



Church & Community Profile

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Church Profile

HISTORY OF DBICC

DBICC is a Bible based English language church. We began as a home group when tent makers Randy and Jennifer Strode came to Hong Kong in the fall of 1996. Pastor Randy, a graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary, oversaw the growth from a small home group to a church when at 4:00 pm on August 2, 1998 weekly Sunday services began at a facility subleased from another church. In September 2002 service times changed to 10 AM when DBICC moved to its own facility at 402 Marina Commercial Centre. The time change and the larger venue helped drive some significant growth, especially with our children's ministry.

After 9 years of dedicated service in Discovery Bay, Pastor Randy & Jennifer felt it was time to move back to the US. Pastor Chuck Crabtree and his wife Violet assumed the responsibility of Interim Pastor in April 2005.

Pastor Brad Hicks took over from Pastor Chuck when he arrived in July 2006 with his wife Carol and daughters Zoe & Ellen. In addition to shepherding a growing flock, he orchestrated a move to larger, more visible and convenient facilities at Discovery Collage. In May 2009, the Hicks moved back to the US.

From May until the end of October 2009 the church continued to function under the leadership of the elder board. A pastor search was conducted and on 1st November 2009 James and Bonnie Buckner accepted the pulpit call. James is a Master of Divinity graduate from Columbia International University and for 26 years served in Hong Kong as a church planter, field director and pastor with Overseas Missionary Fellowship (OMF). James will retire from DBICC in the summer of 2018.

AFFILIATION

Discovery International Community Church ("DBICC") is affiliated with the Evangelical Free Church of China ("EFCC"). It is one of around 50 Evangelical Free churches in Hong Kong. The EFCC has been working in China since 1887 when the Evangelical Free Church of America sent out its first missionary to Canton (now Guangzhou), China. After the Second World War, missionaries were forced to move to Hong Kong where churches have enjoyed a fruitful ministry for years. The EFCC also ministers to the needs of the people of Hong Kong through the Evangel Hospital, the Evangel Theological Seminary, and the Evangel Children's Home.

LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE

We are a congregationally lead Church with an elected elder board comprised of the Pastor and four elders. The elders are elected at the Annual General Meeting for a term of 1 year, renewable each year up to a maximum of 3 consecutive years. Team Leaders are appointed by the Elder Board to take charge of specific responsibilities e.g. missions, finance and Sunday School education. Their appointment is reviewed annually. The DBICC Charter which was published in March 2002, is based on the biblical authority cited in Acts 20:28 and Hebrews 13:17

OUR DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

We believe in one true God, Creator of all things and Lord of the universe, eternally existing in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, being true God and true man, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He died on the cross for the atonement of mankind's iniquities, so that man may be delivered from the condemnation and power of sin. Further arose from the dead, ascended into heaven, where at the right hand of the Father,



He now sits as the Advocate and High priest interceding for the saints. He is also the Head of the church, and will come visibly again from heaven to establish His kingdom and to judge the living and the dead.

We believe that all authority in heaven and earth was given to Jesus Christ after His bodily resurrection. Therefore, it is the duty of every believer to be involved in spreading the good news of salvation in Christ by making disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity, who descended on the day of Pentecost to glorify Christ and continues His ministry today by convicting sinners, granting new birth, and indwelling and empowering believers for victorious and holy living. Therefore, He unites them into one body, the Church of Christ.

We believe that man was created in the image of God to worship Him eternally, but became spiritually dead because of disobedience to God. When Adam our forefather and representative sinned, all sinned in him, and all were born in sin with a corrupt nature. Thus all live under the wrath of God. Yet God in His Grace revealed Christ and offers cleansing by Christ's blood to remove us of our sinful condition as we respond in sincere repentance and accept Christ's redemption for us individually. We believe this to be the work of regeneration by the Holy Spirit necessary for every believer. Therefore, Heaven, God's eternal abode, awaits for all who have trusted in Christ and long to be in the presence of God.

We believe that salvation is a gift of God and can only be received by faith in Jesus Christ alone. Salvation can be found in no one else, because no other name was given to mankind for the forgiveness of his or her sins that he or she might be saved.

We believe that Water Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances to be observed by the church during the present age. They are, however, not to be regarded as means of salvation.

We believe the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, to be the inspired Word of God, the living Word of life, wholly truthful and trustworthy, and the final authority for all Christian faith and life.

We believe that all men will be resurrected, the believers to eternal life and heavenly blessings, and the unbelievers condemned to eternal death in hell.

We believe that Satan is the devil, the source of all evil. He is working in the hearts of disobedient men, and will one day receive eternal punishment.

CONGREGATION AND CHURCH GOVERNMENT

DBICC is a multi-cultural congregation representing more than a dozen nationalities. Many are Chinese from Hong Kong, mostly having received some form of education overseas. A significant number of other ethnic Chinese congregants are from other countries e.g. Malaysia, Singapore, Australia, Canada and the U.K. There is a large contingent of non-Chinese predominantly from Africa (South Africa), Asia (Philippines, Korea), Australia, Europe and North America.

