

# 142,283 people living in Blackpool... All different All equal

## Diversity in Blackpool

### Faith

The Census of 2001 confirms that 78.6% of the local population are Christian, 11.4% say they have no religion and 1.2% belong to other religions including Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh.

Further information on the diversity of Blackpools faith community is available in the Faith Directory, or from the Faith Forum Website [www.interfaithatblackpool.com](http://www.interfaithatblackpool.com).

### Ethnicity

The largest group is White – 98.4% of the population. Non-White groups make up 1.6%. The populations largest groups being Chinese and Asian.

Source - National Census 2001



Festivals of Faith 2007 Blackpool Council and Blackpool Primary Care Trust are committed to equality for all. We are working to promote mutual respect and understanding of the many cultures and faiths that exist within our local communities.

## January

- 1 Shogatsu**  
Shinto New Year.
- 5 Birthday of Guru Gobind Singh (Nanakshahi calendar)**  
Guru Gobind Singh was the tenth and last of the Sikh Gurus. He initiated the 5 Ks and founded the Order of the Khalsa.
- 6 Epiphany**  
Christians celebrate the arrival of the three wise men to visit the infant Jesus.
- 6 Christmas Day (Ethiopian)**  
The spiritual homeland for all Rastafarians is Ethiopia.
- 6 Christmas Day (Armenian Orthodox)**  
Christians celebrate Jesus Christ's birth.
- 6 Theophany (Orthodox)**  
This date marks the baptism of Jesus.
- 7 Christmas Day (Orthodox)**  
Christians celebrate Christ's birth. Many Orthodox churches use the Julian calendar, therefore Christmas is celebrated some days later than other Christians.
- 14 Makar Sankranti**  
Hindus celebrate as night and day stand as equal.
- 14 World Religion Day**  
The aim is to build awareness and an understanding of the harmony that is needed between communities of different faiths in our multicultural society.
- 20 Al-Hijira**  
Islamic New Year.
- 21 Toshi-goi-no-Matsuri - Yakuyoke festival**  
This festival focuses on rights of passage.
- 23 Vasant Panchami**  
This festival denotes the beginning of spring.
- 27 National Holocaust Memorial Day**  
This day marks the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau. First held in 2001.
- 29 Ashura**  
Shiite Muslims commemorate the Martyrdom of the Prophet's grandson, Hussein.
- 31 Birthday of Guru Har Rai (Nanakshahi calendar)**  
Guru Har Rai was the seventh Sikh Guru.

- 18 Chinese New Year**  
Year of the Pig (a Yin year).
- 19 Clean Monday - Beginning of Lent (Orthodox)**  
This day marks the start of lent for Orthodox Christians.
- 20 Shrove Tuesday**  
Christians prepare for lent and ask for forgiveness for their sins. Also known as Pancake Day.
- 21 Ash Wednesday**  
Today marks the start of lent for Western Christian Churches.

## March

- 1 St David's Day**  
Christians commemorate the patron saint of Wales.
- 2 Start of Nineteen day fast**  
Baha'is go without food or drink from sunrise to sunset.
- 2 Women's World Day of Prayer**  
Celebrated on the first Sabbath of each month, women pray with and for one another to strengthen their spiritual bonds.
- 3 Holi**  
The Hindu spring festival.
- 4 Purim**  
Jewish people remember the courage by a Jewish girl called Esther who saved many lives in Persia.
- 17 St Patrick's Day**  
Christians commemorate the patron saint of Ireland.
- 21 Naw-Ruz**  
Bahai New Year.
- 21 Jamshedi Noruz**  
New Year's Day for Zoroastrians, in the Falsi calendar.
- 21 Shubun-sai - Equinox day**  
On this day Japanese people visit the graves of loved ones.
- 21 Spring Equinox**  
Pagans celebrate the rejuvenation that comes with spring.
- 25 Annunciation**  
The Blessed Virgin Mary was told by the angel Gabriel that she would give birth to Jesus.
- 27 Khordad Sal**  
The birthday of Greater Noruz Zoroaster, in the Falsi calendar.
- 27 Rama Navami**  
Birthday of Lord Rama.

