

Bret has served as the pastor of Bay Ridge Christian Church since December, 1993. He is a graduate of the US Naval Academy (1983) and Reformed Theological Seminary (2005). Prior to becoming a pastor, Bret spent 5 years as a Marine Corps officer, and several years as a computer programmer.

Bret has been married to Linda since 1984, and they have been blessed with four wonderful children - Timothy (1986), Jeremy (1987), Jonathan (1989), and Stephanie (1991) - and two wonderful grandsons, Josh (2011), and Owen (2012), and a beautiful granddaughter Kahlan (2012).

A brief testimony from Bret follows:

I was born on July 8, 1961 to Jerry and Carolyn Hicks in Shreveport, Louisiana. Due to my father's increasing responsibilities for Nabisco, we were forced to move fairly often. Thus in my younger years I lived in Dallas, Atlanta and the suburbs of Chicago, until we finally moved to Woodbury, Georgia in the early 1970's, where we stayed for the remainder of my childhood.

Though both my father and mother had been raised in the church, they did not raise my younger sister or I within the Christian faith. In fact, I can only remember attending a church meeting a handful of times prior to my fourteenth birthday. While in high school, however, God began to work in my life. I began to attend a local Southern Baptist Church, although my reasons for attending were more social than spiritual. Nonetheless, I made a public "profession" of faith while I was fifteen years old. However, though God had begun to convict me of my sin, I had not yet been truly converted. In fact, at this point there was no discernible change in my life for I had never truly repented of my sin and found faith in Christ.

During my Junior year in High School I began to attend a local bible study. During the course of this study I was finally soundly converted by the Spirit of God. I began to apply myself to learn the Word of God and to seek out fellowship with God's people. The remainder of my high school years became a time of great spiritual growth, as I learned to walk with God and attempted to share my faith with those around me. I was even given the privilege of teaching at the Baptist Church I attended on a couple of occasions and discovered that I had a gift of teaching the Word of God.

In July of 1979 I came to the US Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. During my years at the Academy I continued to be trained by more mature believers, and eventually became a member of the New Covenant Church in Annapolis. During this time I continued to grow in my ability to teach the Word and to help lead other believers to a more mature faith.

During my Junior year at the Academy I began to sense that God has placed a call on my life to be a pastor. I also believed that God was going to place me in leadership

within the New Covenant Church in Annapolis. This belief became a driving force within my life for the next thirteen years.

Upon my graduation from the Academy in 1983 I was commissioned as an officer in the US Marine Corps. In 1984 I was married to my wife Linda. During this year we moved to North Carolina and then to Okinawa, Japan, where I served as a leader within the church. My wife also served on the worship team, and we led a small group meeting within the church. I also began to study as much as I could on my own to prepare myself for the pastorate in the future.

After our return to the States in 1985, God began to bless my wife and I with children. We had four children over the next four and a half years (Timothy, 1986; Jeremy, 1987; Jonathan, 1989; Stephanie, 1991). During this time I completed my time in the Marine Corps, and we returned to Annapolis to rejoin the New Covenant Church. We served the church in various capacities (nursery directors, small group leaders, Sunday school teachers), and I was employed as a computer programmer. The church went through some very difficult times (and changed its name to Bay Ridge Christian Church), but my wife and I remained, convinced that God had called us to serve this local church.

In November of 1993 I was asked by the elders of the church to become the pastor of the church. I accepted this call and was ordained and set in by the elders and leaders from other local churches. Due to the small size of the church, I continued to work as a computer programmer for the next 18 months. As the church grew and became stable, however, I was able to shift to full time work for the church in April 1995.

My greatest passions in ministry are to teach the Word of God and help develop a vital local church so that people can experience the abundant life that Christ came to provide for them.

~Bret