**Multi-Faith Britain**

**Introduction**
Throughout its history Britain has encompassed a degree of religious diversity (see Section 3: 'The Other': Jews and Saracens), and this was especially the case at the end of the nineteenth century when large numbers of migrants from Russia and Eastern Europe expanded the Jewish community in Britain (see Section 5: Other Faiths). Migrants from throughout the Empire, from China and the Indian subcontinent also journeyed to Britain and established small communities of Hindus, Muslims, and Buddhists. Nevertheless until the period following the end of the Second World War, Britain still conceived of itself in exclusively Christian terms and the relationship between the established church and the state went mostly unquestioned (see Section 5: Interaction with Society). In writing about the British populace for post-war reconstruction, Archbishop William Temple could therefore write in unabashedly Anglican yet inclusive terms of his desires for a more just society in Christianity and the Social Order (1942). In this same year, and as part of this wider programme, Temple also founded with Chief Rabbi Joseph Hertz the inter-faith Council of Christians and Jews.

**Post-war growth in diversity**
The religious complexion of the nation underwent marked change in the decades following the cessation of hostilities, as Britain was affected by profound geopolitical and social changes — the loss of Empire, moves towards European unity, and global immigration on a vastly increased scale. A great many of the new arrivals to Britain came from commonwealth countries seeking work, security, education, and prosperity — from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and the Caribbean, followed more recently by South East Asia and East and West Africa. They also sought, with varying degrees of success, inclusion within the mainstream Christian communities to which they had belonged in their homelands (see Global Context and Mission) and the resulting integration and flowering of alternative Pentecostal churches has changed the face of church congregations and worship (see Daily Life and Worship) by forging a diverse and multi-ethnic British Christianity (see Multi-Cultural Christianity). Most significantly, however, the arrival of substantial non-Christian religious populations in Britain has ended the old congruence between 'Christianity' and 'religion' and turned Britain — to varying extents across the country, and with marked variation between urban and rural centres — into a multi-faith society.

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**Key:**
- Interactive glossary terms
- Links to other pages on the DVD-ROM

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