



discover
yourself

One-hour experiences to help you
connect *at Atlantic Shores*

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

table of contents

WELCOME TO YOUR
DISCOVERY EXPERIENCES!

- 1 discover **JESUS 101**
 - 2 discover **ATLANTIC SHORES 201**
 - 3 discover **COMMUNITY LIFE 301**
 - 4 discover **YOUR DIVINE DESIGN 401**
- APPENDIX
ANSWERS



welcome

TO YOUR DISCOVERY
EXPERIENCES!

Stories of explorers who discovered new worlds and old treasures fill history books. Their names include Columbus, Magellan, Lewis, and Clark. But there are still discoveries to be made, spiritual discoveries right here at Atlantic Shores Baptist Church, and your name is among the list of explorers.

We designed a series of one-hour Discovery experiences to assist you in taking the next steps and to help you get connected at Atlantic Shores.

They include Discover Jesus 101 (online), Discover Atlantic Shores 201, Discover Community Life 301, and Discover Your Divine Design 401.

We look forward to helping you discover yourself.



discover **JESUS 101**

*The greatest discovery of your life is to get to know God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, God's Son and our Savior. The best news you'll ever hear is the gospel of Jesus Christ. Learn what this good news is all about and make the discovery of your lifetime in the online experience we call **discover JESUS 101**.*

discover JESUS 101

OVERVIEW

Q The Bad News

Q The Good News

Q Suggested Salvation Prayer

The word “gospel” means _____.

What’s so good about the good news?

_____ about us;

_____ about God

Q The Bad News

1. We are all _____.

As it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.” **ROMANS 3:10-12**

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

ROMANS 3:23

We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

ISAIAH 64:6

But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear. **ISAIAH 59:2**

discover JESUS 101

2. The penalty for sin is _____.

For the wages of sin is death. **ROMANS 6:23**

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins.
EPHESIANS 2:1

"You must be born again." **JOHN 3:7**

Q The Good News

1. God _____ you and sent His Son Jesus
to die on the cross for your sins.

*"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that
whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."*
JOHN 3:16

*But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners,
Christ died for us.* **ROMANS 5:8**

God doesn't want something _____ you;

He did something _____ you.

2. By _____ in the Lord Jesus Christ,
you can be _____ and receive the free
gift of _____.

discover JESUS 101

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. **EPHESIANS 2:8-9**

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. **ROMANS 6:23**

If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. **ROMANS 10:9**

“And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” **ACTS 4:12**

Q Suggested Salvation Prayer

Dear God,

I am sorry for breaking your laws and for the things I have done wrong in my life. I ask for your forgiveness and now turn from everything that I know is sin. Thank you for sending your Son Jesus to die on the cross for my sins and to set me free. Please come into my life, fill me with your Holy Spirit, help me live for You, and be with me forever.

In the name of Your Son Jesus I pray, Amen.



discover

ATLANTIC SHORES **201**

This one-hour experience is for newcomers who want to discover more about Atlantic Shores Baptist Church. Discover our sacred mission, vision and ministry strategy, plus the dream and destiny God has for you and your family through His church. You'll also discover why membership at Shores matters, what it means, and how to formally join the church.

discover ATLANTIC SHORES 201

OVERVIEW

Q The Importance of Being Baptized

Q The Church Jesus is Building

Q Our Mission, Vision, and Strategy

Q What We Believe

Q How We Lead

Q Our Affiliation

Q Membership

Q Membership Covenant

Q Membership Application

Q The Importance of Being Baptized

“Baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.” **MATTHEW 28:19-20**

The Bible speaks of two baptisms: water and Spirit baptism.

Why Should I Be Baptized in Water?

1. To follow the example set by Jesus Christ.

At that time Jesus came from Nazareth and was baptized by John. **MARK 1:9**

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water.
MATTHEW 3:16

discover ATLANTIC SHORES 201

2. Because Christ commands it.

Jesus said, "Go then, to all people everywhere and make them my disciples, baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and then teach them to obey everything I have commanded you." **MATTHEW 28:19-20**

And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

ACTS 2:38

3. It says to the world, "I'm a follower of Jesus!"

Many people who heard him were baptized. **ACTS 18:8**

We know that we have come to know him, if we obey his commands. **1 JOHN 2:3**

What is the Meaning of Water Baptism?

1. Water baptism is a symbol not a sacrament.

Baptism is not required for salvation, but salvation is required for baptism. Baptism doesn't accomplish our salvation; it merely illustrates it. In other words, baptism doesn't make you a believer; rather, it shows that you have already believed. In that way, baptism is like a wedding ring. A wedding ring is an outward symbol of an inward commitment.

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast. **EPHESIANS 2:8-9**

2. Water baptism is a sermon.

Christ died for our sins . . . he was buried . . . and he rose again.

1 CORINTHIANS 15:3-4

For when you were baptized, you were buried with Christ, and in baptism you were also raised with Christ. **COLOSSIANS 2:12**

3. Water baptism identifies me with Christ.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.

The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

ROMANS 6:4

4. Water baptism is a pledge to God.

Baptism . . . the pledge of a good conscience toward God.

1 PETER 3:21

5. Water baptism is Trinitarian.

Baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. **MATTHEW 28:19-20**

How Should I Be Baptized?

