

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

WHEREAS, God has in these last days founded His Church upon Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:20; 1 Corinthians 3:11), built it through His people (1 Corinthians 12:14), given it power and authority (Matthew 16:19), and unified it with internal structure (1 Corinthians 12:28) and the Holy Spirit as the guide (John 16:13), that we, as the body of Christ (Ephesians 1:22-23), might present His Gospel (Mark 16:15) by assisting in the implementation of the vision for this local church with the following Constitution and Bylaws of the Church.

WHEREAS, An imperfect system filled with men and women of integrity will function far better than a perfect system filled with men and women who lack integrity. The people we choose are as important as the system we use.

BE IT RESOLVED, that we recognize ourselves as a body of Christian believers working together for the common purpose or mission of helping all people become fully- devoted followers of Jesus Christ. We will pursue this mission by establishing a community hub offering essential resources, training, and support to help all people reach their God-given potential. Under the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia, we may exercise all the rights and privileges granted to religious bodies.

This constitution, along with South Ridge Church's bylaws, provide accountability for ministry leaders and key information for the church body. While impossible to anticipate all future contingencies, the intent of these documents are to provide flexibility to meet long-term changing needs.

ARTICLE 1: NAME AND LOCATION

This body shall be organized under Titles 13.1, 57, and 58 of the Virginia Code as a church corporation known as South Ridge Church, Inc. (hereinafter "Church") located in Fredericksburg Virginia or whatever location the Board and partners may determine (Acts 2:17-21).

ARTICLE 2: AFFILIATION

The Church is autonomous and maintains the right to govern itself. However, recognizing the benefits of cooperation with other churches and organizations for the sake of Christ's work, we may voluntarily affiliate with and support any association or convention of churches that have similar beliefs.

ARTICLE 3: MISSION

The purpose of this corporation is to:

- 1) Bring unbelievers to faith in Christ alone for their salvation. We do this by:
 - a. Deliberately making friends with non-Christians
 - b. Telling His story, the Gospel, and my story/personal testimony (1 Peter 3:15)
 - c. Inviting them to an event (Matthew 28:19-20)
- 2) Build mature followers of Christ who practice these habits:
 - a. Worship (Matthew 22:36-38; Romans 12:1-2)
 - b. Evangelism (Matthew 4:19; Philemon 6)
 - c. Small group fellowship (Acts 2:42-47)
 - d. Serving in ministry (Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 12)
 - e. Training (2 Timothy 3:16-17)"
 - f. Giving (Deuteronomy 14:22; Matthew 6:21)
- 3) Develop leaders who set the pace in the basic habits. (1 Peter 5:1-5; Matthew 20:26)
- 4) Encourage all partners to pursue developing Christ-like lives. (Philippians 3:12-14)

ARTICLE 4: STATEMENT OF FAITH AND BELIEFS

God: God is the Creator and Ruler of the universe. He is spirit and has eternally existed in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal and are one God.

Genesis 1:1, 26-27; 3:22; Psalm 90:2; Matthew 28:19; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Corinthians 13:14

Jesus Christ: Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is co-equal with the Father. Jesus was born of a virgin, lived a sinless human life, and offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people by dying on a cross. He arose from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power over sin and death. He ascended to Heaven's glory and will return to earth to reign as King of kings, and Lord of lords.

Matthew 1:22-23; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1-5, 14:10-30; Hebrews 4:14-15; 1 Timothy 6:14-15; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Romans 1:3-4; Acts 1:9-11; Titus 2:13

The Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit is co-equal with the Father and the Son of God. He is present in the world to make people aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He also lives in every Christian from the moment of salvation. He provides the Christian with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. He gives every believer a spiritual gift(s) when he or she is saved. As Christians, we seek to live under His control daily.

