

# Emirates Baptist Church International (EBCI)

## Dubai, United Arab Emirates

### BRIEF PROFILE

July 2019

#### ABOUT EBCI

Emirates Baptist Church International (EBCI) is a Baptist church based in Dubai in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) comprising expatriate believers who speak English. The weekly worship services are held in a hotel on Fridays, the official start of a weekend in the UAE. Currently, the average attendance on a Friday morning is between 150 and 200 across the worship service, children's church and pre-school. There are about 150 members and another between 100-150 persons that are regular attendees. The Statement of Faith and Statement of Baptist Principles clearly articulate what EBCI stands for and are available to its members.



Till recently, EBCI was led by Pastors (senior and associate) and Deacons with the Deacons charged with serving the church besides assisting the Pastors. In Nov 2013, the congregation agreed to separate the offices of the Pastors and the Deacons to focus on the ministry of the word and ministry of the table respectively.

EBCI continues to pursue recognition by the local government as a separate legal entity; something which has not yet come to pass because the current regulatory environment does not provide for such registration or licensing. Meanwhile, EBCI is part of a wider body in the UAE called the Council of Evangelical Churches through whom its Pastoral staff is provided with residence visas to serve as Pastors in the UAE.

## HISTORY

EBCI was established in 1997 by a group of 28 believers, led by the Holy Spirit to establish a New Testament church with the Lord & Savior Jesus Christ as her head, for the purpose of worshipping God, witnessing to His saving grace, living as Christians in this world, and ministering to the needs of people, to the glory of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Ever since, this body of believers has been striving to fulfill the purpose for which Christ established His church.

## CONGREGATION PROFILE

The congregation at EBCI is very diverse with people from over 25 nationalities, comprising families, and children of all age groups, youth and singles. While they may have chosen to attend or join a Baptist church, they come from diverse denominational backgrounds from their home countries. Given that the entire membership and attendees are expatriates, they live in the country either because they are employed here or because they own and operate an enterprise. Most of them live within a 30 to 40 kilometer radius of the church. There is also a mix in the tenure of people attending EBCI which is reflective of the population turnover.

## MISSION

A church community that seeks to glorify God by making disciples for Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit

## PURPOSE

Word | Worship | Prayer | Community | Ministry | Missions

## STRATEGY

### Celebration Services

The church assembled to encounter the Living God together – to offer praise & worship to Christ, to be strengthened and encouraged by the preaching of the Word, resulting in obedience to God and living a Christ-centered life.

### Small Groups

The church organized into small groups to evangelize the lost, disciple believers, pray together and experience community of believers.

### Personalized, Strategic 'Glocal' Missions

The entire church personally and intentionally involved in world missions through prayer, witness, short-term missions, specific projects and financial gifts. It is part of the International Baptist Convention.

## MINISTRIES

EBCI seeks to fulfill its mission through the following currently active ministries:

### Worship Services

The weekly worship services are held on Friday mornings at 11:00am preceded by Friday School for all age groups which start at 10:00am and typically last for 45 minutes. Worship services typically comprise times of worship through songs and praises, prayers, bringing of tithes, gifts and offerings and preaching of the word of God. Currently, Communion Services are scheduled on the first Friday of every month.

### Friday School Bible Studies

On Friday mornings, Bible studies are conducted before the regular worship service, for age groups above 6 years. It is an area of focus at EBCI for Discipleship and is scheduled so that all members of a family can attend Bible study at the same time.

### Missions Ministry

EBCI as a church seeks to be a faithful witness of the gospel and take this message to those that have not yet heard about Jesus. The church is engaged with the local community as well as in other countries where it works alongside other churches and para-church agencies.

### Small Groups

A number of small groups meet around the city in the homes of members on a weekly basis for a time of fellowship, prayer and study of the word of God. This is another area of focus of EBCI in Discipleship for its members.

### Men's Ministry

The men meet once a month to fellowship and encourage one another through experience sharing, testimonies and exaltations. The ministry also provides the opportunity for men to interact, know one another better and grow together in the Lord.

### Women's Ministry

Ladies meet every Monday morning for a Bible study. The ministry organizes other activities which involve "mother /daughter" emphasis and other seminars and conferences to build up "Godly women" in the congregation.

### Youth Ministry

EBCI youth ministry focused on ages 12 to 18 years is called 180<sup>0</sup> which is reflective of the complete change in the lives of an individual when he or she encounters Christ. It is based on the key verse, "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has gone, the new has come." *2 Corinthians 5:17*. The youth meet every Thursday at the hotel venue of our weekly worship from 6:30pm to 8:30pm and on Friday mornings during the Friday School hour (10:00am to 10:45am). Besides this, they have some fun and spiritual activities planned through the year.

### Children's Church

It caters to the pre-school age group and children of ages 5 to 11. They are led by adult members taking turns during the worship service every Friday to teach the gospel message through Bible stories, testimonies, songs and prayer.

### AWANA

EBCI hosts an AWANA club (Approved Workmen Are Not Ashamed) which works along with parents to develop spiritually strong children who faithfully follow Jesus Christ. The program is scheduled every Thursday evening over a 2 hour period and comprises three distinct sessions for memorizing Bible verses, council time and play time.

### Music Ministry

This ministry is led by volunteers who are utilizing their musical talents that God has gifted them with, to offer praise to the Creator. Different worship teams rotate in leading worship each week. The church choir presents yearly a Christmas Cantata open to the public proclaiming the Gospel message. The Youth and Children's Church normally take part periodically in this ministry.

### Hospitality

The Hospitality committee facilitates opportunities for fellowship by getting the flock (members, regular attendees and visitors) together on several occasions ensuring that "potluck" spreads reflect the national and ethnic diversity of the church. It also takes care of providing coffee and refreshments before and after worship services and other events, for members and worshippers.