



## Covenant Baptist Church

*Reformed and Refreshing*

*November 15th, 2020*

Welcome to Covenant Baptist Church. We are a Reformed church committed to three things:

- **The Exaltation of God**

We desire that the people at Covenant truly understand who God is and His rightful place in their lives as their Lord and sovereign Savior.

- **The Edification of the Saints**

We consider it extremely important to correctly teach the Bible, verse by verse, so we can properly have the Holy Spirit apply it to our lives.

- **The Evangelization of the Sinner**

We understand that God has given us the responsibility to be stewards of the Gospel and that means sharing it exactly like God gave it to us with those who need Jesus.

*<https://covenantbaptistsc.org>*

## Service Times:

Bible Education Hour (Puritans and Systematic Theology)  
~ 9:30 A.M.

Sunday Worship ~ 10:30 A.M.

Wednesday Prayer Service ~ 6:00 P.M., 7:00 P.M.  
—RESUMING SEPT.2 (See p. 2 for more info)

*(We are not interested in traditional worship  
or contemporary worship. We are only  
interested in true worship.)*

## Order of Worship

*(November 15th, 2020)*

Call to Worship: Psalm 56:1-4

The Lord's Supper

Brethren, We Have Met To Worship—334

Scripture Reading: Hebrews 6:1-20

Now Thank We All Our God—433

I Know Whom I Have Believed—356

Message:

The Prayer of Christ for Believers, Part 4:  
The Truth about Unity  
John 17:17-21

Prayer and Benediction

Closing Hymn: My Faith Has Found A Resting Place—404

Baptisms

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### On-Call Deacon List:

- November 15: Waddell
- November 22: Lucas
- November 29: Egan

### Church Cleaning Schedule:

- November 21: Shumpert/Smoak
- November 28: Egan/Fudge
- December 5: Olds/Shealy

### Church Bookstore:

Purchases (cash only) can be made by seeing Annsley or Cristan Smoak,  
or following the instructions left near the bookstore entrance.



## Announcements

We are excited to announce that Justin Peters will be with us in February for a 4 day conference. Please be in prayer as we work out the details for this conference. Begin spreading the word and inviting others to come. This will be a very important conference for discerning truth in these troubled times.

We have resumed our Wednesday study in the book of Romans. We would love for you to attend our services for a time of prayer and preaching of the Word of God. We will also have our “prayer in the other room” at 6 PM. Join us for a time dedicated to prayer for anyone to pray about anything. At 7 PM we have two dedicated prayers about specific predetermined topics.

On Wednesday, November 25, there will be no services due to Thanksgiving holiday.

November is a month in which we recognize all that we are thankful for: our nation, our veterans, and the Bible. As the spiritual war for truth rages on in our country and around the world, we need to equip our active duty service members and veterans with the life-giving truth of God’s Word in a format they can truly engage, Military BibleSticks. Every \$25.00 gift provides a valuable service member or veteran with a Military BibleStick and more... Your generosity will also equip others— those living in the outermost areas of the world who have little or no access to truth—with the vital weaponry of audio Scriptures. Thank you for reaching out to bless our troops and veterans troops and their families in a practical way by providing God’s Word through Military BibleSticks. \$25 sponsors one service member and their family. Please make checks payable to Covenant Baptist Church and indicate it is for BibleSticks. (<https://cdn.faithcomesbyhearing.com/resources/fcbh/mbk-resources/mbk-vision2033-poster-small.pdf>)

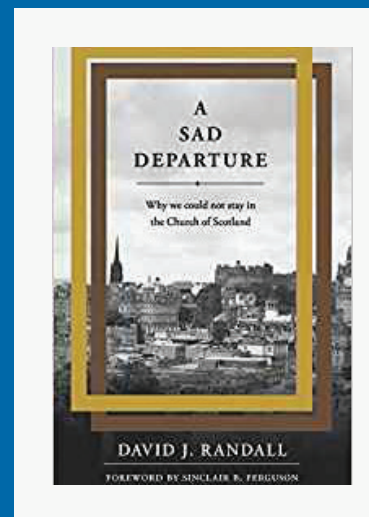
## Book of the Week: A Sad Departure by David J. Randall

*From the Forward by Sinclair Ferguson:*

*A Sad Departure* tells a dark story, almost novelesque in character. A church’s Theological Commission reaches a unanimous conclusion on the teaching on marriage given in its ultimate authority, the Bible. But then its General Assembly acts in a way that ignores, demeans, and rejects that teaching. Thus behind these sad departures lies the prior and much sadder departure of the Kirk from its sacred constitution.

