



SEPTEMBER 18, 2026

MBCH to acquire two Baptist Homes facilities

The Missouri Baptist Children's Home (MBCH) has agreed to acquire two facilities currently under the management of Baptist Homes & Healthcare Ministries (BHHM), pending approval of messengers at the MBC Annual Meeting Oct. 26-27 in St. Charles.

The boards of MBCH and Baptist Homes have agreed to the acquisition, with the Baptist Homes board deciding to sell its remaining properties and cease operations. This decision is a result of months of prayer, study, and careful consideration regarding the unsustainability of the current BHHM ministry in a highly competitive senior-care environment.

On Aug. 24-25, the Missouri Baptist Convention's Executive Board considered a request from BHHM to cease operations, along with a request from MBCH to expand its ministry assignment to include senior care. After considerable prayer and discussion, the Executive Board unanimously approved both requests.

Next month, the Executive Board will ask messengers at the MBC Annual Meeting in St. Charles to approve both requests.

Staff and residents of all Baptist Homes operations have been notified of the decision.

With the acquisition of the Ashland and Ozark facilities, MBCH would expand its mission of meeting urgent needs and creating eternal impact for children and families to include senior adults. This vision is rooted in James 1:27, joining the care for orphans, widows, and vulnerable families under one gospel-centered calling, according to Andy Helton, MBCH executive vice president.

"This is a kingdom opportunity to preserve a Missouri Baptist legacy, steward resources wisely, and extend gospel compassion across every season of life," said Helton.

MBCH's late president, Juston Gates, cast the vision for this initiative, in concert with now-retired Baptist Homes President Rodney Harrison. Understanding the economic headwinds that challenged Baptist Homes, yet desiring to continue providing Christlike, compassionate care for the aging, Gates and Harrison began pursuing a solution that would align BHHM's legacy with MBCH's expanding ministries.

Gates and Harrison understood that the needs of children, youth, families, and the aging are not isolated ministry concerns, said Helton. Rather, they're parts of one larger Baptist

witness to the sanctity of life, the dignity of every person, and the redeeming compassion of Christ.

After prayerful consideration and extensive evaluation, the staff and trustees of MBCH and BHBM, in consultation with senior leaders of the Missouri Baptist Convention, concluded that a more focused, financially viable path would best preserve and strengthen the Missouri Baptist senior-care ministry for the future.

This approach includes Baptist Homes selling five of its senior-care facilities and MBCH acquiring the Ozark and Ashland facilities – both of which are financially strong – thereby reducing operational costs, easing staff demands, and positioning Missouri Baptists' senior-care ministries for long-term viability and kingdom impact.

MBC Executive Director Wes Fowler noted that the refined direction of MBCH and BHBM enables Missouri Baptists to remain faithful to their cooperative commitment and to the biblical mandate of James 1:27: "Pure and undefiled religion before God the Father is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself unstained from the world."

Said Fowler: "By incorporating Baptist Homes' calling to provide Christlike, compassionate care for the aging into MBCH's longstanding commitment to children, youth, and families, this initiative gives Missouri Baptists a compelling opportunity to serve both the vulnerable young and the vulnerable aging with a unified gospel-centered purpose."

Ron Mackey, interim president of Baptist Homes, said this initiative represents a faithful, biblically sound, and forward-looking response to the needs facing Missouri Baptists.

"This allows Missouri Baptists to steward ministry resources wisely, protect a cherished Baptist legacy, and advance a united witness of gospel compassion across every season of life."

Additional information will be provided to Missouri Baptists through letters, *Pathway* articles, videos, and web and social media offerings.