1. Pouring
2. Sprinkling

3. Immersion

For the first 1200 years of Christian history, immersion was the universally accepted mode of baptism.

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water.

MATTHEW 3:16

Then both Phillip and the eunuch went down into the water and Phillip baptized him. When they came up out of the water . . . **ACTS 8:38-39**

The Greek word baptizo means “to dip, to sink, to submerge, to immerse, or to bury.”

Who Should Be Baptized and When?

Everyone who has believed in Christ should be baptized as a first step of obedience in the Christian life.

Those who had received his word were baptized. **ACTS 2:41**

But when they believed . . . they were being baptized.

ACTS 8:12

See also *Acts 8:35-38; 9:18; 10:48; 16:14-15, 32-33, 18:8*

What About Infant Baptism?

Since baptism is for those who have repented and believed, we do not practice infant baptism. Because an infant cannot believe or repent, we practice believer’s baptism.

Infant baptism began as early as 200 AD because of the distortion of two doctrines.

discover ATLANTIC SHORES 201

- Q The doctrine of baptismal regeneration
- Q The doctrine of original sin

Out of that debate came something called the sacramental view of baptism. As a sacrament, baptism was viewed as a means of receiving God's grace. The Bible teaches that baptism is a symbol not a sacrament and that God's graces result from faith not something we do (*Eph. 2:8-9*). Therefore, we use the word ordinance to describe the observance of baptism.

So, what happens to an infant or child that dies before he or she is old enough to make a faith decision? We believe that child is received into the presence of God. For further reading on this subject, we recommend a book by Dr. Ron Jones called *Mysteries of the Afterlife* and a chapter titled "Eternity for Those Who Cannot Believe."

Q The Church Jesus is Building

"I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it." **MATTHEW 16:18**

Jesus never meant for the church he is building to exist for itself, but for the glory of God, for people, for communities, for cities, and for the world.

At Atlantic Shores Baptist Church, you'll discover a missional community of passionate Christ followers who love God and love our neighbors as we live out our faith in the Virginia Beach area, inviting people of all races, tribes, tongues and nations to belong, believe, become and go beyond!

discover ATLANTIC SHORES 201

As a community of faith on mission for Jesus, we partner with God in his redemptive and restorative work in the world today. We also plant churches and partner with other life-giving churches to accomplish His purposes.

For us, church is neither a physical building nor an event we attend one day a week but something we are, wherever we are and whenever we are there. When we gather for Sunday worship and to wherever we scatter throughout the week, we are the called out people of God focused on the mission and purpose of Jesus Christ.

The Nature of the Church

The nature of the church Jesus is building is best understood by the five analogies the New Testament uses to describe the church.

1. The Church is the BRIDE of Christ.
(2 Corinthians 11:2; Revelation; Ephesians)
2. The Church is the BODY of Christ.
(Romans 12:5, Ephesians 4:15-16)
3. The Church is the FAMILY of God. *(Galatians 6:10)*
4. The Church is an ARMY. *(Philippians 2:25)*
5. The Church is a BUILDING. *(1 Peter 2:5)*

discover ATLANTIC SHORES 201

Q Our Mission, Vision, and Strategy

Jesus lived His life _____.

*I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose. **LUKE 4:43***

*For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost. **LUKE 19:10***

*For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. **MARK 10:45***

“Above all else we’ve discovered that one thing all high achievers have in common is they are working for a Big Why.”

GARY KELLER, KELLER WILLIAMS REAL ESTATE

Why We Exist: Our Clear Mission

*And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” **MATTHEW 28:18-20***

Atlantic Shores Baptist Church exists to glorify God by making disciples of Jesus Christ who go and make disciples.

discover ATLANTIC SHORES 201

A disciple is a fully devoted follower of Jesus Christ who is committed to:

- Q _____ to understand and apply God's word to everyday life
- Q _____ God and others (*John 13:34-35*)
- Q _____ by the Spirit, producing spiritual fruit (*Gal. 5:16-26; John 15:1-11*)
- Q _____ others to faith in Jesus Christ (*Matthew 28:19-20*)
- Q _____ until the very end (*Luke 9:57-62*)

What We See: Our Bold 100x Vision

Where there is no vision, the people perish. **PROVERBS 29:18**

Vision is a _____ of tomorrow that produces _____.

Our vision is to touch 100,000 people in the Hampton Roads area and beyond with the love of Jesus Christ by 2026 in a way that yields personal conversion, spiritual formation, family restoration, community transformation, multi-ethnic unity, social justice, and church multiplication.

discover ATLANTIC SHORES 201

How We Do It: Our Simple Strategy

1. _____ to encounter God
(worship).

Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as you see the day approaching. HEBREWS 10:25

Q

Q

2. _____ to experience the
fullness of Christ (discipleship).

But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. 2 PETER 3:18

My little children, for whom I am again in the anguish of childbirth until Christ is formed in you! GALATIANS 4:19

Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. COLOSSIANS 1:28

Q

Q

Q

discover ATLANTIC SHORES 201

3. _____ to serve God and others (ministry).

“For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” **MARK 10:45**

Q

Q

Q

4. _____ to enlarge His reach (evangelism).

