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OUACHITA BAPTIST UNIVERSITY



NEWS

For immediate release

Ouachita's Called 2 Ministry Retreat attracts 150 students and leaders

By Trennis Henderson, OBU Vice President for Communications

August 2, 2017

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ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—Helping equip the next generation of Christian ministers, Ouachita Baptist University recently hosted its inaugural Called 2 Ministry Retreat.

A total of 90 high school students interested in exploring a call to Christian ministry gathered for the July 28-29 retreat on Ouachita's Arkadelphia campus. Participants included 52 high school students from across Arkansas as well as students from Texas, Louisiana and Oklahoma.



Combined with Ouachita student hosts, presenters, faculty and staff, the retreat attracted approximately 150 participants. Among the speakers and facilitators were more than 30 Ouachita alumni, giving them the opportunity to invest in future ministry leaders.

“Called to Ministry reflects our commitment to help students pursue their call to ministry – beyond preparing them as Ouachita students -- that will serve Arkansas churches and beyond,” emphasized Ouachita President Ben Sells.

“It is part of our mission and larger dream for Ouachita to be a place and C2M a gathering to help high school students explore God’s call on their lives,” Dr. Sells added. He said plans are under way to host the second annual C2M Retreat next summer.

The two-day retreat was co-sponsored by Ouachita, the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, the Prestonwood Network and Cross Church School of Ministry. The partnership between Ouachita and the state convention reflects an ongoing commitment to serve together for the benefit of Arkansas Baptists and local churches.

Dr. J.D. “Sonny” Tucker, executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, served as one of the retreat’s breakout leaders. “God is calling some of Arkansas’ top students into vocational ministry,” he said. “As leaders, we have a holy responsibility to assist and facilitate these young people in every way possible.

“The C2M retreat at Ouachita was a top shelf Kingdom response to what God is doing,” Dr. Tucker added. “The ABSC staff has planned several regional ‘Explore your Call’ events this fall, and the event at Ouachita was an incredible kick-off for Arkansas Baptists to focus with great intensity on these students. I deeply appreciate Dr. Ben Sells and Ouachita serving as a host and a partner with this event. This spirit of partnership and cooperation is one of the reasons Arkansas is such a special place.”



Seven Ouachita alumni returned to campus as keynote speakers for the retreat, including Brandon Barnard, teaching pastor at Fellowship Bible Church in Little Rock; Marty Collier, co-pastor of the Church on Rush Creek in Dallas; Susan Goss, founder of Tangible Truth Ministries in Bentonville, Ark.; Brian Mills, college pastor at Cross Church in Fayetteville Ark.; Jeremy Nottingham, senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Brandon, Miss.; Jarrett Stephens, teaching pastor at Prestonwood Baptist Church in Dallas; and Nathan Wagon of Watermark Community Church in Dallas. Worship was led by Blake Johnson, student ministry worship leader at Prestonwood.

Keynote addresses highlighted such topics as “Here Am I, Send Me,” “How to Respond When Critics Ask” and “Your Place in God’s Story.” A total of 14 breakout sessions addressed such issues as “A Call to Lead: Shepherding and Inspiring Others,” “A Heart for Worship: Exploring Styles of Music and Worship” and “A Call to the Nations: Opportunities to Serve in the Biblical World Movement.”

For more information about Called 2 Ministry, email C2M@obu.edu. To learn more about Ouachita or to schedule a campus visit, call 1-800-DIAL-OBU or visit www.obu.edu.

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