

Chestnut Ridge Baptist Church Constitution



Approved February 5, 2012

PREAMBLE

Because Scripture commands, *“But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way”* (1 Corinthians 14:40), we hereby establish the following church constitution.

The objectives of the constitution are to convey the church's:

- Doctrinal position
- Mission and organization
- Offices (along with designated duties and responsibilities)

Changes to the constitution will require congregational approval. Related policy content that does not require congregational approval will be included in the Church Policies and Procedures.

ARTICLE I: NAME AND PURPOSE

Section 1 -- Name

The congregation of believers is incorporated as Chestnut Ridge Baptist Church, located at 499 Chestnut Ridge Road, Laurens, SC 29360 (filed May 24, 1988); and will be known as the same.

Section 2 -- Purpose

The congregation is organized as a church exclusively for religious, charitable, and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any comparable future United States Revenue Law).

The church's purpose includes, but is not limited to, establishing and maintaining religious worship, promoting personal evangelism, developing Christian discipleship, encouraging Christian fellowship, and glorifying God by fulfilling the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:36-40) and the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20).

This will be accomplished by building, maintaining, and operating churches and any other ministries that the church may be led of God to establish. It is also authorized to license, ordain, and commission individuals to the Gospel ministry.

Section 3 -- Mission Statement

Spreading God's Amazing Love by Developing Fully Devoted Followers of Christ.

ARTICLE II: DOCTRINAL POSITION

Section 1 -- Doctrinal Summary

Based on the belief that the Scriptures are inerrant and inspired by God, we believe in one God, existing as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, and died a substitutionary, sacrificial death. He rose from the dead on

the third day and offers salvation to sinful man through personal trusting faith. Those saved are indwelt by the Holy Spirit and become members of the true church, the Body of Christ, until He returns for His own.

An abbreviated Statement of Faith for Chestnut Ridge Baptist Church is contained in Appendix I.

The church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of The Baptist Faith and Message as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention on June 14, 2000.

Section 2 – Ordinances

The church will observe the ordinance of the Lord's Supper a minimum of four times per year. Baptism will be observed at times deemed appropriate by the Senior Pastor.

ARTICLE III: ORGANIZATION

Section 1 -- Affiliation

The church chooses to cooperate with the Laurens Baptist Association, the South Carolina Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

Section 2 -- General Organization

The church will be Congregation ruled, Elder led, and Deacon served. The church acknowledges the Lord Jesus Christ as its head and regards the Holy Scripture as the only infallible guide in matters of faith, church order, and discipline. The operation of the church will follow the precepts outlined in the constitution, which may not be changed without approval of the congregation.

The immediate direction of the spiritual and temporal affairs of the church will be the responsibility of the Elders. Elders will be responsible for the shepherding and oversight of the ministry of the church as servant leaders.

The church will call a Senior Pastor to provide primary spiritual leadership of the body and to provide operational leadership and staff direction. The Pastoral Staff will coordinate and direct their specifically assigned areas of ministry, collectively covering the entire scope of church activity and involvement.

Deacons are responsible for the physical care of the body of the church. Ministry Teams will be responsible for the operational ministries of the church.

Section 3 -- Financial Management

In matters of financial integrity, the church shall be above reproach. Procedures shall exist to cover proper methods of collecting offerings and distributing funds. Specific funds or categories for designated offerings may be created as needed, with a reasonable effort made to see that these funds are distributed as designated. A financial review or audit of the church's finances will be performed annually.

No part of the net earnings of the church will benefit or be distributed to its members, Trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the church will be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payment or distribution in furtherance of the purpose and mission of the church. The church is authorized to provide support for any missions or benevolence programs it deems appropriate to fulfill its mission.

Section 4 -- Identification of Legal Officers Required by Incorporation

Officers of the Church will be Trustees, Treasurer, and Clerk.

Trustees:

Non-staff elders will be identified as Trustees. Legal and contractual documents will be signed by a minimum of two non-staff elders acting as agents of the church who shall do so only with official authorization of the Elders.