Read the full description and purchase at:

[https://www.amazon.com/dp/1848716613/ref=cm\\_sw\\_r\\_sms\\_c\\_api\\_i.LpODbDPQXYWM](https://www.amazon.com/dp/1848716613/ref=cm_sw_r_sms_c_api_i.LpODbDPQXYWM)



## Covenant Baptist Church Events

**Greek Class**—*On hold*

**Biblical Counseling Class**—*On hold*

**Second Sunday Dinner**—*December 13th. Please plan to bring a dish to share and stay for the fellowship. Also remember that we usually have visitors who stay for the meal, and you are encouraged to bring more than a small side dish so that there is plenty to go around.*

**Planned Parenthood Gospel Outreach**—*Tuesday, Nov 17th and Friday, Nov 20th*

## Other Events:

**Truth: Answers for Women, March 27-28 2020**—(*Williamstown, KY*)

*DELAYED UNTIL 2021*

*More at: <https://answersingenesis.org/outreach/event/answers-for-women-2020/>*

**2021 National Conference | Ligonier Ministries, March 18-20**— (*Orlando, FL*)

*More at: <https://www.ligonier.org/events/2021-national-conference/>*



## Exposing the Underlying Worldview: Acts 17

—by Simon Turpin

### Encountering World Religions: Acts 17:16–34

If we want to share the gospel with those of other religions, it is important to know what the Bible says about this. Paul’s speech to the Areopagus in Acts 17:16–34 is the classic text for sharing the gospel with those from different religious backgrounds. In order to engage with his audience in Acts 17, Paul uses the biblical meta-narrative of the Creation-Fall, redemption, and consummation.

### Where Does Religion Come From?

Before looking at Acts 17, it is important to understand the origin of religion; in order to know the meaning of anything, we have to understand its origin. The origin of religion began in the Garden of Eden when God clearly revealed himself to Adam. However, Adam and Eve rejected that revelation and chose to believe a falsehood about Him. In this act of disobedience, they chose to follow Satan’s worldview over God’s worldview (Genesis 3:4–5). They created the first human religion, rejecting God’s perfect and true religion.

Adam’s disobedience had consequences for the rest of his descendants since it

affected how they viewed God and creation. This can be seen at the event of the Tower of Babel, which was the beginning of the religious diversity we see in the world today (see Deuteronomy 32:8, 16–17, 21). At the Tower of Babel, monotheism devolved into polytheism, pantheism, and the worship of anything other than the one true, living God. When the people were dispersed at Babel, they would have taken with them a hybrid truth of the living God mixed with the twisting and distorting of the truth of that revelation about Him (Romans 1:18–32). Religion then is first of all a response to God’s revelation—it is either in faith or rebellion. It is either based on God’s Word or man’s word.

### Idolatry in Athens

At his arrival in Athens, Paul sees that the city is full of idols, which to him are actually not gods at all (1 Corinthians 8:4; cf. Acts 19:26); in fact he believes that demonic influence lies behind them (1 Corinthians 10:20; 1 Timothy 4:1). Paul would have also understood the idolatry in Athens as evidence of suppressing the truth of God’s revelation in creation (Romans 1:18–20). When we realize that mis-directed religion is a human idolatrous response to God’s revelation, behind which are demonic influences, it will help us think about communicating the gospel to those of other religions. Nevertheless, Paul was so “provoked” at seeing the idolatry in the city that he was moved to preach the gospel in the market place.