## April

- 1 Palm Sunday**  
The entry of Jesus into Jerusalem is remembered and Christians celebrate the beginning of Holy Week.
- 2 Hanuman Jayanti**  
The birth of Hanuman.
- 2 Therevada New Year**  
A three-day festival to mark the New Year.
- 3 Passover**  
Jewish people celebrate over eight days commemorating the Exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt.

- 5 Good Friday**  
Christians commemorate the crucifixion of Jesus.
- 5 Easter (Western & Orthodox)**  
Christians celebrate the resurrection of Jesus from his death.
- 14 Vaisakhi (Baisakhi)**  
Sikhs celebrate the New Year and also the founding of the Khalsar.
- 14 Birthday of Guru Nanak (Nanakshahi calendar)**  
First Guru and founder of the Sikh religion.
- 15 Yom Hashoah**  
This date marks the closest to the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.
- 18 Birthday of Guru Angad Dev (Nanakshahi calendar)**  
Second of the Sikh Gurus.
- 18 Birthday of Guru Tegh Bahadur (Nanakshahi calendar)**  
Ninth of the Sikh Gurus.
- 21 Ridvan**  
The start of Baha'is most important festival lasting 12 days. The Bab declared that Baha'ullah was the prophet.
- 21 Anniversary of Haile Selassie's visit to Jamaica**  
Rastafarians believe Haile Selassie to be their God and that he will liberate them by returning them to Africa.
- 23 St George's Day**  
Christians commemorate the patron saint of England.
- 30 Beltane**  
This festival marks the marriage between Goddess and God. Pagans enjoy traditional maypole dancing.

## May

- 2 Birthday of Guru Arjan Dev (Nanakshahi calendar)**  
Fifth of the Sikh Gurus.
- 2 Wesak or Buddha Day**  
The most significant festival for Buddhists, as they celebrate Buddha's birthday.
- 17 Ascension Day**  
It commemorates the last earthly appearance of the Risen Christ, who, according to Christian belief ascended into heaven in the presence of many witnesses.
- 23 Shavut**  
It is remembered at this time that the first harvest was taken to the Temple.
- 23 Birthday of Guru Amar Das (Nanakshahi calendar)**  
Third of the Sikh Gurus.
- 23 Declaration of the Bab**  
The Bab was the founder of the Bahai faith. He declared the coming of Baha'ullah in May 1844.
- 27 Pentecost - Whitsun**  
Christians celebrate the Holy Spirit's descent upon the disciples.
- 29 Ascension of Baha'ullah**  
Baha'is commemorate the death of Baha'ullah in 1892.
- 3 All Saints Day (Orthodox)**  
All saints are honoured on this day.
- 21 Summer Solstice**  
The longest day of the year.
- 30 Asala - Dharma Day**  
Buddhists celebrate the first of Buddha's teachings. It has become known as 'The Wheel of Truth'.

## June

- 5 Simchat Torah**  
The 'Rejoicing in the Torah' as it is known, marks the completion of the Torah readings for this year.
- 9 Lailat al-Quad - Night of Power (start)**  
Muslims celebrate the revelation of the Quran to the Prophet Muhammad by Allah.
- 11 Navaratri**  
The start of Autumn is celebrated over nine nights.
- 13 Eid-ul-Fitr**  
It is the end of the period of fasting and thanks is given to Allah.

## July

- 9 Martyrdom of the Bab**  
Baha'is commemorate the anniversary of Bab's execution.
- 23 Birthday of Haile Selassie I**  
Rastafarians celebrate the birth of their God.