Treasurer:

The Treasurer shall ensure that all funds and securities of the church are properly secured in such banks, financial institutions, or depositories as appropriate. The Treasurer shall also be responsible for providing annual reports and monthly updates of the account balances, revenues and expenses of the church. The Treasurer will be elected by the congregation on an annual basis. The Treasurer and financial secretary will be bonded.

Clerk:

The Elders will designate a Church Clerk who will be responsible for keeping official records of actions approved or affirmed by the congregation, as well as ensuring that official documents and records of the church are properly filed and maintained.

ARTICLE IV: MEMBERS

Section 1 -- Qualifications for Church Membership

Membership is available to those who:

- Have trusted Christ as their personal Savior
- Have been or are willing to be baptized by immersion
- Are willing to support the ministry, mission, and doctrinal beliefs of the church

To ensure that new members are aware of the beliefs, ministries, and expectations of the church, those desiring membership will complete the following:

- Attend an informational class on the ministry and mission of the church
- Counsel with an Elder or Pastor
- Sign the Membership Covenant

Section 2 -- Congregational Responsibilities

Every member has a unique and valuable role in the life of the body. It is expected that each member will strive to become more and more Christ-like, to be purposefully and prayerfully involved in ministry, and to give discerning and faithful support to the leadership.

Each member shall have the privilege and the expectation of participating and contributing to the ministry and life of the church, consistent with God's leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources each has received from God. Elders will have oversight of those who are serving in the ministries of the church; non-members may serve with the approval of the Elders. Members of the congregation may request that any matter be formally brought to the Elders for consideration by submitting a request in writing to an elder. If the member(s) are not satisfied with the response of the Elders, the matter will be resolved in accordance with Matthew 18 in the best interest of the church.

Biannual business meetings will be held. Minutes will be taken at each meeting. It is the privilege and responsibility of members to attend all members' meetings and to contribute by voting on issues brought to the congregation by the Elders.

Section 3 -- Congregational Approvals

Congregational approval will be required for the following items:

- Election of the Church Treasurer
- Call of all Pastoral Staff
- Dismissal of the Senior Pastor
- Changes to the church constitution
- Capital, building, or indebtedness activities whose value exceeds 5 percent of the total annual ministry budget
- Other items the Elders believe may substantially impact the direction, operation or scope of the ministry

Approval will be defined as a seventy-five percent affirmative vote by members attending a properly scheduled congregational meeting. The exception is the dismissal of a Senior Pastor, which will require only a simple majority affirmative vote.

Any member who continues to fully meet the qualifications for membership may participate in congregational approvals. The following will be required for congregational approvals:

- At least two weeks advance notice
- Written ballots
- All active members (18 years of age and older) present will constitute a quorum.

Section 4 -- Congregational Affirmations

The congregation will be asked to affirm by written ballot the recommendations of the Elders for the following items:

- Initial selection and annual reaffirmation of individual elders
- Selection of Deacons

- Annual Church Ministry Plan

The Annual Church Ministry Plan is a document that articulates the vision for the church's ministry. The Ministry Plan will be developed by the Elders, Pastoral Staff, and Core Ministry Team Leaders. It will focus on goals for staffing, organization, and financial needs to support that vision. The affirmation of the Ministry Plan shall be done in conjunction with a review of the general financial situation of the church.

Elder recommendations must be communicated to the congregation at least two weeks in advance. In cases where a strong affirmation is not received, the Elders will examine their decision and either provide additional information to the congregation or modify the decision before resubmitting it to the congregation for affirmation.

Section 5 -- Removal from Membership

Names will be removed from membership rolls when a transfer of membership is requested, when a member requests removal of his/her name, or when a member dies. Periodically the church membership rolls will be reviewed, and those who have not been active in the church ministry for over one year may be contacted to determine if they desire their name to be removed from membership.

Section 6 -- Transfer of Membership

Membership may be transferred to another church of like faith upon written request. Information regarding a person presently under church discipline will be forwarded to any church to which a person requests a transfer of membership.