### Paul’s Religious Audience: The Epicureans and Stoics

It was because Paul was preaching Jesus and the Resurrection (Acts 17:18–19) that some Epicurean and Stoic philosophers invited him to the Areopagus in order to know more of what he was teaching. These two philosophies were different from Paul’s worldview.

For example, the Epicureans were indifferent to the gods because they believed the gods were too removed to be objects of concern; the Epicureans were basically like today’s agnostic secularists. They argued that the chief human good was “pleasure” and that the gods did not interfere in human affairs. The Epicureans did not believe in an afterlife but rather believed that at death the body merely returned to its various elements.

The Stoics, on the other hand, were pantheists who argued for the unity of humanity and relationship with the divine. Both the Epicureans and Stoics were essentially materialists who, unlike Paul, did not believe in one God who created

the world and was sovereign over it (Acts 17:24–26; cf. 14:16).

## Paul's Platform: The Areopagus

Paul was invited by the Epicureans and Stoics to speak at the Areopagus, not because he was speaking about a generic God, but because he was preaching Jesus and the Resurrection (Acts 17:18–19), something the Greeks were philosophically opposed to (verse 32).

Paul did not look for some supposed neutral ground between himself and his Greek audience by speaking about God in generic terms in order to win the people over; this is important to keep in mind. One of the primary problems in Christian apologetics today is that, rather than defending the faith, many Christians end up defending a generic theism. We must realize that theism does not equal Christianity. As Christians we are not meant to make theists out of people; we are called to defend the Christian faith (1 Peter 3:15). This means sharing what the triune God of creation has done for us in the gospel and standing on the authority of Scripture.

Paul, however, begins his speech by noting that the Athenians are “very religious” (Acts 17:22, *δεισιδαιμονέστερος* *deisidaimonesteros*), a term which itself is ambiguous since it can be used either in a positive (religious) or negative (superstitious) sense; it is probably used in a negative sense here. For a rhetorical device, Paul deliberately chooses a word which would draw his audience into the context of his explanation of God, Creation, mankind, redemption, Resurrection, and judgment. He preached to the Athenians in this unique way because he recognized that his worldview was different from theirs; they were basically evolutionary in their thinking.

Paul was able to do this because he was not ignorant of the culture, nor was he consumed by it; but he observed the culture with the intent of proclaiming the gospel to it (Acts 17:16, 23). If we are to be better communicators of the gospel to people from other religions, it is important that we know something about what they believe.

## Encountering and Exposing the Unbelieving Worldview: Creation and Fall

Since Paul understood the people he was preaching to and their religious back-

ground, he knew the topics he needed to address. For instance, after seeing the idol to an “Unknown God,” Paul used it as a springboard for explaining who God really is. By doing this, Paul deliberately went against the philosophies of the people in his preaching by proclaiming God as Creator of everything (Isaiah 42:5; Exodus 20:11).

Paul then explains that God created mankind from one man (ESV). This idea contradicted the Athenians belief that they originated from the soil of the ground, as Schnabel explains:

*The reference to one ancestor in Acts 17:26 . . . is an unambiguous reference to the biblical tradition of the beginning of all human existence in the creation of Adam, the first man whom God brought into being (Gen 1:26–27, 2:7). There is no clear parallel in Greek thought or mythology to this conviction that the human race can be traced back to one man who was created by God.*

Paul deliberately refers to Adam in order to show that all people have their roots in the one man God originally created. The background of Acts 17:26–27 is Deuteronomy 32:8, which asserts monotheism in the face of polytheism, with the division of the nations mentioned in Genesis 10 and 11 as the remote background. This serves to highlight how God has providentially arranged the movements of the nations of mankind so that they may seek Him.