“And you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” **ACTS 1:8, MATTHEW 28:19-20**

Q

Q

5. _____ Field of Dreams & Destiny (fellowship).

discover ATLANTIC SHORES 201

And they devoted themselves to . . . the fellowship **ACTS 2:42**

But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. **2 PETER 3:18**

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen. **EPHESIANS 3:20-21**

Q What We Believe

We embrace the historic and orthodox teachings of the Christian faith as found in the Holy Scriptures, the Bible, according to the following statement of faith. We also practice the Augustinian idea that in essential matters of doctrine and theology we have unity, in non-essentials we have liberty, and in all things we show charity or love. Through our affiliation with Southern Baptists, we also embrace the Baptist Faith and Message 2000.

THE SCRIPTURES

We believe in the verbal plenary inspiration of the Scriptures (both the Old and New Testaments) and that “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God.” We believe that the original autographs are without error because of the work of the Holy Spirit as He moved each man to record the words of God. We believe that the proper way to interpret the Bible is by using a literal, historical, grammatical method of interpretation.

2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21

discover ATLANTIC SHORES 201

GOD

We believe in one God with three eternal distinctions: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. They are the same essence, but separate in personalities.

*Matthew 3:16-17; Matthew 28:19-20; II Corinthians 13:14;
Hebrews 9:14*

JESUS CHRIST

We believe that Jesus Christ is God and that He is eternal. We believe that when Jesus Christ came to take on the form of man that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin. We believe that He lived a sinless life and that He provided the necessary atonement, vicariously, for our sins by the "sacrifice of Himself." And, most importantly, we believe that He died and was buried and that "He rose again the third day according to the scriptures."

*John 1:1-2, 10:30, 20:31; Philippians 2:6-8; Isaiah 7:14;
Matthew 1:22-23; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Isaiah 53:4-6;
Hebrews 9:26; I Corinthians 15:3-4*

HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is God and indwells every believer at the point of salvation. We believe that the Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment; that He is active in the new birth; that He testifies of Christ; that He seals the believer unto the day of redemption, and that He makes intercession for believers. We believe it is essential for man to be filled with the Spirit and controlled by the Spirit by keeping sin confessed and walking in the light. We do not adhere to the teaching of a subsequent "baptism" of the Holy Spirit as evidenced by speaking in tongues. We believe that the biblical gift of

discover ATLANTIC SHORES 201

tongues was only operational during the age of the Apostles as a sign gift to unbelievers.

1 Corinthians 6:19, 13:8-10, 14:22; Romans 8:9, 26; John 3:5-6, 15:26, 16:8; Ephesians 4:30, 5:18; 1 John 1:6-7

SATAN

We believe that Satan is a living being who is void of truth. We believe also that he is the god of this world who has blinded the eyes of them who believe not and that he is in constant battle against Christians.

John 8:44; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Acts 26:18; Ephesians 6:11-12

CREATION

We believe in and accept by faith the literal Genesis account of creation. We believe that God created all things (Colossians 1:16), including man.

Genesis 1:1-2, 2:25; Hebrews 11:3; Colossians 1:16

HELL

We believe in a literal hell of everlasting fire, everlasting destruction, and everlasting punishment.

Matthew 25:41, 46; 2 Thessalonians 1:9; Revelation 20:11-15

HEAVEN

We believe in a literal heaven where Jesus is today preparing a place for His believers. We believe that only those who have received Jesus Christ into their hearts will be able to enter into heaven.

John 14:1-2; Matthew 7:13-14; Revelation 21-22

discover ATLANTIC SHORES 201

FALL OF MAN

We believe that God created man in innocence, but by willful disobedience man sinned and because of this, everyone is a sinner with an inherited sinful nature. Therefore, man is under just condemnation without defense or excuse.

Romans 3:10, 23, 5:12, 16-19; Psalm 51:5, John 3:19

SALVATION

We believe that salvation is of the Lord on the merit of the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Salvation is a free gift that excludes any possible merit on the basis of works. We believe that the two essential doctrines that must be present in every lost person that wants to be saved are repentance and faith. We also believe that once a person has been saved that there is no chance of his ever going to hell and that he is eternally secure in Christ. A public profession of salvation is a prerequisite to church membership.

Philippians 1:6; Romans 3:24-26, 6:23, 10:9-10; Ephesians 2:8-9; 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 3:5; Acts 2:38, 16:31; John 3:16, 36; 1 John 5:11-13

CHURCH

We believe that the local church is a group of professing believers in Christ who unite together to serve Christ. From this same commission, the church also has the responsibility of teaching, evangelizing, and baptizing. The local church should also provide fellowship, worship, and prayer.

Matthew 16:18, 28:19-20

discover ATLANTIC SHORES 201

COMMUNION

We believe that the Lord's Supper symbolizes the Lord's death and is open to all who have received Christ as their Lord and Savior.

1 Corinthians 11:23-34

BAPTISM

We believe that baptism is a symbol of the believer's identification with Christ in His burial and resurrection; therefore, profession of faith in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior is a prerequisite to baptism. Baptism is an act of obedience that follows salvation; it is not a requirement for salvation. We believe that the only Scriptural mode of baptism is by immersion in water and is a prerequisite to church membership.

