form the structure of Muslim life and are mandatory for all believers, known as the **Five Pillars**.

In addition to the **Quran** (sacred scripture), Muslims have the **Hadith** (not sacred scripture) which is a collection of traditions and sayings of the prophet Muhammad that, with accounts of his daily practice (the Sunna), constitute a major source of guidance for Muslims to supplement the Quran.

Allah is the Arabic word for God. **Isa** is the Arabic word for Jesus. Christians in the Arab world use those same names for the Christian triune God, so the distinction is not in the name itself but in the cultural understanding of the name.

Muslims strongly reject the idea that Adam’s sins fall on us and that we can do whatever we want and then shift the whole load of sin to Jesus by a simple prayer. Muslims believe that every person is responsible for his own sins and must pay for his own sins by rituals and good works.

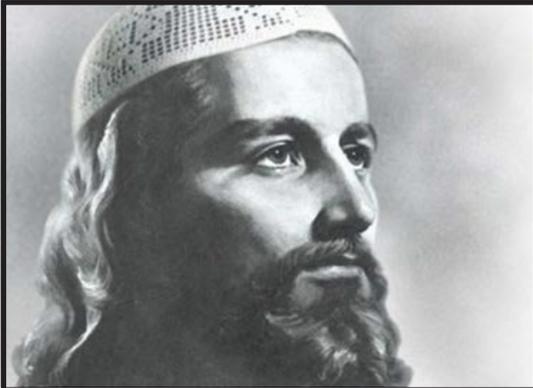
On **Judgment Day**, God will look at each life to see if the good has outweighed the bad. If mostly good, God will be merciful and forgive the person’s sins and grant entrance to heaven (paradise, a place of physical pleasures). If mostly bad, the person will be sent to hell. On this side of death, even the most devout Muslim never knows for sure how God will judge, but by faithfully performing the duties of the Five Pillars, one can improve the probability of after-life in heaven.

There are many **prophets** in Islam, including the Old Testament prophets, John the Baptist and Jesus.

Muslims believe in **angels, demons and jinn** (invisible mortals that are half human and half demonic).

Sharia means the whole body of Islamic Law. It is the religious legal system that governs the political, social and moral duties of faithful Muslims. It is not clearly defined and therefore open to many interpretations and practices from place to place.

The Muslim Jesus



Miraculously born of Virgin Mary

Performed miracles

Wonderful teacher

Only sinless one

Never died

Alive in heaven now

Will return to earth

**Greatest prophet
BUT NOT GOD**

Prophet, not deity

The central tenet in Islam is belief in strict monotheism (*tawhid*) – the oneness of God. The opposite of *tawhid* is *shirk*, which is associating partners with Allah.

Shirk is the one unforgivable sin in Islam. Associating a partner with Allah is a rejection of Allah's mercy and takes one outside of the faith. A person dying in this state goes to hell.

Believing that Jesus is God, a partner with Allah, and praying to him, trusting him for forgiveness, seeking guidance from him and proclaiming allegiance to him is to commit the unforgivable sin.

No wonder it is so difficult for a Muslim to chose to become a Christian, or even to listen to the gospel story!

Even with so much in common, ***this is the one almost insurmountable hurdle.***

Muslims believe that Jesus was raised to heaven without being crucified and that he is alive in heaven now.

He will return to earth again in the midst of wars fought by al-Mahdi, the redeemer of Islam, against the Antichrist and his followers. Jesus will kill the Antichrist and convince everyone that Allah is the one true God, and thus there will be one world-wide Muslim community.

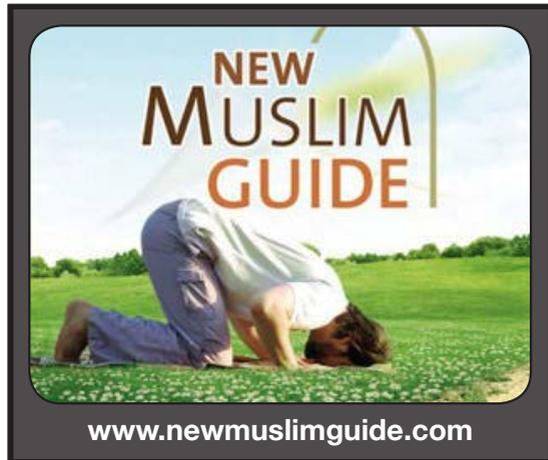
Muslim theologians teach that after the death of al-Mahdi, Jesus will assume leadership and usher in a time of universal peace and justice. Jesus will rule about forty years and then die and be buried in the city of Medina in a grave beside Muhammad.