2 Corinthians 3:17; John 16:7-13, 14:16-17; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 2:12, 3:16; Ephesians 1:13; Galatians 5:25; Ephesians 5:18

The Bible: The Bible is God's Word to us. It was written by human authors under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is the supreme source of truth for Christian beliefs and living. Because it is inspired by God, it is the truth without any mixture of error.

2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; 2 Timothy 1:13; Psalm 119:105, 160; Proverbs 30:5

Human Beings: People are made in God's image, which means we are spiritual beings with souls. God created each of us to have a personal relationship with Him. People are the supreme object of God's creation. Although every person has tremendous potential for good, all of us are marred by an attitude of disobedience toward God called "sin." This attitude separates people from God and causes many problems in life.

Genesis 1:27; Psalm 8:3-6; Isaiah 53:6a; Romans 3:23; Isaiah 59:1-2

Salvation: Salvation is God's free gift, but each person must decide whether or not he or she will accept it. We can never make up for our sins by self-improvement or good works. Only by trusting Jesus Christ as God's offer of forgiveness can we be saved from sin's penalty, which is eternal separation from God at death. When we turn from our self-ruled lives and trust Jesus in faith, we are saved. Eternal life begins the moment we receive Jesus Christ into our lives by faith.

Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9; John 14:6, 1:12; Titus 3:5; Galatians 3:26; Romans 5:1

Eternal Security: Because God gives us eternal life through Jesus Christ, the true believer is secure in salvation for eternity. If you have been genuinely saved, you cannot "lose" your salvation. We have this security because our salvation is maintained by God's grace and power, not by our efforts.

John 10:28-29; 2 Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 7:25, 10:10, 14; 1 Peter 1:3-5

Eternity: People were created to exist forever. We will exist eternally either with God through His forgiveness and salvation or eternally separated from God by our sin. To be eternally separated from God is hell. To be eternally in union with Him is eternal life in heaven. Heaven and hell are real places of eternal existence.

Hebrews 9:27; 2 Corinthians 5:10; John 3:16; John 2:25; 1 John 5:11-13; Romans 3:23; Romans 6:23; Revelation 20:15

The Church: There is one true universal Church, known in Scripture as the body of Christ, composed of all those who acknowledge Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Scripture commands believers to regularly gather and to devote themselves to worship, prayer, teaching the Word, and fellowship. Baptism and the Lord's Supper (Communion) are observed as the ordinances established by Jesus Christ. Service to the body of Christ and outreach to the world are accomplished through the development and use of spiritual gifts and talents. The local expression of the church is realized wherever God's people meet in obedience to this command. Partners are to work together in love and unity, under the watchful care and guidance of the appropriate leadership, with the ultimate purpose of glorifying Christ.

Matthew 16:15-19; Mark 14:22-26; Acts 2:42-47; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 11:23-28; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 4:11-12; Hebrews 10:24-25

Marriage and Sexuality: It is the Bible's position that marriage involves the commitment of one man and one woman for one lifetime. Though various cultures and customs have evolving definitions of marriage, it is God alone who has ultimate authority to prescribe and describe marriage.

Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:1-9, Mark 10:1-12

Furthermore, sex is intended by God to be exercised and enjoyed only within the boundaries of marriage.

Matthew 15:19, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, 1 Thessalonians 4:3, Hebrews 13:4

With the Bible as our guide, South Ridge Church regards any and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, sex outside of marriage, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography or even lustful intent toward such, as sinful and ultimately unsatisfying. We also regard as sinful the intent, desire to, or act of surgically or chemically altering one's body in an attempt to adopt a biological sex different than the one with which a person is born. Since the body is a creation of God, we hold sexual identity to be biologically determined, and associated gender norms are to be observed as appropriate to biblical standards. Disagreement with one's biological sex only leads to spiritual confusion and emotional chaos.

Genesis 1:27, Romans 1:26-32, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

In order to preserve the function and integrity of the Church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical example to the partners, attenders, and the community, it is imperative that all partners and those employed by the Church in any capacity or committed to the Church in partnership should abide by and agree to this "Statement on Marriage and Sexuality" and conduct themselves accordingly.