Romans 6:4-5

THE LORD'S SECOND COMING

We believe in the imminent, pre-tribulation rapture of the church in which Jesus Christ calls all believers from the earth to meet Him in the air to be taken to Heaven. This will be followed by a seven-year Tribulation period that will culminate by the premillennial, bodily return of Jesus Christ to earth to judge the earth and set up a literal one thousand year Millennial Kingdom. This will end with the Great White Throne Judgment that will be followed by Eternity.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; John 14:1-3; Daniel 9:24-27; Revelation 6-19, 20:1-7, 11-15; Revelation 21-22; Matthew 24:29-31

discover ATLANTIC SHORES 201

MARRIAGE AND SEXUAL ETHICS

We believe the Bible teaches that marriage is the exclusive, covenant relationship between one man and one woman. While sexual intimacy within the marriage relationship between one man and one woman is approved and even celebrated in Scripture, we believe that any sexual intimacy outside of this covenant relationship is sinful and prohibited. Further, we believe that God created human beings in two distinct genders: male and female. We believe any attempts to alter or change one's gender are prohibited and sinful.

Genesis 2:24, 19:5, 13, 26:8-9; Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1:26-32; 1 Corinthians 5:1, 6:9-10; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4

Q How We Lead

In the Holy Scriptures, God revealed his plan for leadership in the church. He launched the church by giving certain individuals special spiritual gifts. They are apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. These believers, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, initiated the Christian movement and brought local churches into existence through their teaching and preaching of the gospel.

1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; Hebrews 13:17-18; Acts 6:1-6, 20:28; Ephesians 4:1-6, 11-12; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Psalm 78:72

As churches were established in the faith, elders were appointed to continue the pastor-teaching ministry in each local church. The elders were given responsibility for the oversight of that particular church body and the shepherding of its members.

discover ATLANTIC SHORES 201

As necessary, deacons were also appointed to serve the church, particularly by undertaking those areas of need that would otherwise prohibit the elders from performing their primary biblical responsibilities of prayer and the ministry of the word (*Acts 6:1-6*).

Rooted in Scripture, Atlantic Shores Baptist Church is:

- Q LED by a team of pastors
- Q OPERATED by our staff
- Q GOVERNED by a body of elders
- Q SERVED by our deacons and lay ministry leaders

Our governance structure and decision-making process is designed to accomplish three things:

- Q Maximize MINISTRY
- Q Minimize BUREAURACY
- Q Maintain ACCOUNTABILITY

Elder Body

Constitutionally, the elder body at Shores is made up of the lead pastor, 2-4 additional pastors appointed by the lead pastor, the chairman of the deacons, and four active lay members of the congregation that are nominated by the church family. The lead pastor serves as the president of the elder body and, at the same time, is accountable to the executive committee of the elder body. The lay elders make up the executive committee. Together, the elders pray, maintain doctrinal purity, govern, teach, equip people for ministry, oversee the budgeting process, act as trustees of

discover ATLANTIC SHORES 201

the non-profit corporation, review and confidentially advise on personnel matters, and maintain open communication. The elders are qualified to serve on the basis of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. Legally, the elder body serves as the board of directors of Atlantic Shores Baptist Church, a Virginia non-profit corporation, and is granted authority to act on behalf of the church family. The Lead Pastor is the President of the Board of Directors.

What is a Lead Pastor?

The Lead Pastor at Shores is the primary teaching pastor of the church. He is responsible for the spiritual equipping and oversight of the entire congregation and serves as the president of the elder body. He is the spokesman for the elder body to the congregation and is directly accountable to the executive committee of the elder body for the carrying out of his duties in the church (*Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11-12; 1 Peter 5:2-4*). Furthermore,

- Q The Lead Pastor is the SPIRITUAL LEADER of the church (presbuteros).
- Q The Lead Pastor is the SERVANT LEADER of the church (poimen).
- Q The Lead Pastor is the SENIOR LEADER of the church (episkopos).

So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.

1 PETER 5:1-3 ESV

Deacons

Deacons were appointed in the early church to serve the church, particularly in areas of need that would otherwise hinder the elders from performing their biblical responsibilities (*Acts 6:1-7*). At Atlantic Shores Baptist Church, deacons are lay leaders who serve the body in various capacities, including caring for families in need or in crisis. Deacons are selected and approved by the elder body. They are qualified on the basis of 1 Timothy 3:8-12.

Pastors and Vocational Personnel

God uses vocational personnel and lay leaders at Atlantic Shores to implement the work of His ministry at His church. We consider it a sacred trust for anyone to serve in a paid or volunteer capacity, and we set high standards for such service. Our goal is to create a healthy work, volunteer, and worship environment that builds up the body of Christ and that everyone can enjoy (*Ephesians 4:1-6*).

Vocational personnel include pastors, ministry directors, ministry coordinators, operations, and administration. All personnel matters come under the confidential review and advisement of the elder body. When it comes to human resources, the elders and personnel supervisors carefully follow biblical principles, state and federal laws where applicable, and best practices from other churches, business, and charitable organizations. Generally, we do not comment, publically or privately, on the departure of vocational personnel for the following reasons: (1) to protect the unity of the Spirit, (2) to protect each employee's right to privacy, and (3) to protect the church legally.

discover ATLANTIC SHORES 201

Lay Ministry Leaders

People from within the church family are called upon to serve on a variety of lay ministry teams. Most volunteer opportunities require you to be an active member of the church. Go to “Ways to Serve” for a list of lay ministry opportunities. Some volunteer positions require a confidential background check.

