

JAVEA INTERNATIONAL BAPTIST CHURCH (JIBC), CHURCH PROFILE - SEPTEMBER 2024

THE TOWN OF JAVEA/XABIA

Javea is a small town on the Costa Blanca. It has been a centre of population for over 3,000 years. Developed by the Romans as a commercial and fishing port, and later colonised by Moors, it was impacted by Christian monasticism in the 6th century.



Javea is a prosperous town (apparently the 6th most affluent in Spain), with an attractive coastline, surrounded by hills, and beautiful

countryside. It is situated halfway between two major international airports: Valencia to the north and Alicante to the south. These are reached by road and are each about an hour and a half away by car.

Today the town has a resident population of approximately 27,500 people, with nearly 45% of that number coming from the UK, the Netherlands, Canada, USA, USSR, Columbia, Germany, France, Cuba, et al. Statistics from the town council seem to indicate that about 750 locally born residents are leaving the town each year. Of the incomers, approximately 50% are English





speakers. Published figures indicate that visitors would total 4 times the number of Javea residents during the summer period of the year.

JAVEA INTERNATIONAL BAPTIST CHURCH

JIBC began to emerge as an offshoot of Denia Baptist Church in 1992. Links with the USA, European Baptist Federation, and the Baptist Union of Great Britain (BUGB) have been in evidence over the years with the strength of those relationships varying significantly over that time. JIBC is a member of the East Midlands Baptist Association of BUGB and is required also under the terms of the Church Licence to hold membership of FERED (Federation of Evangelical



Entities)

The Christian context of JIBC is unusual. Like practically all non-Catholic churches in Spain, JIBC is regarded as a sect by the Government. It is licensed by the

Ministry of Justice via FERED which processes the licence. This legal position severely restricts some activities, such as outdoor acts of worship (baptism) and evangelism, which can require police and local authority permissions.

The nearest Baptist congregation is in the large town of Denia, is multilingual, and numbers about 400. In or close to Javea, aside from Catholic churches, there is a small chapel used by the Anglican communion (traditional in worship and small in numbers), and a Spanish-speaking Baptist community (El Faro), and a small church at Benitaxell (including some who previously worshipped at JIBC). There is also a group of half a dozen former members of JIBC who wanted to develop a Café Style Church following COVID. The Jehovah's Witnesses have a place of

worship, as does the Islamic community, which is described as fundamentalist - and on account of which we have been advised to lock the church door during worship. The church rents a small building in the Old Town of Javea for €1089 a month but aspires to buying its own premises in due course and by Gods leading.

Pastoral leadership is currently provided through “the Squad”, a team of pastors drawn from the UK and USA, working together to provide leadership for up to three months at a time (the legal limit for non-EU passport-holders). The availability of members of the Squad is seriously impacted by international visa regulations and Brexit, which in turn put pressure on financial resources.

JIBC has a well-established set of values, carefully worked through with a previous pastor. They place Jesus at the Centre, and embrace the importance of Church Family, Evangelism, Outreach, Discipleship, and Service.



JIBC believes that its primary calling is to reach English speaking ex-pats for Christ

In November 2023, the church adopted the following **Vision Statement**, which it is earnestly seeking to follow:

For the glory of God, JIBC aims to be:

- ***a church of prayerful, Spirit-filled believers united in seeking to grow more like Jesus***
- ***committed to reaching into the community, leading people to faith in Jesus and making disciples***



Membership is around 30, with a Leadership Team of four. A significant percentage of the members / attendees are of retirement age. Several of them are not resident in Javea all the year round but split their time between Javea and their home country. JIBC also welcomes a number of people who visit Javea on a regular basis for holiday, though not necessarily for long periods of time. These factors cause numbers present on a Sunday to fluctuate at various times of the year.

Attracted to JIBC's Bible-based teaching and the church's openness to the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the congregation is drawn from a range of Christian backgrounds. Some members of JIBC travel as far as 30 kilometres to attend worship, though most live in the town or nearby

JIBC meets every Sunday at 10.30 am for Morning Worship, with Communion normally being held on 1st and 3rd Sundays in the month. We have Sunday school each week to coincide with 'sermon time' and crèche facilities can be available. The pattern of our worship varies but we always include scripture – typically supporting the sermon – with prayer, and hymns/worship songs, with opportunities for prayer as the Spirit leads, and sometimes testimonies. Because of a current lack of musicians, sung worship depends on recorded material. At the close of services, Prayer Ministry is available, in confidence, to meet the prayer needs of the Fellowship and visitors. Coffee and tea are served in our Café area, as we continue fellowship following our services.