However, Paul tells the Athenians that their fallen attempt to seek after and find God is ultimately a failed one. In Acts 17:27, the term “grope” (*pselapheseian*) used “in both classical and biblical texts . . . refers to the groping of a blind person or the fumbling of a person in the darkness of night.” Witherington notes,

*The image is not an encouraging one, even when coupled with what follows it—“and yet God is not far from each one of us.” The overall effect of this verse is to highlight the dilemma and irony of the human situation. Though God is omnipresent, and so not far from any person, ironically human beings are stumbling around in the dark trying to find God. When one is blind, even an object right in front of one’s face can be missed. The sentence does not encourage us to think the speaker believes that the finding of the true God is actually going on, apart from divine revelation. To the contrary, the true God remains unknown apart from such revelation.*

This is why Paul will go on to present the revelation of the light of the gospel so that it can shine through the darkness of idolatry in Athens (cf. 2 Corinthians 4:6).



## Exploring and Evangelizing the Unbelieving Worldview: Redemption and Consummation

For the Athenians to relate to what he was saying, Paul connected the truth of who the Creator God is with the truth that God has already given to them by way of natural revelation. He did this by quoting two Greek poets to these Athenian philosophers (Acts 17:28). Paul used these Greek poets as a part of his defence and persuasion of the gospel. By taking what they already knew and bringing it to his defence, Paul used God's revelation in nature to persuade them of what they already knew to be true. He connected that inner knowledge to who God is, adding explicitly Christian content to it.

This connection with the knowledge of God that the Athenians already have leads to a bridge for Paul to share the gospel. Paul then tells the Athenians that God has overlooked the ignorance of the nations who find themselves in need of repentance and being reconciled to God through Christ (Acts 17:30).

In this way, the gospel can be seen as subversively fulfilling world religions. The gospel is subversive because it stands as the contradiction and confrontation to all manifestations of world religions. It makes a call for repentance from idolatry to the true and living God (Acts 17:30, 14:15; cf. 1 Thessalonians 1:9). But it is also the fulfilment of what these false religions seek. Since idols are counterfeits of the one true God, the metaphysical, ethical, and epistemological questions that other religions ask (but ultimately cannot answer) are answered by the triune God alone.

Unlike the Stoics, who had a cyclical view of the world, Paul concludes that there will be a definitive judgement on the world by Christ, so it is incumbent of all men to repent of their sin and turn to Him (Acts 17:30–31). The Resurrection of Jesus is the proof that there will be a final judgement.

### Reaction to Paul's Message

There was a threefold reaction to Paul's mention of the Resurrection and future judgement. First, it is mocked (Acts 17:32) by the Athenians. The idea of the Resurrection was incompatible with the Athenian view of life who believed that "once a man dies and the earth drinks up his blood, there is no resurrection." This is why, by the cultural standard of wisdom, the Cross and Resurrection was foolishness to the Greeks (1 Corinthians 1:23). The second reaction is that some have an open

mind to hear Paul again about this. Third, there was a positive response as some believe that Jesus is the Christ (Acts 17:34). Contrary to what some have wanted to suggest, Paul's apologetic methodology was not wasted in Athens. Rather it was successful, in that it gave the Athenians the foundation for understanding the gospel message and should be seen as a model of how to approach those who are "Greek" in their thinking.

### Conclusion

World religions are a rebellious, idolatrous response to God's revelation of Himself in creation. Because God has made himself known to every person, we need to communicate the truth of the gospel in such a way that it connects with the truth that God has already communicated by way of natural revelation. The good news is that God is now redeeming people from false religions throughout the earth and uniting them into one people of God through the gospel of Jesus Christ.



## Wikipedia bans editors from expressing support for traditional marriage

—by Anugrah Kumar

Wikipedia has decided to restrict its editors from expressing opposition to same-sex marriage on its platform — a decision that comes months after co-founder Larry Sanger said the site’s neutrality policy was “dead.”

Volunteers who write and edit Wikipedia’s articles can no longer include on their profile page any “userbox” — a badge expressing their beliefs — that is against gay marriage. For example, one such userbox states, “This user believes marriage is between one man and one woman.”

The decision was made after a recent discussion where “predominantly left-wing editors” argued such a stance was “discriminatory” and against site policy, according to Breitbart.