Decision-making and Voting in the Church

As a general rule we do not make decisions by calling a vote of the congregation. However, we will ask the active members of the church to vote for the following reasons: (1) to call a new Lead Pastor, (2) to make a change in the church Constitution and By-laws, and (3) to approve the annual church budget.

Q Our Affiliation

Recognizing that God’s work is larger than a single church and that we are better together than apart, Atlantic Shores Baptist Church is an autonomous church that chooses to affiliate with the largest Protestant denomination in the world known as Southern Baptists. We enjoy a ministry partnership nationally with The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and regionally with Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia (SBCV).

A portion of our Shores Global Initiatives financial giving goes to the Cooperative Program to support more than 4,000 missionaries around the world through the

discover ATLANTIC SHORES 201

International Missions Board (IMB) and church planting through the North American Missions Board (NAMB). We also participate in disaster relief through Southern Baptists.

In addition to the Atlantic Shores statement of faith, we also embrace the Baptist Faith and Message 2000.

Baptist Lifestyle Principles

Beliefs are not worth much unless they are translated into actions. Based on what the Bible teaches, we practice the following **B-A-P-T-I-S-T** lifestyle principles.

Bible as Our Sole Authority

Since God's Word is the only completely reliable and trustworthy authority, we accept the Bible as our manual for living. When faced with a decision, our first question is, "What does the Bible say?" We practice daily Bible reading, Bible study, and Bible memory. The Bible is the basis for all we believe (*2 Tim. 3:16-17*).

Autonomy of Each Local Church

Christ is the head of the church, not any person, group or religious organization. While recognizing the value of associating and cooperating with other groups of Christians, we believe every local church should be self-governing and independent from any denominational control. Each congregation determines its own strategy, structure and style (*Col. 1:18*).

discover ATLANTIC SHORES 201

Priesthood of Every Believer

The Bible teaches that every Christian is called to “full time” Christian service regardless of his or her vocation. We practice the truth that every member is a minister and a missionary. We encourage every member to find a place of service and ministry. Additionally, we believe that every believer has direct access to God through prayer and Bible reading (*Rev. 1:6; 1 Pet. 2:5-9*).

Tithing as an Expression of Biblical Stewardship

Believing God’s people are commanded to support God’s work, we practice biblical stewardship in the way we handle the money and resources God entrusts to us. We encourage tithing (10 percent of income) as a starting point in our giving.

Immersion

We practice baptism by immersion as the best way of picturing the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ and as a way to publically identify with him. Baptism never accomplishes salvation; it only illustrates it. Following Jesus in baptism is the first step of obedience a new believer takes in his or her walk with Jesus (*Col. 2:12; Rom. 6:1-2; Matt. 3:13-17*).

Spirit-led Living

The only way to live the Christian life successfully is by relying on God’s enabling resources made available to us by his indwelling Holy Spirit. We seek to practice a daily dependence on God’s Spirit to help us do what is right and discern God’s will for our lives (*John 15:5; Eph. 5:18; Phil. 2:13*).

discover ATLANTIC SHORES 201

Telling Others About Christ

It is the responsibility of every believer in Jesus to share the Good News with friends, family, co-workers and neighbors. We personally introduce Jesus Christ to others, participate in the Great Commission, and invite people to church (*1 Pet. 3:15; Matt. 28:18-20*).

Q Membership

Thank you for your interest in becoming a member of our faith community. Two words describe the formal relationship you can enjoy with Atlantic Shores Baptist Church: membership and partnership.

*Now you are the body of Christ and individually **members** of it.*

1 CORINTHIANS 12:27

*So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and **members** of the household of God.*

EPHESIANS 2:19, 3:6, 4:25, 5:30

*I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your **partnership** in the gospel from the first day until now.*

PHILIPPIANS 1:3-5

As members of the body of Christ, we also choose to make a serious commitment to a local body of believers called Atlantic Shores Baptist. In doing so, we recognize the power of partnership in fulfilling our gospel mission to “glorify God by making disciples of Jesus Christ who go and make disciples.”

discover ATLANTIC SHORES 201

The Atlantic Shores Baptist Church Constitution and Bylaws spells out the rights and responsibilities of church members. It also defines what we mean by active membership. It is important to know what membership is and is not. Generally,

Membership Is Not:

- Q Achieved status
- Q Passive
- Q Completion of a process

Membership Is:

- Q Ongoing lifestyle
- Q Active
- Q Commitment and involvement

Because membership is a serious commitment, we have three requirements.

1. Personal Faith in Jesus Christ

Are you a Christ-follower? Are you trusting Jesus Christ alone for the forgiveness of your sins and for your eternal destiny? We ask you to share your personal faith testimony to a pastor or elder in writing.

2. Believer's Baptism

Have you been baptized as a believer, by immersion and with the understanding that your baptism identifies you with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ? For membership, we ask that you be baptized the way Jesus was. If you were baptized by immersion as a believer at another church, we accept your baptism as meeting the requirement for membership.

discover ATLANTIC SHORES 201

3. Membership Covenant

We ask all prospective members to attend our Discovery experiences, embrace the mission, vision, strategy, and beliefs of Atlantic Shores Baptist Church, and sign the membership covenant (p.31).

