

NAMB training provides resources to develop culture of evangelism

By Chloe Newton

Staff Writer

Pastors and other ministry staff from across Mississippi attended an evangelism training run by the North American Mission Board (NAMB) on September 24 at First Church, Brandon. The training courses have been occurring for about a year and a half throughout the United States. NAMB desires to partner with every state convention and with pastors to develop an evangelism culture in the local churches.

“We’re attempting to help pastors put together a roadmap to create a culture of evangelism in the life of their church. It’s in the DNA of the life of their church, and it’s in every ministry. So it doesn’t matter if it’s children’s ministry, student ministry, senior adults, the worship ministry, small groups, it’s all focused on evangelism. And so the whole church is immersed in it,” said Tim Dowdy, NAMB’S Vice President of Evangelism.

Attendees received an evangelism kit provided by NAMB to equip church leaders with the tools to grow their church’s engagement in sharing the Gospel daily.

“I came today because I wanted to experience the North American Mission Board evangelism kit,” said Andrew Irwin, student minister at First Church, Laurel. “They did a great job of just kind of helping us realize, we need to be doing [evangelism] ourselves. We need to be healthy ourselves. If we’re ever going to have this change in our congregation, it’s got to start with us.”

The training seeks to boost morale in the effectiveness of evangelism. When churches dwell upon reaching the nation with the Gospel, it seems an overwhelming task. However, Jesus promised his disciples that he would be with them (Matthew 28:20). It is not the effort of one church that will reach the nation, but of many churches working together.

“We want to make this a priority of raising up our church, raising up the people of the church to be serious about fulfilling the great commission. So just very excited that we’ve got guys with a renewed focus on leading evangelistic efforts in the church,” said Bo Rice, pastor of First Church, Brandon, and host of the event.

“These kinds of events in general encourage me. I have an opportunity to sit down and be poured into and really revived and regenerated with all the things that we’re supposed to be doing. I continue to be encouraged to keep leading out in [evangelism], but for me to do it just for the joy of obeying Christ in that particular area,” said Collin Montgomery, pastor of First Church, Greenwood.

As spiritual lostness in North America increases, so must evangelism efforts. NAMB hosts these trainings so pastors are well-equipped to train up members in the Great Commission. Pastors have a responsibility to show the urgent need for members to daily engage neighbors and coworkers with the Gospel.

“The good news is churches have reengaged and they’re more hungry to share the gospel with their neighbors and friends and family and to be on mission locally and abroad with the gospel,” said Dowdy.

“We’ve had so much good response to the North American Mission Board,” said Don Lum, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board’s Director of Evangelism. “That tells me we have confidence in the North American Mission Board and what they’re trying to

accomplish and how they're trying to partner with us and with our churches, and that's been pretty special."