Church worship on Sunday takes place within a new **theatre** at the "Discovery College" in the heart of DB. Our English service commences at 10:00 am and goes to 11:20 am. Our worship style can be described as casual, informal and chorus centric. We have several full-time home-makers, almost all other adult members are white-collar professions (teachers, bankers, accountants, businessmen, pilots, etc.) Most belong in the upper middle-income bracket. Our service has an attendance ranging from 120-150, of which about 65+ are members. We have around a dozen pre-teens and teenagers. Our K.I.D.S. Church (nursery to 13 yrs) has around 50 to 70 participants. Many attendees have come to Hong Kong on short-term contracts of 2-4 years. Each December and June, we say good-bye to many families. God has filled their seats and brought increase through the years. The present economic downturn has had little impact on our Church and we have always met our budgetary needs.



We are a congregationally lead Church and have a Church Charter. DBICC has an elder board comprised of the Pastor and two/four other elders elected annually at the Annual General Meeting (the “AGM”) for a term of 1 year, renewable yearly up to a maximum of 3 consecutive years. Currently, elder candidates are limited. Team Leaders are appointed by the Elder Board to take charge of specific responsibilities e.g. missions, finance and Sunday School education. Their appointment is reviewed yearly.

STAFF

DBICC has staff of two excluding the Pastor. They are:

General Ministries Coordinator – three-quarter time responsible for event coordination and administrative needs of the Pastor and the church.

Children’s Ministries Coordinator – three-quarter time responsible for K.I.D.S. (Kids In Divine Service) Church, K.I.D.S. Community, programme and event leader for children.

Our Volunteers - not a strength, given their busy schedules and busy lives of those who attend at DBICC.

MINISTRIES

K.I.D.S. Ministries - K.I.D.S. Community encompasses four age groups meeting on Sundays at K.I.D.S. Church:

- Nursery (up to 2.5 years)
- Jr. kids (2.5 to 5 years)
- Sr. kids (6 – 10 years)
- xTreme (11-13 years)
- Souled Out (14-18 years)

DB is populated by young families with young children. We consider K.I.D.S. Church a vital ministry within the church and an excellent bridge or connecting point to our community.

Small groups – Three home groups, one man’s bible study group, one woman’s bible study (“Precept”) group, one woman’s discipleship group, and a mom-to-mum’s group. Our weekly calendar is full of opportunities to get connected and be encouraged by others.

Youth – DB offers few resources for teens, including church-based youth activities and Bible studies. We are preparing to set up a bible study home group for teenagers.

Missions/Outreach – DBICC has sponsored mission trips to Mongolia and Laos. We also sponsor local missionaries. Locally, we provide fun and recreation for the children of Evangel Children’s Home.

Sports & Recreation – Weekly ongoing activities are available to help newcomers get connected.

Worship Ministry – Our worship ministry is made up 4 rotational teams, including a Filipina Choir.



Filipina Ministry – Domestic helpers from the Philippines meeting Sunday afternoon for bible study, choir rehearsals, street evangelism activities (“Evangelism Explosion”) and prison evangelism outreaches

Prayer Ministry – Meeting for intercession every Sunday morning before the service, and offering personal prayer after each Sunday morning service

Community Profile

GENERAL INFORMATION

Hong Kong, literally meaning a “fragrant harbour”, is one the world’s largest shipping container ports. Hong Kong is also a busy metropolitan business center. Most of the major corporations of the world have offices here. The personnel they send to Hong Kong bring together a mixture of race and nationalities from across the world. The pace of life is very fast and social pressures at work and home is a part of the culture here.

Although most local residents speak Cantonese, one can function easily using only the English language. With a population of more than 7 million people, Hong Kong remains a safe place to live and one can feel quite safe to wander about, even late at night.

The weather in Hong Kong is hot and humid in the summer, but most indoor space is well air-conditioned. Autumn is generally sunny and cooler. Winter is mostly overcast and cooler, but never freezes and rarely frosts. Pollution is a concern for those with asthma related concerns.

GOVERNMENT

July 1, 1997 marked a historic event in Hong Kong., After 156 years under British rule, Hong Kong became a part of the People’s Republic of China. It is now designated as a Special Administrative Region (SAR). As such, it presently enjoys the same economic and religious freedoms as before. In fact, very little has changed in everyday life.

HONG KONG - HOW IT NEEDS ‘THE GOOD NEWS’

Hong Kong can be said to be dynamic and in a constant state of flux – in one moment, it is considered the world’s top city to do business, with its efficient infrastructure and abundant financial and human resources . . . the next, a city struggling to maintain its prosperity, especially in these very days of economic downturn.

Generally, Hong Kong people work long hard hours, often just making ends meet. There are some that do so for personal gain, however whatever the motive, underlying busyness, anxiety and uncertainty prevail. People are searching for something secure, unchanging . . . something to believe in (In DB, we find a post-secular European community and a pre-Christian Asian Community).