After meeting the above three requirements, and should you express a desire to join Atlantic Shores Baptist Church in membership, a brief interview will be scheduled between you and a pastor, elder, or deacon of the church.

Q Membership Covenant

Followers of Jesus have been invited graciously into God's redemptive purposes for the world through the church. In light of this reality, the opportunity to join a local church is much more than a commitment to consistent attendance or active involvement in community. It is also a sacred call to be involved in the redemptive work of our sovereign God and to be a microcosm of the universal household of God. Therefore, we will covenant together to fulfill these purposes and hold one another accountable to this high calling.

Therefore, having received Jesus Christ as my personal Savior, and being in agreement with the beliefs, vision, mission and strategy of the church, and being willing to participate in the life of the church, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with this church family called Atlantic Shores Baptist Church. In so doing, I commit myself to God and to my brothers and sisters in Christ in the following ways:

discover ATLANTIC SHORES 201

1. I will protect the **UNITY** of my church.

- By acting in love toward other members
- By refusing to gossip or talk evil about others
- By following the leaders as they follow Jesus
Romans 15:5, 9; Ephesians 4:3, 13; 1 Peter 1:22; Hebrews 13:7

2. I will share the **RESPONSIBILITY** of my church.

- By praying for its growth
- By giving a tithe of my financial resources
- By inviting my friends and neighbors to attend
*Malachi 3:9-10; 1 Thessalonians 1:2; Luke 14:23;
Romans 15:7; 1 Corinthians 8-9, 16:2*

3. I will serve the **MINISTRY** of my church.

- By attending weekend worship services regularly
- By connecting in community with others in a life group
- By serving on a lay ministry team
Acts 2:42-47; Ephesians 4:12; Hebrews 10:25

4. I will support the **TESTIMONY** of my church.

- By living a godly life
- By telling others about Jesus
- By loving God and my neighbor
Philippians 1:27; Matthew 28:19-20; Luke 10:25-27

PRINT YOUR NAME

SIGNATURE

DATE

membership

APPLICATION

NAME

DATE OF BIRTH

SPOUSE NAME

ADDRESS

APT. NO.

CITY/STATE/ZIP

HOME PHONE

HIS EMAIL

HER EMAIL

MY SPIRITUAL DECISIONS MARK ALL THAT APPLY

- Today, I placed my faith and trust in Jesus Christ as my personal Savior.
- I would like to talk to someone about becoming a follower of Jesus.
- I would like to be baptized.
- I want to become a member of Atlantic Shores Baptist Church.
- I have read and signed the membership covenant.

DISCOVERY EXPERIENCES

MARK THE EXPERIENCES YOU HAVE COMPLETED

- Discover Jesus 101
- Discover Atlantic Shores 201
- Discover Community Life 301
- Discover Your Divine Design 401



discover COMMUNITY LIFE **301**

God made us with a deep longing for human connection. In this one-hour experience, discover why authentic biblical community matters and how life groups provide the important first step to getting connected at Atlantic Shores. Discover how life groups S.E.R.V.E. the Lord and their community. We will also help you locate a life group that works for you and your family.

discover **COMMUNITY LIFE 301**

OVERVIEW

Q Why Community Life?

Q What is a Life Group?

Q Types of Life Groups

Q Life Groups that S.E.R.V.E.

Q Why Community Life?

1. We were _____ for community.

Then God said, "Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness." . . . So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

GENESIS 1:26-27

Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." **GENESIS 2:18**

Pastor and author Eugene Peterson says, "Christians are a community of people who are visibly together at worship but who remain in relationship through the week in witness and service."

2. We _____ each other.

More than 50 "one another" references in the New Testament point to how we need each other. Here are a few:

- Love one another
- Be devoted to one another

discover COMMUNITY LIFE 301

- Give preference to one another
- Accept one another
- Admonish one another
- Greet one another
- Serve one another
- Bear one another's burdens
- Be kind to one another
- Regard one another
- Comfort one another
- Be hospitable to one another

3. _____ happens best in the context of community.

*They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. **ACTS 2:42-47***

4. To address the _____ of living in a fallen world.

Author Lyle Schaller says, "The biggest challenge for the church at the opening of the twenty-first century is to develop a solution to address the discontinuity and fragmentation of the American lifestyle."

discover COMMUNITY LIFE 301

5. To help people _____ at Shores.

As the church grows _____ it must also grow _____.

Author Eric Wright says “Let’s dream of a community where the weak are welcome, where the lonely find friends, where the poor feel rich and where the rich are poor in spirit, where practical help and prayer go hand in hand, where concern for others breaks down barriers and pours out into local communities and to the end of the earth.”

6. To fulfill the _____ of the church by making disciples of Jesus Christ who go and make disciples.

Q What Is a Life Group?

Life groups are _____ of the church that organically _____ together.

SIZE: Up to _____ consistently attending before the group multiplies.

discover **COMMUNITY LIFE 301**

FREQUENCY: Life groups gather _____ per month.

LOCATION: Life groups gather _____
or _____.

TIME: Life groups meet at _____
throughout the week.

