

# MBCB welcomes new pastors for orientation day

*By Chloe Newton*

*Staff Writer*

Over a decade has passed since the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) has hosted New Pastor Day. MBCB Executive Director-Treasurer, Shawn Parker, envisioned rekindling the event. On Nov. 18, 25 new pastors gathered from around the state to connect and to learn. The ultimate goal was to strengthen the relationship between the pastors and the convention.

“We wanted those guys to be able to spend a day with us, so they’ll know throughout all of our departments here what resources and what assistance that we can offer to the churches. We want them to know how we can work together with them in ministry. Being a new pastor, it’s a scary role, and it’s a scary time,” said John Pace, MBCB Director of Leadership.

“[It was a] a wonderful opportunity to connect with fellow brothers and sisters and get the chance to make use of their gifts and opportunities to further the kingdom,” said Noah Whitehead, pastor of New Harmony Baptist Church, Blue Springs. Whitehead was hired in May of 2023.

Throughout the day, the church leaders heard presentations from the three major teams at MBCB – church engagement, church support and church health. The pastors were able to ask questions, to learn more about how MBCB functions, and to bring awareness to the specific needs in their churches.

“All of our departments here at the building try to assist and relate to our churches, our ministers, our pastors, our leaders, to try to work together to accomplish the cause of

Christ, to advance the great commission and the great commandment of Christ here in our state,” said Pace.

The Leadership Department invited pastors who fell into one of two categories: pastors new to the state of Mississippi or those who have served in other roles within Mississippi Baptist churches but have shifted to a senior pastor role.

“I have recently made the switch to the senior pastor role,” said JD Hankins, senior pastor at Fredonia Baptist Church. “In this new role, I want to actually know what resources are available to us as pastors. And coming to events like this, sometimes things are presented to you that you haven’t even thought about. It kind of causes you to ask questions that maybe you’re not even thinking about.”

“There was great value [in the day]. Being able to catch up with fellow ministers in Mississippi and learning all the different ways that the Cooperative Program is funding ministry in the different departments is a blessing. I’m looking forward to cooperating with those I reached out to,” said Whitehead.