Section 7 -- Discipline of Members

The purpose of church discipline is always to lead the erring individual to repentance and ultimately to full restoration, if possible. The Elders will ensure that scriptural procedures are followed in handling disciplinary matters.

If there is still no evidence of repentance, in accordance with 2 Thessalonians 3:14, the person may be removed from the membership and fellowship of the church by the Elders. Actively seeking to teach, promote, or practice anything that is contrary to the clear teaching of Scripture and the statement of faith of the church will also be grounds for termination of membership. Any person who harms the ministry by being disruptive or creating dissension, or who poses a threat to others, may be prohibited from involvement in any or all aspects of the ministry of the church by the Elders.

ARTICLE V: ELDERS

Section 1 -- Duties and Responsibilities of the Elders

Elders are men who have been called by God to a life of service to the church. Elders are Godly men who are responsible for the oversight of every aspect of the church. The position of Elder is

not one of power but of humility, service, and ultimate responsibility to the Lord our God. Elders are to be the primary discerners and guardians of the church. They will be men of prayer and the Word. They will collectively and individually be involved in oversight and shepherding ministries to the body as a whole.

Elders will address issues that impact the general ministry of the church, and will not become involved in detailed operational matters that are the responsibility of the staff. All matters brought before the congregation for affirmation will be submitted by the Elders. As faithful shepherds Elders should be sensitive to concerns and needs of the body and should listen well, while still understanding that they are ultimately accountable to God for their decisions and how well they display a spirit of servant leadership.

The Elders will be responsible for primary ministry oversight through establishment of policies; provision for planning; establishment of priorities; and oversight of deacons, pastoral staff, and key personnel. They will be responsible for approving and monitoring the provisions of the Annual Ministry Plan. The Ministry Plan will articulate the vision for the church's ministry and will focus on goals, staffing, organization, and financial and budgetary needs to support that vision.

Section 2 -- Elder Operations

Elders' meetings will be scheduled on a regular basis, normally no less than once per month. No official action can be taken without the participation and agreement of at least a two-thirds majority of Elders. Annually, the Elders will review their operation in light of their constitutional role and responsibilities. An individual elder may be removed upon majority agreement of the Elders.

A Chairman and Vice-Chairman will be selected annually from the non-staff Elders. Since the Elders are to seek God's direction for the church, it is important that they seek unity and consensus in their decision-making process. The Elders will always speak with one voice after reaching a decision.

Section 3 -- Qualifications for Elders

Specific Scripture references in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, 1 Peter 5:1-4, Matthew 19: 8-12, and 1 Corinthians 7 form the basis for the following list of characteristics desired in an elder:

- **Character:**
He cannot be open to legitimate criticism of character and must have a good reputation with those outside the church. He must be a balanced person who is not given to extremes and one who is self-controlled, not quick-tempered, and not ensnared by addictive behavior. He must be one who is respected, friendly and hospitable; a gentle person who is not quarrelsome. He must be a truly godly man who loves what is good. He must be free from greed and the love of money, completely honest and upright in financial dealings.
- **Family:**
He must manage his own household well. If married he must be faithful and dedicated to his wife. His wife must be respectable (not involved in gossip), temperate, and faithful. If he has children, he must be dedicated to seeing that they become obedient and respectful

Christians. If single he must remain pure in all his relationships. In the case of divorce, Biblical exceptions of adultery, unfaithfulness, and abandonment will be considered in accordance with Matthew 19: 8-12 and 1 Corinthians 7.

- **Leadership:**
He must lead in a humble manner, never being arrogant or overbearing. He must be an example to those he has been entrusted to lead, putting their interests ahead of his own. He cannot be a recent convert, but must be a mature Christian. He must be able to teach and defend the faith, to instruct in sound doctrine, and to stand against those who oppose it.

An elder must demonstrate spiritual maturity, have a recognized calling as an elder, have a desire to serve as an elder, and have been actively serving in an oversight and shepherding ministry to the body as a whole or to a portion of the body. He must also have demonstrated spiritual wisdom and a servant spirit, and must fully support the doctrines and mission of the church. He and his wife must have been exemplary members and active participants in the ministry for at least two years, and they must be willing to commit the time needed to serve.

