

# Mississippi Baptist worship and media leaders fill Longview Point, Hernando, for annual conference

*By Tanner Cade  
Correspondent*

The two-day Mississippi Worship and Media Conference (MWMC) took place July 20-21 at Longview Point Church, Hernando.



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The layout of the schedule includes opportunities for every church to benefit from practical guidance and resources shared.

Keynote speakers included Kenny Lamm, worship ministries strategist at the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, and Mike Harland, associate pastor of worship at First Church, Jackson.

Lamm led breakout sessions entitled, *Leading Change in Worship: Transitioning Your Church's Worship Without Dividing the Church* and *Song Set Creativity: Planned Spontaneity, Seamless Transitions, and What To Do with Your Plans When God Shows Up*.

Harland led breakouts focused on *The Purpose of the Gathered Church in Worship* and

*The Coda – Encouragement for the Long Haul*.

Other worship and media breakouts were led by:

- Don Chandler, worship pastor/Hillcrest Church, Byram.
- Michael Fedrick, worship leader/Williamsville Baptist Church, Kosciusko.
- Stephanie Saurenman, co-director of kids choir/Longview Point Church.
- Whitney Simon, director of children's ministries/First Church, Oxford.
- Brandon Hardin, assistant professor of music/William Carey University, Hattiesburg.
- Lorie Hanson, director of communications/ First Church, Madison.
- Rhonda Brooks, director of media & communications/Longview Point Church.
- Danielle Mullins, communication associate/Harrisburg Church, Tupelo.

"Thanks be to God for the Cooperative Program support provided by our Mississippi Baptist churches, given to support the annual equipping conference for worship and media ministry leaders," said Slater Murphy, MBCB director of worship ministries.

"This year's MWMC has been an amazing experience, including Christ-centered worship, deepening ministry connections, and

fantastic teaching,” he added. “Many of our bivocational ministry leaders have expressed to me their gratitude for this conference, as this is their only opportunity during the year to receive such training.”

Billy Williams serves as worship pastor at Clarke-Venable Church, Decatur, and also serves as the president of the Worship Ministries Church Music Conference. “From the fantastic worship of our awesome God to the helpful and informative breakout sessions, the MWMC was just what I needed as I prepare to lead my worship ministry into the Fall and Christmas seasons,” he said.

The conference began Thursday with afternoon rehearsals and an evening worship service led by the Mississippi Baptist Singing Churchmen and women as well as the Mississippi Baptist Symphony and Orchestra. Mike Harland shared a message geared to worship leaders out of the book of Psalms.

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Media breakout sessions covered audio technologies in worship, designing skills, social media, and planning volunteer teams.

The conference concluded with a passionate worship service led by Steven Hodge and the Longview Point Church worship team and choir. The final words of challenge came from Longview Point pastor Wade Stevens as he preached through chapter four in the book of John.

“Dear brothers, we ought to never be more moved by the crescendo than we are the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We are to worship spirited in the arm of truth, honor, and celebrating the goodness of Christ,” he said.

Stevens shared with worship and media leaders, “Dear brothers, sing the message of the Gospel. No one remembers my sermons, but they sing the songs.”

Murphy shared comments about the hosting church by saying, “Personally, I give praise to the Lord for Pastor Wade Stevens, Worship Pastor Steven Hodge, and the phenomenal staff and congregation of Longview Point Baptist Church, Hernando, for hosting this year’s state worship and media equipping conference.

‘They’ve truly rolled out the red carpet of hospitality. I’m thrilled our ministry leaders have had the opportunity to ‘soak’ in the missional DNA of this wonderful church family.”

Lamm started the conference by leading in the opening plenary session and directing the Singing Churchmen and women choir. He also shared similar sentiments about the conference after traveling from North Carolina to be a keynote speaker.

“It was such a great privilege to be able to come to be a part of this awesome event. Being able to lead the choir and orchestra in worship was a taste of heaven and a high point for me,” he said. “There was a great camaraderie among the people here and everyone was such a delight to work with. I’m very impressed with what Mississippi Baptists have going here.”

Tom Jenkins, associate pastor of music & media at First Church, Starkville, has experienced the conference in years past and regularly participates in the Singing Churchmen. He mentioned, “The 2023 MWMC conference was both challenging and encouraging, in the hospitality of Longview Point Church, in the worship services, in the breakouts.

“No matter your length of time in ministry, God is ready to inspire and teach you. Every church in Mississippi would benefit from sending their worship leader to this conference,” he said.

“Not only is the worship time with the mass choir and orchestra, along with the worship ministry of the host church, so powerful and uplifting, this joint conference blending worship and media is extremely beneficial for worship pastors to get help in areas to grow our ministries in our own churches,” said Byron Green, associate pastor for worship & business at Cross Roads Church, Pelahatchie.

Green also serves as the instrumental event coordinator at MBCB. “I personally come back greatly encouraged in my own ministry from the ideas and teaching from the clinicians and breakout sessions,” he said.

“Hosting the conference has been a real joy and treat to us,” said Hodge as he helped lead hosting responsibilities. “We are really privileged here in the northwest part of the state that we get to host as great an event as this.”

The worship ministries department confirms over 125 attended MWMC.

The Mississippi Worship and Media Conference is supported by gifts to the Mississippi Cooperative Program and registration fees. For more information, contact the MBCB Worship Ministries Department at [cwtaylor@mbcb.org](mailto:cwtaylor@mbcb.org). Telephone (601) 292-3267.

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