Atlanta Christian Church Statement of Faith

God - God is the creator and sustainer of life. Through God all things were made and all things remain. The Lord is eternal – has always been and will always be. God is *triune*: the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit, and yet is one. *Genesis 1:1, 26-27; 3:22; Psalm 90:2; Matthew 28:19; I Peter 1:2; 2 Corinthians 13:14*

Jesus - He is Son of God, co-equal with the Father. We believe the message of the scriptures that he was (and is) the savior of all things. While living in the first century, he was God "in the flesh." And while there were many self-proclaimed messiahs in those days, through his death on the cross and physical resurrection, Jesus was set apart. To trust and follow him was (and is) to restore one's relationship with God and to bring about salvation in one's life. We believe that he will come through on his promise to return and to judge the hearts of all people. *Matthew 1:22-23; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1-18; 14:10-30; Hebrews 4:14-15; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Romans 1:3-4; Acts 1:9-11;*

Holy Spirit - The Holy Spirit is the third person in the trinity, living within every believer's life, enabling him to live a life that is pleasing to God. Among the many descriptions in the scriptures of the Spirit's character and purpose, the overarching one is this: God living *in* us. Paul, the writer of many of the NT letters, calls this the "mystery" of God. The Spirit's task is to convict, comfort, counsel, and guide every believer. The Spirit creates and unifies the church, equipping us with gifts to serve within the local church and within our world. *2 Corinthians 3:17; John 16:7-13; 14:16-27; Acts 1:8; 1; Corinthians 2:12; 3:16; Ephesians 1:13; 5:18; Galatians 5:22-26*

The Scriptures - They are the words, teachings and plans of God, written by people under the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. We believe that God oversaw the process and that we can fully trust in the teachings and claims of the scriptures as the authoritative "word of God." This does not take away the difficulty of understanding and living out the teachings within, however, we hope and trust in their power to change a person's life. *2 Timothy 1:13; 3:16; Psalm 12:6; 119; Proverbs 30:5; 2 Peter 1:20-21*

Eternity - People were created to live forever; death was not part of the plan. But through sin, there is death in the relationship with God, as well as a physical ending to life on earth. We believe that Jesus restores that relationship and empowers us to spread that story through the lives we live and the words that we speak. We have the choice to accept, or, reject the grace of God and spend eternity with or without God. *John 3:16-17; Psalm 1; Romans 6:23; 1 John 2:25; 5:11-13; Revelation 20:15*

Salvation - It is the free gift of God to the world. One can never make up for their own sin by self-improvement (God is perfect) or through "good deeds" alone. Salvation of the world is *through* Jesus alone, and anyone desiring to trust Jesus should acknowledge Christ as Lord (believe), change from his own way to the way of Jesus (repent), express their faith (confess), and be immersed into Christ (baptism by immersion). *The aforementioned are the scriptural pattern of someone "becoming" a follower of Jesus. Romans 3:23; 5:8; 6:23; 10:9; Acts 2:38*

Baptism - Baptism is a step of obedience in following Jesus. It's a public declaration of one's faith and hope in Christ. The apostle Paul calls it a funeral, saying, "We were buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life." (Romans 6:4) ***Baptism is the beginning the new life in Christ.*** We practice baptism by immersion (under water) as this was the scriptural pattern of the first church. The word itself means *to dip, plunge* or *immerse*. The pattern of the early church was baptism in this form. We practice what's known as a "believer's baptism," meaning that each person has come to this decision in their own heart. To follow Christ is an individual decision, not a community one.