The discussion began after an editor, Adam Cuerden, suggested that just one userbox be deleted, calling it “pretty explicitly homophobic” and citing a site guideline prohibiting “inflammatory or divisive” content in userboxes. Soon, he suggested that other userboxes in favor of traditional marriage should also be deleted.

The move led site administrator “Ad Orientem” to resign, according to The Christian Institute, which noted that the administrator pointed out that the decision was “clearly inconsistent” with the project’s commitment to neutrality and condemned hostile com-

ments about traditional marriage supporters.

They “represent an ugly tendency to condemn the views of others as outside the bounds of acceptable thought, never minding those views are held by the vast majority of people globally and the followers of most of the world’s major religious faiths,” the administrator was quoted as saying.

In May, Wikipedia co-founder Sanger had declared that the site’s “NPOV,” or neutral point of view, “is dead.”

“The original policy long since forgotten, Wikipedia no longer has an effective neutrality policy,” he wrote. “There is a rewritten policy, but it endorses the utterly bankrupt canard that journalists should avoid what they call ‘false balance.’ The notion that we should avoid ‘false balance’ is directly contradictory to the original neutrality policy.”

Referring to the Jesus article on Wikipedia, Sanger said, “It simply asserts, again in its own voice, that ‘the quest for the historical Jesus has yielded major uncertainty on the historical reliability of the Gospels and on how closely the Jesus portrayed in the Bible reflects the historical Jesus.’”

He continued, “In another place, the article simply asserts, ‘the gospels are not independent nor consistent records of Jesus’ life.’ A great many Christians would take issue with such statements, which means it is not neutral for that reason—in other words, the very fact that most Christians believe in the historical reliability of the Gospels, and that they are wholly consistent, means that the article is biased if it simply asserts, without attribution or qualification, that this is a matter of ‘major uncertainty.’”

“In other respects, the article can be fairly described as a ‘liberal’ academic discussion of Jesus, focusing especially on assorted difficulties and controversies, while failing to explain traditional or orthodox views of those issues. So it might be ‘academic,’ but what it is not is neutral, not in the original sense we defined for Wikipedia.”

## On Abortion, from Tony Miano

Many Christians object to front line abortion clinic ministry. Some insist that it is too confrontational, too abrasive, impractical, unloving, and ineffective. Many Christians who object to this kind of ministry do so from the perspective of Crisis Pregnancy Center ministry.

Christian Crisis Pregnancy Centers are an important element to the Christian fight against abortion. Unfortunately, too few CPC's include the gospel of Jesus Christ in their ministry to men and women either contemplating abortion or looking for post-abortion counseling.

What many Christians fail to realize is the difference between front line abortuary ministry and CPC ministry.

When a woman walks into a CPC she is looking for help. When a woman walks into an abortuary she is looking to murder her child.

When a woman walks into a CPC the counselors have time to speak the truth in love to a person who is contemplating murdering her child. As a woman approaches the door of an abortuary, the Christians on the front line of battle, who want to save not only the life of the child but also the soul of the parents bent on murdering the child, have just a matter of seconds to change the parents' minds.

Such extraordinary circumstances, such critical incidents require fast thinking, stern talk, immediate prayer, and risk. The hope is that the murderous parents will stop long enough for the front line Christian soldier to talk to them about alternatives to murder and to proclaim the gospel to them.