Though sexual expression outside of biblical guidelines is sinful, it is forgivable. The gospel provides redemption and restoration to all who confess and give up on their sin, seeking mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11, Ephesians 2:1-10, Titus 3:3-7

Furthermore, there is a difference between temptation, repented sin and unrepented sin. Jesus was tempted in all ways as we are, yet He never sinned. Partners, employees, volunteers, and attenders of the Church wrestling with all manner of sexual temptation will find a Church ready to point them to Jesus and join with them to fight for their obedience to Christ. Jesus called the weary and heavy-laden to Himself.

As a church desiring to help all people become fully devoted followers of Christ, South Ridge Church will be a safe place for men and women fighting sexual temptations of all kinds. For those fighting temptation and repenting of sin, the Church will provide love, care and direction.

Matthew 11:28-30, 1 Corinthians 10:13, Hebrews 2:17-18, Hebrews 4:14-16

This “Statement on Marriage and Sexuality” does not provide grounds for bigotry, bullying or hate, as we fully believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect and dignity, regardless of his or her lifestyle. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be recognized as sinful and are not in accordance with the Bible nor the teachings of the Church.

This “Statement on Marriage and Sexuality” is based upon God’s will for human life as conveyed to us through the Bible, upon which this Church has been founded and anchored, and this shall not be subject to change through popular vote, referendum, prevailing opinion of partners or the general public, influence of or interpretation by any government authority, agency, or official action, or legal developments on the local, state, or federal level.

ARTICLE 5: VOLUNTEER (PARTNERSHIP) AGREEMENT

Having received Christ as my Savior and Leader, following that with Baptism and being in agreement with South Ridge’s Statement of Faith and Beliefs, Values, and Mission, I unite with the South Ridge Church family. In doing so, I commit myself to God and to others by doing the following:

I will take responsibility for my own spiritual growth and development by pursuing a close relationship with Jesus and prayerfully learning and applying His teaching. I will strive to put God’s Kingdom and pleasing Him, first in my life.

I will devote myself to care for and love others, as Jesus would, by living an open and honest life, promoting and preserving unity, receiving and giving Biblical encouragement and correction, and putting the needs and interests of others above my own.

I will work together with others by serving wherever I am needed, supporting the ministry of South Ridge financially, and following spiritual leadership within Biblical boundaries.

I will work diligently in my community and throughout the world to accomplish my part in helping God’s Kingdom in general, and South Ridge in particular, fulfill the mission of “leading people in a growing relationship with Jesus”.

I will abide by the Constitution, and Bylaws including those policies dealing with church discipline, conflict resolution and partners’ rights and responsibilities and agree to be bound by the Articles, Constitution and Bylaws and accompanying policies and procedures.

All partners will be required to sign a written copy of the Volunteer (Partnership) Agreement.

ARTICLE 6: ORDINATION, LICENSING, AND COMMISSIONING

South Ridge reserves the right to ordain, license, or commission individuals as ministers of the gospel to perform the ordinances and ceremonies of the church including, but not limited to, marriage, baptism, communion, and funerals.

ARTICLE 7: DISSOLUTION AND LIQUIDATION OF THE CHURCH

The period of duration of the Church is perpetual. However, upon dissolution or winding up of the Church, all assets remaining after payment, or provision for payment, of all debts and liabilities of the Corporation shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code as determined by the Board of Directors. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of exclusively for such exempt purposes by a court of competent jurisdiction of the county in which the principal office of the Church is then located.

ARTICLE 8: AMENDMENTS

Constitutional amendments require a three-fourths majority vote by the Board of Elders before they can be presented to the partnership. Additionally, at a meeting to amend the constitution a quorum of 25 percent of the voting partnership of all South Ridge campuses must be present. All amendments require a three-fourths affirmative vote of those eligible to vote and participating to be adopted.