PURPOSE: To glorify God by making disciples of
Jesus Christ who go and make disciples

Q **Types of Life Groups**

We feature the following types of life groups at Shores, grouping people according to:

1. _____

Tell us where you live and we can get you connected with people at Shores that live in your neighborhood or community. This is our primary way of connecting people in life groups, decentralizing ministry to where you live. We do this by high school zones.

discover **COMMUNITY LIFE 301**

2. _____

- Single mothers
- Grief Share
- College and young singles
- Recovery from substance abuse

3. _____

Gender specific life groups are available through our men's ministry and women's ministry.

Q Life Groups That S.E.R.V.E.

At Atlantic Shores, a life group is more than just a Bible study. Life Groups S.E.R.V.E. throughout the year. This is part of what makes community life at Shores a unique, exciting, diverse, and spiritually fulfilling experience.

S = _____

Life groups gather for Bible study and prayer. We call this reaching in.

A _____ life group goes deeper into the message preached that week by our lead pastor through small group discussion.

discover **COMMUNITY LIFE 301**

E = _____

Life groups reach in through Bible study and prayer, but they also reach out through evangelism. They find ways to connect with unchurched and dechurched people in their neighborhood and community, build relationships of integrity, and share the gospel. No holy-huddles!

R = _____

The life group that plays together stays together. They find ways to have fun together and enjoy life through recreation. This is not hard to do in the Virginia Beach area that is one of the best recreational destinations in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States.

V = _____

Life groups find ways to volunteer on the church campus to make the weekends happen at Shores; they also find ways to volunteer in their community and become the hands and feet of Jesus to others. We address this further in Discover Your Divine Design 401.

E = _____

Life groups care for one another when a family crisis arises. They pray for one another, visit one another in the hospital, provide meals, etc. They also find ways to share the love of Jesus by connecting with a compassion ministry in their community and by going on short-term missions trips together.



discover

YOUR DIVINE DESIGN 401

Serving the Lord with your time, talent, and treasure is a hallmark of community life at Atlantic Shores, and we value our volunteers! In this one-hour experience, discover your divine design, what the Bible teaches about spiritual gifts, and ways to serve at Shores. This class includes a brief introduction to our ministry placement services, plus a personalized spiritual gifts inventory and a personality assessment.

discover YOUR DIVINE DESIGN 401

OVERVIEW

Q What Is your S.H.A.P.E.?

Q What is a Spiritual Gift?

Q Types of Spiritual Gifts

Q A Few Truths About Spiritual Gifts

Q Ways to Serve at Shores

Q Placement Services

Q Are You the Missing Puzzle Piece?

Ministry Team Covenant (Appendix 1)

Your divine design is the way God created you and is a combination of your personality, temperament, natural talents, passion, experiences, and spiritual gifts. Rick Warren calls this your S.H.A.P.E. In this discovery experience, we will explore that aspect of your divine design as it relates to the New Testament concept of spiritual gifts and more.

Q What Is your S.H.A.P.E?¹

- | | | |
|----------|------------------------|---|
| S | Spiritual Gifts | What spiritual gift(s) has the Holy Spirit given to me? |
| H | Heart | What do I love to do?
What is my passion? |
| A | Abilities | What talents and skills have I learned? |
| P | Personality | Where does my personality best suit me to serve? |
| E | Experiences | What experience and education have I received? |

Q What Is a Spiritual Gift?

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 1 CORINTHIANS 12:4-7

“A spiritual gift is an individual manifestation of grace from the Father that enables you to serve Him and thus play a vital role in His plan for the redemption of the world.”

KEN HEMPHILL

“A spiritual gift is a special attribute given by the Holy Spirit to every member of the Body of Christ according to God’s grace for use within the context of the Body.”

PETER WAGNER

“A spiritual gift is an expression of the Holy Spirit in the life of believers which empowers them to serve the body of Christ, the church.” GENE WILKES

The list of spiritual gifts in the New Testament are found in four main passages:

- Romans 12:6-8
- 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 28-30
- Ephesians 4:11
- 1 Peter 4:9-11

Q Types of Spiritual Gifts

The list of spiritual gifts combined from the four passages of Scripture in the New Testament can be categorized in three ways:

1. _____ Gifts

Miracles, healings, tongues, interpretation of tongues

These gifts were given by the Holy Spirit and were purposeful during the Apostolic Era as signs that the gospel message and the messenger were authentic (*Hebrews 2:3-4*).

2. _____ Gifts

Pastor, teacher, evangelist, apostle, prophet

The Holy Spirit distributes these gifts to the church for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry.

3. _____ Gifts

Administration, encouragement, faith, giving, hospitality, leadership, mercy, service, wisdom

The Holy Spirit distributes these gifts to the church to build up and encourage the body of Christ.

discover YOUR DIVINE DESIGN 401

Q A Few Truths About Spiritual Gifts²

1. Only _____ in Jesus have spiritual gifts (*1 Corinthians 2:14*).
2. Each believer has _____ spiritual gift. (*1 Corinthians 12:7*).
3. You can't _____ for a spiritual gift (*Ephesians 4:7*).
4. The _____ decides what gift(s) we get (*1 Corinthians 12:11*).
5. We are to _____ the gift(s) God gives us (*Romans 11:29*).
6. It's a _____ to waste the gifts God gave us (*1 Corinthians 4:1-2*).