## Other News:

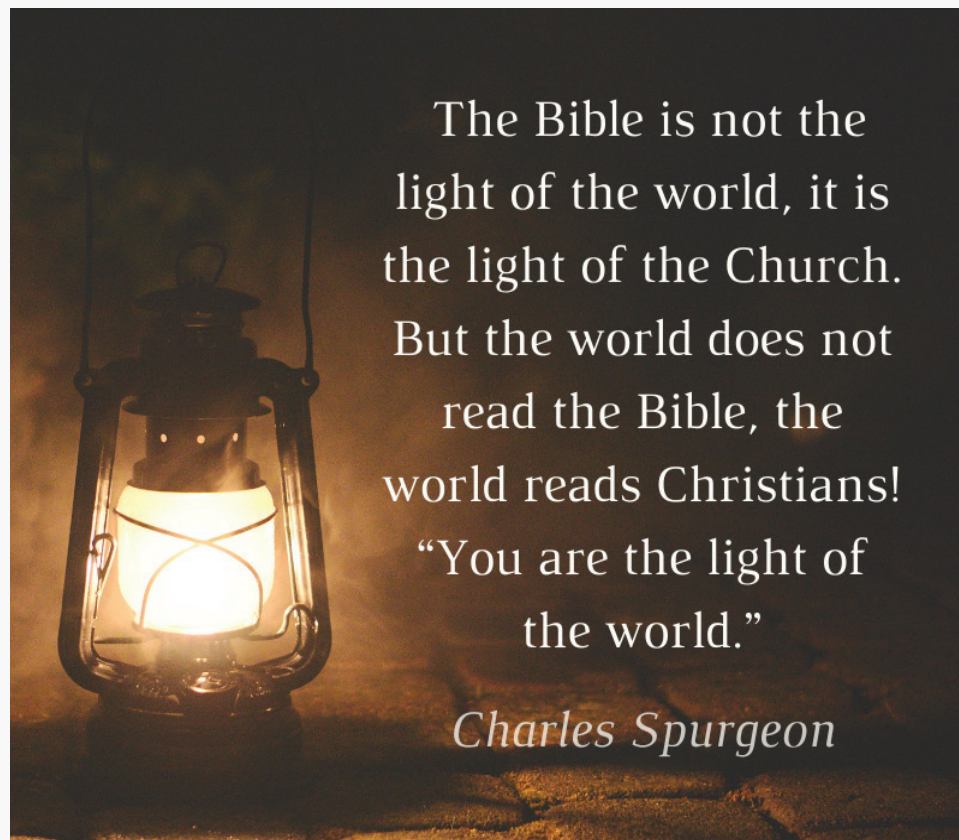
**Mississippi school forbids 3rd-grade girl from wearing “Jesus Loves Me” mask**— <https://disrn.com/news/mississippi-school-forbids-third-grade-girl-from-wearing-jesus-loves-me-mask>

**Store guard stabbed 27 times for asking two women to wear masks**— <https://www.wtsp.com/article/news/nation-world/store-guard-stabbed-masks-argument-chicago/67-e537ccba-7cb3-4ea2-b11a-c8f9b405a94a>

**Middle East Student Ministry Update**— <https://heartcrymissionary.com/mision-updates/middle-east-student-ministry-update/>

**Texas man who took down church shooter cleared of all charges by grand jury**— <https://disrn.com/news/texas-man-who-took-down-church-shooter-cleared-of-any-charges-by-grand-jury>

## Quote of the Week:



## Biblical Counseling Resources

**Strategies for Fighting Depression Well**—by Jim Newheiser  
<https://biblicalcounseling.com/fighting-depression-well/>

**Identity Language in Counseling**—by Martha Peace  
<https://biblicalcounseling.com/identity-language-in-counseling/>

**The Pursuit of Peace**—by Sam Stephens  
<https://biblicalcounseling.com/the-pursuit-of-peace/>

**Defeating Despair**—by Tim Pasma  
<https://biblicalcounseling.com/defeating-despair/>

**Gracious Words Amid Sword Thrusts**—by Jim Koerber  
<https://biblicalcounseling.com/gracious-words-amid-sword-thrusts/>

**You Can Please God**—by Kyle Gangel  
<https://biblicalcounseling.com/you-can-please-god/>

**Crafting Temptation and Repentance Plans to Help Addicts**—by Keith Palmer  
<https://biblicalcounseling.com/crafting-temptation-and-repentance-plans-to-help-addicts/>

### Covenant Baptist Biblical Counseling Class:

*A Biblical Counseling class started February 13th at 7 PM here at the church. If you would be interested in participating, please let the pastor know. We are going to livestream the class. Just go to the website at <https://covenantbaptistsc.org> and click the livestream button on home page at 7pm Thursdays.*