Section 4 -- Selection of Elders

Elders will be selected by a process that involves their recognition by leadership and affirmation by the congregation. Members of the congregation may recommend names of potential candidates to the active Elders. For those who agree to be considered as an elder, the congregation will be asked to provide comments relevant to the qualification of each candidate.

An ordination council (comprised of local pastors and/or elders) will carefully examine each candidate, and those found to meet the criteria for Eldership will be recommended to the congregation for affirmation. Candidates not previously ordained to the office of Elder will be ordained after affirmation by the congregation. As the need arises, there will be an active search initiated by the Elders for men who meet the criteria stated for Eldership.

There will be a minimum of three non-pastoral staff Elders. The Senior Pastor will be an Elder by nature of his position, with his qualifications determined at the time he is called to this ministry. Those serving in other pastoral staff positions will not automatically be recognized as Elders, but will follow the same selection process as men not serving in staff positions. At no time may the number of Elders employed or compensated by the ministry exceed one-third the total number of Elders. Eldership will be recognized only if conferred through the body.

Recognizing that service as an Elder is a life's calling; Elders may serve as long as they continue to *serve effectively, remain qualified, and are **annually** affirmed by the congregation.* Non-staff Elders may voluntarily take a sabbatical at anytime although it is encouraged to be in coordination with the Annual Ministry Plan. All non-staff Elders will take at least a one-year sabbatical from their corporate responsibilities during a 4 year period of service. This time of sabbatical need not impact their individual shepherding responsibilities nor their vocational ministry responsibilities.

Section 5 -- Elder Accountability & Dismissal

The Elders will annually review the qualifications and performance of each Elder. Whenever an Elder ceases to be scripturally qualified, he will no longer be recognized as an Elder. If at the time of his accountability review, an Elder is found to be no longer functioning in an Elder-type role or no longer desires to serve as an Elder, the Elders will evaluate the situation. If the situation is expected to be short term, he may be placed on sabbatical. If it is expected to be long term, he will no longer be recognized as an Elder.

The congregation will be asked to reaffirm the Elders each year. This annual affirmation will provide valuable input about the effectiveness of each Elder. If an Elder does not receive a vote of reaffirmation from seventy-five percent of the congregation, he will be placed on sabbatical and will become an inactive Elder.

ARTICLE VI: SENIOR PASTOR

Section 1 -- Qualifications of the Senior Pastor

The Senior Pastor must meet the spiritual qualifications of an Elder as well as any specific criteria set forth by the Elders.

Section 2 -- Duties and Responsibilities of the Senior Pastor

The Senior Pastor will be the primary spiritual leader and shepherd of the ministry. He will be responsible for spiritual direction, content of public services, and content of the general teaching ministry of the church. He will be the primary person responsible for articulating ministry vision. The Senior Pastor will be recognized as an Elder by nature of his position. The Senior Pastor will also oversee the primary operation and administration of the ministry. The Senior Pastor will exercise his leadership in conjunction with input from the staff, and counsel and consensus of the Elders.

In his role as the principal shepherd of the church, the Senior Pastor is responsible for seeing that the spiritual needs of individuals are being met. Therefore, he will oversee those responsible for such areas as teaching, counseling, and church discipline.

The Senior Pastor will oversee and shepherd the Pastoral Staff and also work closely with them on matters of spiritual direction and areas of teaching. The Senior Pastor will be responsible for oversight of staff positions. The Senior Pastor or his designee(s) will be responsible for seeing that positions are filled with qualified people of godly character who support the mission and purpose of the ministry.

Section 3 -- Selection of the Senior Pastor

In the event that the office of Senior Pastor becomes vacant, it is the responsibility of the Elders to call an Interim Pastor or Supply Pastor(s). The Elders will also be responsible for forming a Pastor Search Team, presenting this team to the congregation for approval, and dialoging with the team for a full understanding of the mission-vision of the church and the type of minister needed to continue the church in that direction.

