

# MISSIONS FEST – in ALBERTA

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## What Is Missions Fest?

Missions Fest is a three-day missions conference held annually in Edmonton. It is sponsored and organized by Alberta congregations from many evangelical denominations. The conference goal is to help individuals find the place where their interests and abilities can best be put to use in the Great Harvest. Its purpose is to inform and challenge people of all ages to get involved in relief, charity, and education, by sending, praying, giving and going. Missions Fest Edmonton is a non-profit society registered in the Province of Alberta; it qualifies for tax-exempt status as a registered charity under the Income Tax Act.

## History

In 1984, the first Missions Fest in Vancouver was held under the sponsorship of six local Christian churches. The aggregate attendance was estimated to be 3,600 over the weekend. Since that time, the Vancouver conference has grown and is presently sponsored by 151 Christian churches of most denominations. The aggregate attendance is 35,000.

Other cities hosting Missions Fests are: Winnipeg, Montreal, Toronto, Halifax, Portland, OR. & Southern California.

Edmonton has modeled itself after the Vancouver conference. Its first conference was held in February 1995 with 17 sponsoring churches and an aggregate attendance of 5,500 over the weekend. In eleven years it has grown and is now sponsored by 89 churches with an aggregate attendance of 21,000.

## Who are the Missions Organizations?

They are non-profit, charitable organizations that reach out to people groups around the world to facilitate a better quality of life for people. Although their interests are diverse, most see themselves meeting needs in education, medicine, relief, community and resource development, language encoding, and adult literacy, etc. They also share the hope and freedom found in the teachings of Jesus Christ and interpret them in practical ways such as showing care, love, forgiveness, generosity, respect, and understanding of others.

## What Happens At Missions Fest?

It is a weekend when people of all ages come together to be challenged, informed, and educated in global mission activity by participating in a variety of experiences:

- 140 colorful exhibits, representing organizations that work in most countries around the world, provide current information.
- Speakers of international acclaim give addresses in general assemblies.
- Children (ages 2-5 & Grades 1-6) participate in workshops and programs that raise awareness of the many people groups around the world.
- Youth are challenged to reach out to others during their assemblies and seminars.
- Christian schools are invited for Friday Field Trips.
- Music plays a big part in these gatherings as does a Flag Parade of Nations.
- Seminars are planned throughout the three days. Mission Organizations are invited to submit suggestions for seminars.
- The closing assembly on Sunday, “Sing to the Nations”, is an evening of celebration and brings into focus the joy described in Revelation 5:9 when we will worship with “every tribe and tongue, people and nation” around God’s throne.

## How Is The Conference Financed?

To encourage family attendance, the conference is free to all age groups. Finances are provided in three ways: mission organizations pay a rental fee for exhibit space, local sponsoring churches make an annual contribution and people who attend are invited to make donations.