**Biblical counseling class on hold while teacher recovers from surgery.**



## Covenant Baptist Church

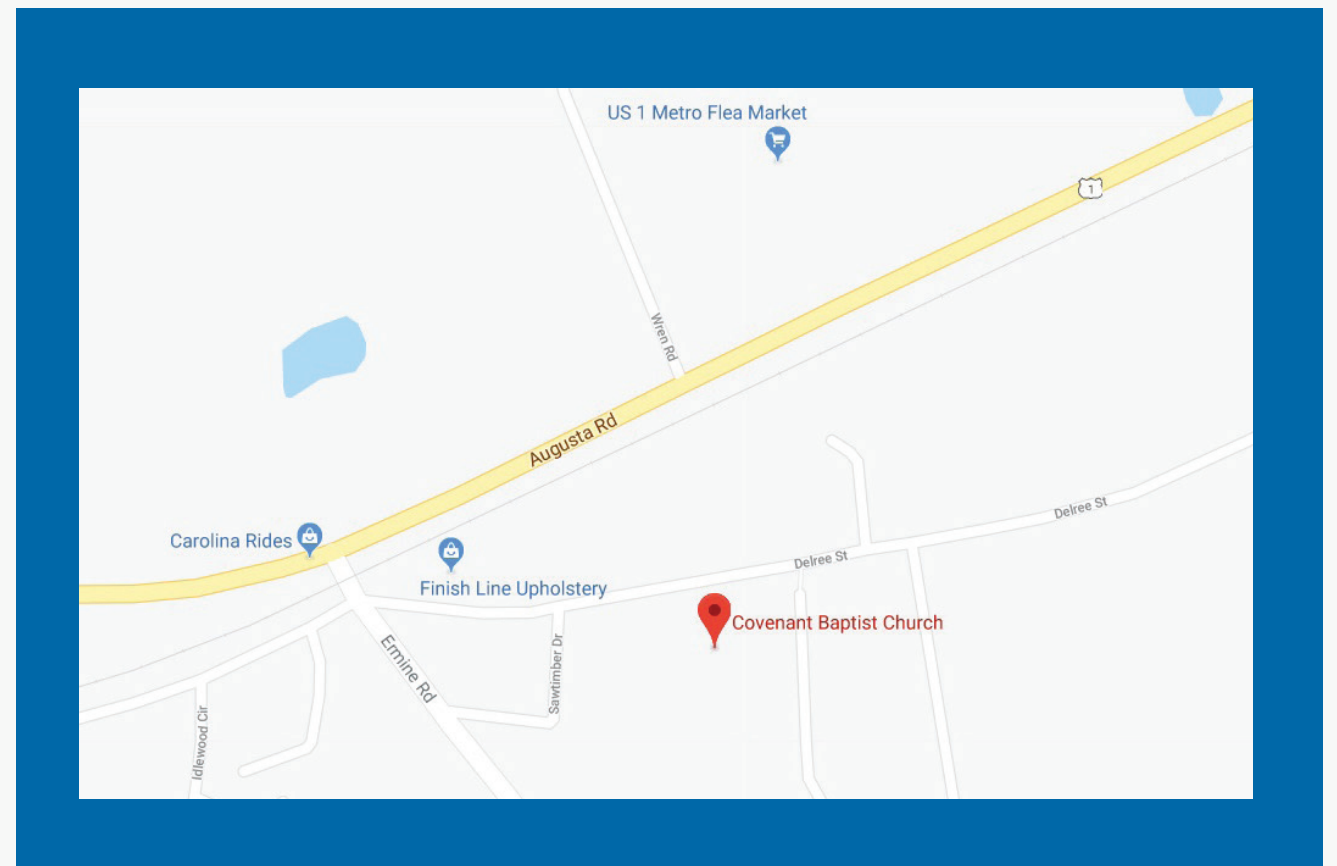
*Reformed and Refreshing*

*3535 Delree Street*

*West Columbia, SC 29170*

*<https://covenantbaptistsc.org>*

## Location:



*If you are interested in joining our church, please speak to one of our elders or deacons.  
They will be happy to give you the information you need.*