## August

- 1 Lughnasadh**  
Pagans give thanks for the harvest.
- 11 Lailat al Miraj**  
Muslims celebrate the journey which Prophet Muhammad took from Mecca to Jerusalem before ascending to heaven.
- 17 Birthday of Marcus Garvey**  
Rastafarians celebrate the birthday of the Jamaican politician who started the Back to Africa movement.
- 21 No Ruz**  
This day marks New Years Day in the Shensheshahi calendar.
- 26 Khordad Sal**  
This day marks the birthday of Zoroaster, (Shensheshahi calendar).
- 28 Raksha Bandhan**  
Sisters use threads as a symbol of protection, tying them to the wrists of their brothers as a sign of love.

## September

- 4 Janmashtami - Krishna Jayanti**  
The birth of Lord Krishna is celebrated.
- 11 Ethiopian New Year**  
Ethiopian New Year.
- 13 Rosh Hashanah**  
Jewish New Year.
- 13 Ramadan (start)**  
Muslims begin a period of one month's fasting.
- 15 Ganesh Chaturthi**  
The birthday of Lord Ganesh.
- 22 Yom Kippur**  
The holiest day - Day of Atonement. A day of fasting.
- 23 Harvest Festival**  
Thanks is given for the harvest. It is shared with the less fortunate.
- 27 Sukkot**  
Jewish people commemorate their journey through the desert towards the Promised Land and the guidance received from God.

## October

- 5 Eid-UI-Adha**  
This four-day holiday marks the end of Hajj.
- 21 Winter Solstice**  
The shortest day of the year.
- 24 Christmas Eve**  
The day before Christmas.
- 25 Christmas Day**  
The birth of Jesus Christ is celebrated by Western Christian churches.

- 20 Birth of the Bab**  
Baha'is celebrate the birth of the pre-founder of the faith.
- 21 Dusseera**  
Hindus celebrate the victory of Lord Rama over Ravana.
- 31 Samhain**  
Pagans remember those who have died and celebrate death in this, the Festival of the Dead.

## November

- 1 All Saints' Day**  
All saints are honoured on this day.
- 2 Coronation of Emperor Haile Selassie I**  
Rastafarians see Haile Selassie as their God.
- 9 Diwali**  
The sixth Guru released from prison on Diwali is remembered.
- 9 Diwali**  
The 'Festival of Lights' is celebrated as fireworks light up the skies. The Goddess of Wealth is celebrated.
- 9 Diwali**  
5 day celebrations take place during the 'Festival of Lights'.
- 11 Remembrance Sunday**  
This day marks the commemoration of all the lives lost during World War I and World War II.
- 11 Armistice Day**  
At 11:00am on this day a 2 minute silence is observed to mark the end of the World War I and in memory of the lives lost.
- 12 Birth of Baha'ullah**  
Baha'is celebrate the birth of the founder of their faith.
- 24 Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur (Nanakshahi calendar)**  
Sikhs commemorate the martyrdom of their ninth Guru who was executed for refusing to convert to Islam.
- 24 Birthday of Guru Nanak (Lunar Calendar)**  
First Guru and founder of the Sikh religion.
- 30 St Andrew's Day**  
Christians commemorate the patron saint of Scotland.

## December

- 5 Hannukah**  
The Festival of Lights mark the restoration of the Holy Temple.
- 5 Bodhi Day**  
Some Buddhists celebrate Buddha's Nirvana on this day.
- 19 Hajj (start)**  
This marks the annual pilgrimage to Mecca.
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Note: The dates above are shown using the Gregorian (Western) calendar, however some dates may vary regionally due to the lunar calendar.

Blackpool Council and Blackpool Primary Care Trust have produced this calendar to raise awareness of key religious and faith festivals. It is not an exhaustive list of every faith day or religious festival but it is a start, based on the information from the Multi-Faith Calendar 2007 ([www.multiplefaithcalendar.co.uk](http://www.multiplefaithcalendar.co.uk)). We welcome your comments and feedback - please contact the Faith, Equality and Diversity Unit on 01253 47117.