Prayer Ministry

Regular Prayer Meetings are held bi - weekly in the Church, all are encouraged to attend, and normally once per month in the Church all life groups join together.

Life Groups

We have five well attended Life Groups, most with about 8-10 members. The emphasis within the groups is **Discipleship**, with the groups meeting once a week

in homes, except on the third Wednesday of each month when there is normally a joint prayer time or training course at the Church Centre. The study material is generally linked to our teaching and sermon programs.



Mission

We support two missions currently Acacia, (Assisting Communities and Children in Africa, and Youth for Christ in Moldova and receive monthly updates from them. JIBC were instrumental in commencing financial support for the building of a new Church and Community Centre in Zimbabwe for Acacia, the final large donation to complete the centre from one of our Fellowship.



Baptism



Since our church building is rented, we do not have an internal Baptistry and rely in main on using fellowship swimming pools, albeit we have had a Baptism in the sea, following approval from the council, with their imposed restrictions on the content of the service with limited Christian content (No worship music).



Ambitions of JIBC for the Future

To improve our ability to reach and attract youth and make relevant to them what we can offer including worship services to meet their needs and grow them both socially and spiritually.

In addition, we have seen more young families attending Sunday Services, many of which have recently moved to Javea. Some have become regular attendees and have integrated with the JIBC family. We pray that this growth area will continue and through that JIBC will be re-energised as the church moves forward.

To start "Home Mission" by identifying and supporting those within the Javea area who are in need, adopting our Vision Statement to support our local communities.

Community Outreach

The Meeting Place is a weekly drop-in time at the Church Centre café on Tuesday Mornings.

Chair Aerobics - We have a new outreach commencing autumn 2024 of gentle exercise, commencing on Tuesdays prior to The Meeting Place.

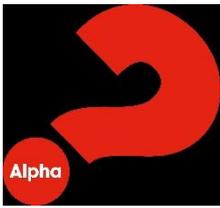
Film Night - Monthly we normally operate a film night on a Friday, enabling people to join us in a non-threatening way, with a glass of wine and finger food to share in fellowship and then a good film.

Breakfasts - A bi-monthly program of breakfasts on Saturday mornings in local restaurants or the Golf Club, with a speaker. (Usually a Christian subject or testimony) Our members are encouraged to bring a non-believing friend along.

"Awesome Walkers". Several of our members are involved in a secular walking group which explores the wonderful local countryside; there are opportunities to connect with non-Christian visitors and local residents through the group.



One Christmas outreach is our **'Carols in the Port'**, open air carol singing in the Port Square next to all the cafes. We invite other local Church congregations to join us in this opportunity to reach both locals and visitors. We hand out carol books to all those enjoying a coffee in the sunshine just before Christmas and are well received (and generally people want to make a donation which goes to a charity we support).



We are commencing an internal Alpha, autumn 2024 to involve the Fellowship and leading on to an external Alpha in 2025, along with previous Alpha courses we have also used Freedom in Christ, Shape Course and The Bible Course.

Pastoral Leadership *(see the church's Pastor Profile for detail)*

The Church is looking for a pastor who would maintain its strong tradition of biblically-based preaching and who would be capable of leading significant outreach into the ex-pat community in the town.

We are searching across the globe for the right candidate to Pastor the church, who may well come from outside the BU system but will wholeheartedly support our Baptist ethos and values. We recognise that that we have to be flexible in being able to arrive at an agreement with the correct candidate.

The Post is for a pastor who would work approximately half time on a house-for-duty basis. As a manse, the church recently bought a modern third-story duplex which has 3 bedrooms, is well furnished and is ideally positioned. JIBC has also been gifted a modern, well-presented car for the Pastor's use.



Safeguarding Policy

Spain has recently adopted Safeguarding through the Criminal Law for the protection of vulnerable children and adults. We are working through the documentation with the help of FEREDDE and look to adopt their policy in due course. In the meantime, JIBC has adopted a Safeguarding Policy in line with BUGB guidelines and following online training via BUGB. New workers / Pastors from the UK would be asked for evidence of CRB checks in the requirements, and those from other countries would be expected to produce similar evidence of the compliance of safeguarding from their own country which will be compared to ensure the church is in compliance.

Please contact: Peter Ball (Church Secretary) at Peterball215@gmail.com or
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