After an in-depth evaluation, the Elders must be in one accord before recommending a candidate to the congregation for approval. Multiple candidates will not be presented to the congregation at one time. The congregation will call a Senior Pastor upon a seventy-five percent affirmative vote of members in attendance at a properly announced meeting.

Section 4 -- Dismissal of the Senior Pastor

If a majority of Elders calls for dismissal of the Senior Pastor, written notice will be provided to the congregation and a congregational vote will be scheduled two to four weeks from that date. The Senior Pastor may be placed on a paid leave of absence pending the congregational vote. If a simple majority of church members who participate in the congregational vote calls for his dismissal, his services will be terminated.

ARTICLE VII: PASTORAL STAFF

Section 1 -- Qualifications of Pastoral Staff Members

Pastoral Staff members must have personal characteristics consistent with scriptural qualifications for Elders as well as meet other qualifications set forth by the Senior Pastor and approved by the Elders.

Section 2 -- Duties of Pastoral Staff Members

The Pastoral Staff will coordinate and direct their specifically assigned areas of ministry, collectively encompassing the entire scope of church activity and involvement. They will report to the Senior Pastor. The number of Pastoral Staff positions and general definition of responsibilities for each will be approved by the Elders. The Senior Pastor will recommend any major changes in Pastoral Staff positions or responsibilities (based on an analysis of ministry needs and available financial resources) and submit them to the Elders for approval.

Section 3 -- Selection of Pastoral Staff Members

The filling of Pastoral Staff positions will be directed by the Senior Pastor or his designee(s) and approved by the Elders.

Section 4 -- Dismissal of Pastoral Staff Members

If the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Elders or the Senior Pastor calls for the dismissal of a member of the Pastoral Staff, the Elders will schedule a vote on the matter two to four weeks from that date. If a majority of Elders concurs in calling for dismissal, his or her services will be terminated.

ARTICLE VIII: DEACONS

Section 1 -- Overview and Qualifications of Deacons

The primary focus of the Deacons is to minister to the needs of the church. Deacon and servant are synonymous. The role of deacon is not one of authority, but one of service.

Those being considered as a deacon will be carefully examined to determine their spiritual maturity, wisdom, and servant spirit. Specific Scripture references in 1 Tim 3:8-13 and Acts 6:3 form the basis for the following list of characteristics desired in a deacon:

- * **Character:**
He cannot be open to legitimate criticism of character. He must be one who is sincere, respected, and not ensnared by addictive behavior. He must be free from greed and the love of money, completely honest, and upright in financial dealings. He must be "known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom."

- * **Family:**
He must manage his own household well. If married he must be faithful and dedicated to his wife. His wife must be respectable (not involved in gossip), temperate, and faithful. If he has children, he must be dedicated to seeing that they become obedient and respectful Christians. If single he must remain pure in all his relationships. In the case of divorce, Biblical exceptions of adultery, unfaithfulness, and abandonment will be considered in accordance with Matthew 19: 8-12 and 1 Corinthians 7.

Those serving as deacons must meet the spiritual qualifications of a deacon. They must demonstrate a strong interest and desire in meeting the temporal needs of the congregation, collectively or individually. They must have been exemplary members of the church for at least one year prior to the time of selection and be willing to commit the time needed to serve.

Section 2 -- Duties and Responsibilities of Deacons

Deacons are responsible for the physical care of the body of the church. They are a visible manifestation of the spiritual ministry called for in Scripture. They will form a core group that will coordinate the activities of members of the church involved in ministries of service. They will identify and periodically review areas of need within the congregation, specifically focusing on those with special needs, such as single mothers, widows, those in an emergency financial crisis, and those with other benevolence needs.

The Deacons will coordinate and direct those involved in support activities during public services, specifically focusing on assistance with ordinances, collection and counting of the offering, greeting, ushering and surveillance of the facilities during times of ministry activity. They may appoint individuals over each of these areas of responsibility and periodically review, encourage, and guide them.

