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For immediate release

Wilkins honored as ABSC Associational Missionary of the Year

By Rachel Moreno

March 5, 2019

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PARIS, Ark. – Dennis Wilkins was named this year's Associational Missionary of the Year during the Arkansas Baptist State Convention's (ABSC) annual Associational Missionaries' Workshop, which was held Feb. 25-27 at Mount Magazine State Park. Associational missionaries from around the state attend the yearly meeting for workshops, group discussions, worship and fellowship.

Ouachita Baptist University hosts a dinner every year during the meeting and announces the recipient of the Associational Missionary of the Year Award.

"We recognize that each associational missionary is genuinely committed to the Lord, your association, and the larger work of Arkansas Baptists," said Dr. Ben Sells, president of Ouachita. "Each year, there are multiple recommendations for this award and so many people who could be the recipient. We take this opportunity to spotlight one of your peers to collectively say 'well done, good and faithful servant.'"

Sells went on to ask Wilkins, who leads the North Pulaski Association, to join him at the podium as he shared why Wilkins was named this year's honoree.

"Dennis' journey to being an associational missionary has been non-traditional, yet in God's providence this journey likely helped him to have such an impact in a short amount of time," Sells said.

Wilkins, who originally is from North Little Rock and is a 1967 Ouachita graduate, worked for companies Proctor and Gamble, Fairfield Communities and Del Webb Corporation from 1967 to 1996 before surrendering to the call to ministry. He then pastored First Baptist Church in Bluffton, S.C., was active in the South Carolina Baptist Convention and served on the North American Mission Board.

After returning to Arkansas, Wilkins served as interim pastor for 47th Street Baptist Church of North Little Rock. Originally stepping into the role of associational missionary for North Pulaski as an interim, Wilkins was later asked to stay and has served full-time since 2015. Wilkins also serves on Arkansas Baptists' Task Force for Prayer and Spiritual Awakening and Conflict and Reconciliation ministry.

"In interviewing people to learn more about Dennis' impact as an associational missionary, I learned the following," Sells continued. "Dennis is a connector, a man who one person said has 'a vision bigger than himself and a gift for uniting others for the Kingdom.' Dennis is a Kingdom builder. A prime example is how he has led his association to pray for revival and spiritual awakening in a way that one pastor described as 'contagious.' ... He has successfully encouraged the churches in his area to engage in missions efforts around the state. He was particularly helpful in planning and implementing the Acts 1:8 Day in North Pulaski in 2017.

"Thank you, Dennis, for your faithfulness to the Lord throughout your life and for how you have stewarded your experiences and gifts to have such an impact in the North Pulaski Association and across the state," Sells said.

Wilkins is married to Marsha. Together they have two daughters, two grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

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