

Not Just Lutherans and Catholics: A Timeline of Religious Diversity in the Twin Cities

Pre-European Contact - 1848

10,000 to 6,000 BCE (early prehistoric period)— early tribes leave evidence of spear points, atlatls, and darts.



5000 BCE to 1800 CE – Rock petroglyphs (Jeffers, left) created in southwestern MN. Images of animals and people.

100 BCE to 500 CE – Hopewell culture burial mounds created in what is now St. Paul (Indian Mounds Park)

1600s – **Dakota** and **Ojibwe** tribes begin to occupy region, but other tribes are also present (southern MN): Arapaho, Cheyenne, Foxes, Iowa, Omaha, Oto, Ottawa, Ponca, Sauk Winnebago, Wyandot.

1680 – Father Louis Hennepin (**Roman Catholic**) publishes an account of the falls on the Mississippi, which he names “St. Anthony Falls” after St. Anthony of Padua.

1766 – British explorer Jonathan Carver explores Wakan Tipi (“Dwelling of the Great Spirit” in **Dakota**), a cave with animal and human petroglyphs beneath what is now called Dayton’s Bluff above the Mississippi River in St. Paul. Burial mounds above the site begin to be plundered.

1840 – **Catholic** priest, Father Lucien Galtier establishes a chapel on the bluff overlooking what is now St. Paul. (1847 drawing, right)



1834 – **Presbyterians** Gideon and Samuel Pond arrive in what is now St. Paul to missionize among the **Dakota**.

1847 – **Baptist** missionary Harriet Bishop in St. Paul.

1848 – Minnesota becomes a US territory.

1849 to 1924

1849 – First **Methodist** and First **Presbyterian** churches founded in St. Paul. **First Baptist** Church, St. Paul, 1850. Christ Church Episcopal, St. Paul, 1851. St. Anthony of Padua (**Catholic**) Church in St. Anthony (later Minneapolis), 1849. First **Congregational** Church, St. Anthony, 1851. First **Universalist** Church, St. Anthony, 1854.



1856 – Mount Zion Hebrew Association founded in St. Paul as the first **Jewish** (German) organization in the region. (Left, Mt. Zion Temple, 1875)

1858 – Minnesota is granted statehood.

1859 – Episcopal Bishop Henry Whipple arrives to head the **Episcopal** Church and missionize the **Ojibwe**.

1860 to 1924 – Period of immigration: German, Scandinavian, South and Central European: **Roman Catholic, Lutheran, other Protestant, Eastern Rite Catholic, Eastern Orthodox**.

1863 – Pilgrim **Baptist**, the first African American church in the Twin Cities, founded in St. Paul.

1866 – Augustana Evangelical **Lutheran** Church (Swedish and some Norwegians and Danes) established in Minneapolis.

1869 – Augsburg Seminary (**Lutheran**) founded.

1887 – St. Mary’s **Russian Orthodox** Church in NE Minneapolis founded by Eastern Slavs, Carpatho-Rusyns, Ukrainians, and Ruthenians, and Russians.

1890s – Russian and Central European **Jews** arrive and found Orthodox synagogues. Lebanese and Syrian

immigrants arrive, mostly **Christian** but some may have been **Muslim**.

1890-1960 – Spirit Island, **Native American** holy site at the base of St. Anthony Falls, mined and destroyed.

1924 – US immigration quotas for non-European countries severely tightened.

1924 – Present

1946 – Minneapolis called the “anti-Semitic capital of the US” in a *Common Ground* article by Carey McWilliams.

1948 – **Muslim** Student Association founded at the University of Minnesota [sources differ in this date].

1959 – Ukrainian refugees arrive. Expansion of **Ukrainian Orthodox Church**.

1965 – US immigration quotas for the Middle East and South Asia relaxed.

1974 **Hindu** Mandir founded in former **Methodist** church in Northeast Minneapolis. Move to new temple in 2006 (right).



1970s and on – Immigrants and refugees from South Vietnam, Thailand, and Laos begin to arrive. They establish several **Buddhist** temples in the region.

1980s and 90s – Hmong (from Laos) immigrants bring indigenous **shamanistic** practices. **Russian Jews** and East Africans—Oromo (**Christian**), Ethiopian (**Orthodox Christian**), Somali (**Muslim**)—arrive.

2011 – Church of **Scientology** opens in the former Science Museum of Minnesota in downtown St. Paul.

Timeline created by Jeanne Halgren Kilde, June 2016