10 Reasons why Muslims say Jesus is not God

Click at right (when connected to Internet) to see a **video** explaining why Muslims do not accept the divinity of Jesus



Faith and Practice explained by Muslims*



Nuances and detail

In every faith there are nuances difficult for outsiders to explain in detail. We don't want Muslims to explain what Christians believe; we want to explain it ourselves.

Likewise, Muslims want to explain what they believe in their own words, as they do in these linked sites:

Click at left (when connected to Internet) for example of what Muslims teach new converts.



Click at left for example of Muslim evangelism, explaining Islam to Christians.



Click at left to browse an Islamic website with articles teaching Muslims how to live out their faith.

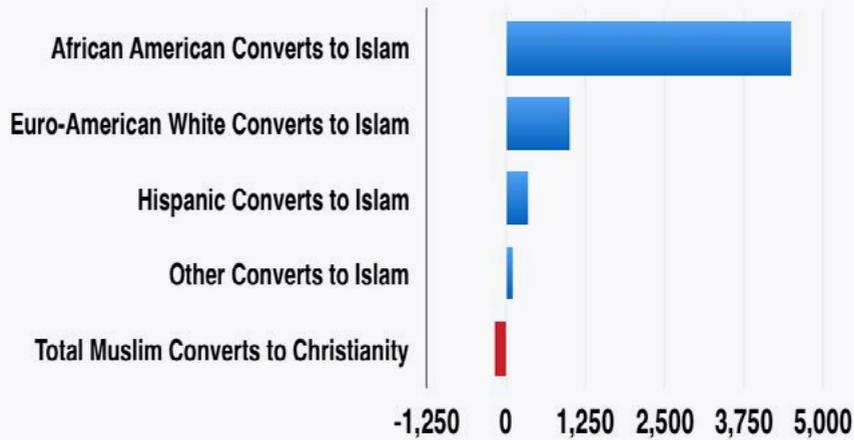
See [10 points Christians should know about Muslims](#) and [What parents teach their children about Christmas](#)



Click at left for video of former Christian youth pastor's testimony of his conversion to Islam

Conversions To and From Islam

Chart 9
Conversions to Islam 2000-2017



Since 2000, more than **6,000** people in the Twin Cities have converted to Islam, and stayed ...

but only about **175** have converted from Islam to Christianity, and stayed. (In addition, there are a small number of Muslims who converted before coming here.)

Three-fourths of initial converts return, both ways.

The conversion rate is far greater for Muslims than for Christians, but **conversion is not the strong driver of Muslim growth in the Twin Cities.**

STRONG DRIVERS OF MUSLIM GROWTH:

- Heavy immigration inflow from Muslim countries and refugee camps
- Muslim families have four or more children; Christian families have two children
- Children are born Muslim and must remain Muslim; no choice to make
- Muslim men can marry Christian and Jewish women, but all children must be Muslim
- Many Muslims believe it is a grave sin (shirk) to even listen to a gospel presentation
- Severe social/spiritual pressure on anyone who leaves the Muslim community (ummah)

An eye-opener!

Every pastor should see this video and send it to church leadership team

Click at right (when connected to Internet) to see **video** showing how Islam will soon become the world's dominant religion. Sobering news for Christians.

Muslims Are Taking Over The World at an ALARMING Rate - M...

FERTILITY RATE

France	1.8
England	1.6
Greece	1.3
Germany	1.3
Italy	1.2
Spain	1.1

MORE VIDEOS

www.churchscouts.org/videos/muslims-births



Home



Menu



About



Reports



Statistics



Interviews



Culture



Books



Parachurch

www.churchfacts.com

Supplying Twin Cities church leaders with strategic information
for making better, bolder, faster decisions for church growth