The Deacons will see that policies exist to guide impartial and equitable assistance to those with needs. They will be responsible for the distribution of benevolence funds. The Deacons may have male and female assistants. The Deacons should meet monthly. Minutes will be taken, recorded, and presented to the church after each meeting.

The Chairman of the Deacons will closely coordinate the activities of Deacon Ministries with the Pastoral Staff, working with a designated staff liaison. He will also periodically report to the Elders and will meet with them at least quarterly regarding the effectiveness of the Deacons in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities.

Section 3 -- Selection of Deacons

New deacons will be selected by a process that involves their recognition by leadership and affirmation by the congregation. At any time, but at least once each year, there will be an active search initiated by the Deacons for men who meet the criteria stated for deacons. Members of the congregation may at any time recommend names of potential candidates to the Deacons. For those who agree to be considered as deacons, the congregation will be asked to provide comments relevant to the qualification of each candidate. The Deacons will then carefully examine each candidate and those found to meet the criteria for deacon will be recommended to the Elders for approval and to the congregation for affirmation. Those who have not previously been ordained to the office of deacon will be ordained after affirmation by the congregation.

There will not be a preset number of Deacons. Service as a deacon is open to all who are qualified and who desire the office, including those employed or compensated by the ministry.

There will not be a preset term of office for deacons; they may serve as long as they continue to function effectively and remain qualified. Deacons will be asked to rotate off after each 3 years of service. This rotation need not impact their individual service responsibilities.

The Deacons will annually select their own Chairman and Vice-Chairman, as well as any other necessary officer.

Section 4 -- Dismissal of Deacons

Upon the call of a majority of Deacons for the dismissal of a specific deacon, the matter will be referred to the Elders. If a majority of the Elders concur, the deacon will be dismissed.

The congregation will be asked to reaffirm the deacons each year. This annual affirmation will provide valuable input about the effectiveness and length of service for each deacon. If a deacon does not receive a vote of reaffirmation from seventy-five percent of the congregation, he will be removed from his role.

ARTICLE IX: MINISTRY TEAMS

Section 1: Responsibilities

The operational ministries of the church will be carried out by Core Ministry Teams. These include but are not limited to, Discipleship, Missions, Stewardship, Personnel and Facility Management. The Core Ministry Teams will be coordinated by the Pastoral Staff and/or the Elders and empowered by the church to fulfill their missions.

With the approval of the Elders, each Core Ministry Team may create Support Ministry Teams to assist it in carrying out its mission. If a Core Ministry Team is comprised of multiple Support Ministry Teams, all of the Support Ministry Team leaders will be part of that Core Ministry Leadership Team.

Ad Hoc teams may be created by the Elders to assist in completing specific tasks. Each team will have a clearly defined purpose. Types of teams may include but are not limited to a Pastoral Search Team, Governance Team, etc.

Section 2: Membership

Ministry Teams will be populated by those church members, in good standing, who have demonstrated a spiritual giftedness and passion for the mission and responsibility of their specific team. These individuals will be identified through a spiritual gift assessment program completed by each active member.

A Pastoral Staff Member and/or an Elder will oversee each Core Ministry Team and appoint its leader. The Core Team Leader will recommend Support Team Leaders to the Elders for their approval. The Elder approved recommendations will be presented to the church for affirmation as part of the Annual Church Ministry Plan.

There will be no preset term for team members. However, the Team Leader and/or the assigned elder can recommend rotation or sabbatical years for team members.

Although Core and Support Ministry Teams may, at any time, enlist other members and/or friends of the Church to assist in carrying out their missions, only those additional team members who are to serve in a teaching capacity must be approved by the Elders.

ARTICLE X: GENERAL ITEMS

Section 1 -- Amendments

Elders, acting in one accord, may suggest changes, deletions, or additions to the constitution. Proposed changes must then be made available in writing to members, at least two weeks prior to the congregational vote. If a three-fourths majority of church members who participate in the congregational vote approves the changes, the constitution will be amended. Amendments will be recorded in Article XI, along with the signatures of the Senior Pastor and the Chairman of the Elders. The constitution will be reviewed by the Elders and Pastoral Staff for compliance and applicability at a frequency no less than once each five years.

