

A Visit to the London Muslim Mosque

Connecting With London's Community

The Rev'd Deacon Pat Henderson

I was delighted that approximately 50 people answered Okba and his family's invitation to come to the London Muslim Mosque on Wednesday January 25, 2017 for a tour.

We were greeted by Imam Abd Fatah Twakkal who graciously welcomed us into his community of faith.



He explained that the doors opened in 1964 and since then the London Muslim Mosque has been a growing and flourishing community. It is hailed as the first mosque in Ontario and the second mosque in Canada.

We were invited into the central worship for a question and answer period at which time the Imam explained how Muslims truly live out their lives and their faith in peace.

We then witnessed the evening prayer service and afterwards we were invited to a lecture hall in the lower floor for some more Q & A time together.

At the London Muslim Mosque, they strive to provide service, guidance and support for our community in accordance with the teachings of the Quran & Sunnah towards building a better society.

It is my prayer that there will be an opportunity to continue the engagement and learning for both our communities in the near future.

Information on the Five Pillars of Islam adapted from
<https://www.islam-guide.com/ch3-16.htm>

Their Vision:

To be a holistic Islamic community focused on education, jurisprudence, and social activities

Their Mission:

Provide an environment for spiritual, intellectual, social, and physical balance in accordance with Quran and Sunnah

Their Guiding Principles:

- Follow the Quran and Sunnah in Actions and Words
- Acquire Knowledge, Develop Empathy and then Act
- Adapt with Boundaries in Mind
- Love For Others What We Love For Ourselves and Respect Their Choices
- Operate with Excellence
- Support Environmental & Financial Sustainability
- Follow the Five Pillars of Faith (below) which are the framework of the Muslim life.

1) The Testimony of Faith: The testimony of faith is saying with conviction, "La ilaha illa Allah, Muhammadur rasoolu Allah." This means "There is no true god (deity) but God (Allah), and Muhammad is the Messenger (Prophet) of God." This testimony of faith is the most important pillar of Islam.

2) Prayer: Muslims perform five prayers a day, at dawn, noon, mid-afternoon, sunset, and night. Prayer in Islam is a direct link between the worshipper and God, and in prayer, a person feels inner happiness, peace, and comfort.

3) Giving Zakat: All things belong to God and wealth is therefore held by human beings in trust. The original meaning of the word *zakat* is both 'purification' and 'growth.' Possessions are purified by setting aside a portion for those in need, and, like the pruning of plants, this cutting back balances and encourages new growth.

4) Fasting the Month of Ramadan: Every year in the month of Ramadan, all Muslims fast from dawn until sundown, abstaining from food, drink, and sexual relations. By cutting oneself off from worldly comforts, even for a short time, a fasting person gains true sympathy with those who go hungry, as well as growth in his or her spiritual life.

5) Pilgrimage to Makkah: The annual pilgrimage (Hajj) to Makkah is an obligation once in a lifetime for those who are physically and financially able. The Hajj is performed in the twelfth month of the Islamic calendar. Pilgrims wear simple clothes which strip away distinctions of class and culture so that all stand equal before God. The end of the Hajj is marked by a festival, Eid Al-Adha. This, and Eid al-Fitr, a feast-day commemorating the end of Ramadan, are the two annual festivals of the Muslim calendar.