The Church can help people to find the confidence they seek and the assurance they need for the future. The Christian message of light and hope can break through the doom and gloom.



Furthermore, Hong Kong still being a “gateway” in many ways to the rest of China, the local church can play a crucial role in spurring the spiritual awakening of the “sleeping Dragon” (albeit with political sensitivity). What an exciting time to be in Hong Kong for the spread of the Gospel in China/Asia.

LIFE IN DISCOVERY BAY

Community life in Discovery Bay (DB) centers around the Plaza (Piazza), DB North Plaza and the Residents Club. The Plaza is located at the ferry pier with an open piazza that has a number of shops and restaurants surrounding it. Families gather in this area for a coffee (espresso houses), a burger (McDonalds), pizza, or Subway sandwiches on weekends, as they meet with friends and play outdoors. DB North Plaza is adjacent to [Auberge Hotel](#). This serves as second open plaza for the community, and visitors also offering dining, supermarket, recreational, medical centre etc. The cost of living is higher (groceries & restaurants) in DB than in Hong Kong.

DB currently has two residents clubs that all residents can join for a monthly fee. Besides the residential clubs, there is a golf club (expensive) and a private marina club for boaters.

DBICC services are located in Discovery College a premium venue in DB. DB is a resort-like community of homes found on the northeast coast of Lantau Island. Many chose to live here, as it provides low-density apartments, many recreational activities, a safe fun environment for children and easy access to the Hong Kong International Airport. The current population is around 17, 000 with over 30 nationalities represented. Around half of the population are expatriates. The other half are both local and overseas Chinese – most of whom speak moderate to fluent English.

DB was conceived by a single developer, the Hong Kong Resorts Company (“HKR”), which owns all the property and manages the whole area. Construction of DB began in the early 1980’s and now has over 12 different residential areas of mostly low to mid-rise apartment flats. There are a few stand-alone homes in DB. Apartments are called “flats” and range in size from 500 to 1200 sq. feet. For an expatriate couple/family of four – a home in the 800 - 1000 square foot range would be considered average for a typical DB resident.

The development has a water frontage, restaurants and a grocery store catering to residents. There are the usual amenities including, post office, health & dental clinics, drug store and hardware store. DB is connected to the rest of Hong Kong by a 30-minute ferry and/or public buses to our local subway (Mass Transit Railway or MTR). There are taxi services from the North Plaza of DB to other parts of Hong Kong.

There are two Cantonese churches, two Filipino churches and three English churches. These churches represent Anglican, Missionary & Alliance and Catholic congregations. DBICC speaks of itself as the community church for DB.

EDUCATION IN DISCOVERY BAY

DB has five kindergartens and five primary schools. English speaking children cannot attend local primary schools unless they are prepared to receive instruction in Cantonese. The alternative is to attend a private international school or government subsidized – English School Foundation schools (<http://www.esf.edu.hk/index.aspx>). There is no guarantee that children living in DB will attend a school in DB. Middle school and high school children often travel to Hong Kong (West Island & South Island ESF).



Because of the sheer number of young children living in DB, there are many types of extracurricular educational and sporting activities.

MEDICAL SERVICES IN DISCOVERY BAY

There are two private medical clinics in DB and one dental clinic. Costs are relatively low, but most people have some sort of private insurance, which is attainable in Hong Kong. There are several excellent private hospitals in Hong Kong, but most local people use the government system, which is nearly free for all services. Tung Chung, 20 minutes by bus from DB, operates a local government hospital and has good services for newborns.

SPECIAL INFORMATION ABOUT DISCOVERY BAY

DB is well known as the residential spot for families with small children or ones expecting children. Young children have many opportunities to make friends and moms have many of other moms to form baby groups, play-groups and hold other social events.

HKR does an excellent job in hosting many festivals in DB that are popular with residents, such as: Dragon Boat Festival, Mid-Autumn Festival, flea markets and other various holiday events to draw residents and visitors from outer Hong Kong out to create a festive atmosphere.

DB is a lovely, safe, fun environment for families in Hong Kong. It is a unique, resort-like area. There are no private vehicles with the exception of golf carts; due to a restricted number of golf carts licenses, be prepared for golf cart/license price as high as a BMW elsewhere in the world. Most residents rely on public transportation which includes frequent bus service and minivans which can be hired on demand to take you around DB. It is an easy commute to more “local” communities and the big city. The downside to living in an expatriate dominated community is that friends do tend to eventually move on and new friends need to be made – but with such a great community, that is always an easy task.

WEBSITES

Discovery Bay International Community Church - www.dbicc.org

Hong Kong Resorts - <http://www.discoverybay.com.hk/>

Discovery Bay Forum - <http://www.dbayforum.com>

Hong Kong Tourism Board - <http://www.discoverhongkong.com/eng/index.html>

English School Foundation - <http://www.esf.edu.hk/index.aspx>

Hong Kong Government - <http://www.gov.hk/en/residents/>