Q Ways to Serve at Shores

Serving on a ministry team is a privilege of membership. Below is a general list of ministries in which you can volunteer and put your spiritual gifts to use at Atlantic Shores. A more detailed list of volunteer positions and position descriptions is available from Placement Services.

discover YOUR DIVINE DESIGN 401

- Administrative
- Children's Ministry
- Helping Hands
- Ushers
- Guest Services
- Life Group Leader
- Special Events
- Student Ministry
- Media and Tech Team
- Music and Worship
- Prayer Ministry
- Radio Ministry
- Women's Ministry
- Men's Ministry

Q Soul Care Policy

Because serving without soul care leads to burnout and spiritual failure, we require all who serve or volunteer at Atlantic Shores to attend regular worship gatherings and be connected in a life group. We also encourage the practice of personal spiritual disciplines that include but are not limited to daily Bible reading, prayer, fasting, worship, journaling, silence, solitude, and Sabbath (*1 Kings 19:1-18; Luke 9:23; 1 Timothy 4:8*).

Q Placement Services

Our Placement Services team is available to help you find a place to volunteer and serve in the ministry of Atlantic Shores that fits with your divine design. To ensure the best fit for you and the church, we offer the following assessments and a consultation with a pastor as a following up to the 401 experience.

discover YOUR DIVINE DESIGN 401

- Q Spiritual Gifts Inventory
- Q Personality Type Indicator
- Q Smalley Animal Personality Assessment

Links to these free assessments are available at **atlanticshores.org/placement**. After you complete the assessments, make an appointment with Placement Services to schedule your pastoral consultation.

Q Are You the Missing Puzzle Piece?

God wants to do amazing things in and through you. So we invite you to discover your divine design and then place your puzzle piece in the great picture of what God is doing at Atlantic Shores. In his book, *The Hole in Our Gospel*, Richard Stearns writes,

It's time to commit. What are you going to do about it? In the end God works in our world one person at a time. The hungry are fed, the thirsty are refreshed, the naked are clothed, the sick are treated, the illiterate are educated, and the grieving are comforted, just one person at a time. You have the opportunity to be that one person to someone who needs what you have to offer. And what you have to offer is never small and insignificant. Again, the great picture of what God is doing in our world is incomplete without your unique puzzle piece—the one that only you possess. But you must choose to place your piece in the puzzle.

- 1 Rick Warren of Saddleback Church in California developed S.H.A.P.E. as a tool to help individual believers discover their own specific SHAPE for ministry.
- 2 Rick Warren, Saddleback Church. Used by permission.
- 3 Please be aware that some volunteer positions require a background check.
- 4 We ask all volunteers to read and abide by the Ministry Team Covenant (see Appendix 1).

APPENDIX

Ministry Team Covenant

Before the Lord and together with my fellow ministry team members, and with the intent to strengthen our church, I solemnly enter the following covenant:

A COVENANT OF TEAM UNITY

I now commit to remaining loyal to my fellow team members. When the team has made a decision, I will support it although I may have voted against it. I will not criticize the decision or activities of the team or any individual member unless I do it face-to-face. If a problem develops between another team member and me, I will faithfully follow the conflict resolution steps set forth in Matthew 18:15-17.

A COVENANT OF OPEN AND LOVING COMMUNICATION

I now commit to speaking in love and acting with forbearance toward my fellow team members. I also recognize the importance of this team speaking openly and honestly to

discover YOUR DIVINE DESIGN 401

one another. As I exercise the privilege of thinking aloud to help sort out my thoughts and feelings, I will give that same privilege to others without taking offence. As I interact with members of the church family, I will do so without gossiping, sowing discord, or speaking negatively about any person in the church, nor will I participate in such conversation with any individual or group where this goes on.

A COVENANT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

I now commit to holding in confidence the privileged information I receive because of my position as a member of this ministry team. This includes discussions in team meetings. I understand that I may share privileged information with my spouse only if he/she is also committed to this standard of confidentiality and has demonstrated the ability to maintain such a covenant.

A COVENANT OF FAITHFULNESS

I now commit to serve on this ministry team. I will arrange my schedule as best I can so that I can attend meetings regularly. If something should arise that will keep me away, I will notify the leader.

A COVENANT OF INTEGRITY

If the time comes when I can no longer carry out this covenant, I will resign this ministry team without causing strife and dissention within the team or within the larger church family.

answers

discover JESUS 101

good news, bad news, good news, sinners, death, loves, from, for, faith, forgiven, eternal life

discover ATLANTIC SHORES 201

on mission, learning, loving, living, leading, lasting, picture, passion, gather, for worship, in life groups, grow, life groups, Shores Bible Institute, discipleship coaching, give, time, talent, treasure, go, local outreach, global missions, grace

discover COMMUNITY LIFE 301

created, need, life change, alienating effects, connect, larger, smaller, mission, smaller expressions, S.E.R.V.E., 25 people, 2-4 times, off campus, on campus, various times, geographic, affinity, gender, spiritual formation, sermon-based, evangelism, recreation, volunteerism, extending care and compassion,

discover YOUR DIVINE DESIGN 401

sign, supporting, serving, believers, at least one, earn or work, Holy Spirit, develop, sin





ATLANTICSHORES
LIVE IT. LOVE IT. CHURCH.

**1861 Kempsville Road
Virginia Beach, VA 23464
Phone: 757.479.1133**

ATLANTICSHORES.ORG