Section 2 -- Dissolution of the Church

Upon the dissolution of the church the Trustees shall, after paying or making provision for payment of all the liabilities of the church, dispose of all the assets of the church to such organization(s) that are organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization(s) under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future comparable United States Internal Revenue Law), as the

Trustees shall determine. Assets may be distributed only to organization(s) that agree with the church's Statement of Faith.

Section 3 -- Authorization and Approval of the Constitution

This constitution supersedes all other previous constitutions. The effective date of this constitution is February 5, 2012.

We hereby certify that this constitution has been approved by the congregation in accordance with the constitutional procedures in effect at this time.

Approval By:

Senior Pastor

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Trustee

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Treasurer

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Article XI: Amendments

Future amendments will be added to this section along with their dates and signatures of the Senior Pastor and Chairman of the Elders. Any changes to this document or its attachments are to be recorded on the official copy maintained by the church and reflected on any copies made available to the congregation.

Approval By:

Senior Pastor

Name: _____

Signature : _____

Date : _____

Chairman of the Elders

Name: _____

Signature : _____

Date : _____

APPENDIX I:

ABBREVIATED STATEMENT OF FAITH CHESTNUT RIDGE BAPTIST CHURCH

Article I -- The Scripture

We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are inspired by God and inerrant in the original writings, and that they are of supreme and final authority in faith and conduct.

Article II – God

We believe in one God eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Article III -- Jesus Christ

We believe that Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, and is true God and true man (God-man).

Article IV -- Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity, one with the Father and the Son, the indweller of every believer whereby each is sealed unto the day of the redemption of the body.

Article V – Devil

We believe in the existence and operating power of a real and personal being opposed to all righteousness and exalting himself against all that God is and has, the evil one called the Devil or Satan.

Article VI – Hell

We believe in a literal hell, the place of eternal punishment for the wicked dead.

Article VII – Heaven

We believe in a literal place called heaven where God's immediate presence is manifested, where the angels are, and where the redeemed shall ultimately be, from whence Christ descended and ascended again, where He makes intercession for the saints, and from whence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

Article VIII – Man

We believe that God created man in His own image and in a state of innocence, but that through temptation he willfully transgressed and became dead in trespasses and sins, whereby his posterity inherits a corrupt nature, being born in sin and under condemnation.

Article IX – Salvation

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scripture, as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice; that He arose from the dead in His glorified body, ascended into heaven and as our great High Priest and Advocate He ever lives to make intercession for us; that all who believe on His name are justified on the ground of His shed blood and receive the gift of eternal life by the grace of God.

Article X – Regeneration

We believe that regeneration is a divine and instantaneous work of the Holy Spirit whereby God imparts life to one dead in trespasses and sin.

Article XI – Sanctification

We believe that sanctification is a divine and progressive work of the Holy Spirit whereby God, upon the ground of the finished work of Christ on the cross, His present intercessory ministry, and His Divine Word, sets the believer apart and works out, in, and through him by means of a submissive will which is well pleasing to Himself through Jesus Christ. This work culminates in the redemption of the body.

Article XII -- The Church

We believe in the one true church, the mystical Body and Bride of the Lord Jesus, composed of believers from Pentecost to the Rapture, into which believers are baptized by the Holy Spirit. We believe that the local church is an organization composed of professing believers instituted for the purpose of fellowship, worship, and service. In the matters of administration and policy, it is self-governing.

Article XIII – Baptism

We believe that Christian baptism of a believer by immersion in water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is the Biblical mode of baptism and testifies of the believer's faith in and identification with the crucified, buried, and risen Savior.

Article XIV -- The Lord's Supper

We believe that the Lord's Supper is an ordinance whereby believers show forth the Lord's death until He comes.

Article XV -- The Second Coming of Christ

We believe in the glorious hope of the pre-millennial, imminent, visible, and bodily return of Christ.