

## **Louisiana Baptist Agricultural Missions Fellowship**

### **News from the Annual Meeting:**

The 2016 annual meeting of the Fellowship was held at FBC, Homer on January 30 with good attendance. Louisiana members attending also welcomed members of the Board of Directors of the Agricultural Missions Foundation (ADF), which is the parent organization of our Louisiana Fellowship. The objective of both organizations is similar and is to provide technical and financial support to agricultural projects around the world for the Kingdom of Christ. We were happy ADF members chose to hold their winter meeting with ours.

The crowd was treated to excellent historical perspectives on agricultural missions from Nelson Philpot of Louisiana and Harold Watson from Mississippi. Nelson has a great affinity for the currently supported work in Southern Mexico having traveled to that region several times. Mr. Watson spent 35 years as an agricultural missionary in the Philippines, as well as in several other countries in Southeast Asia. His contributions to the physical and spiritual well-being of the rural poor would be difficult to exaggerate.

Next on the program was retired agricultural missionary Kerry Johnson and his wife Mauri who discussed numerous self-help projects established among the Zapotec Indians of Southern Mexico. Kerry's passion for agricultural missions and his love for the people with whom he spent so much time was very evident. Our Louisiana Fellowship has sponsored projects in that region for the past 15 years. The Zapotec people had an incredible history until Europeans conquered the region and forced them to live primarily high in the mountains on the very fringe of society. The Zapotecs are known as "The people of the corn" because they first domesticated corn and gave it to the entire world.

Following a delicious catfish lunch with all the trimmings served by some of the members of FBC, Homer, both our Fellowship and the ADF Board held their respective business meetings. During our business meeting, we were very encouraged by the report that was read from the Swains who the Fellowship supported for the first time in 2015. They are serving in Eastern Europe and made great use of the funds that were provided. Through the Swains efforts and our support, several greenhouses were constructed for the production of calla lilies, cabbage, and immortelle (a local crop from which an oil is distilled for pharmaceutical use). Drip irrigation systems also were installed and 5 sheep and a milk cow were provided. There are plans for more greenhouses and irrigation systems. Our meeting concluded with the decision to continue to support projects both in Southern Mexico and in Eastern Europe. A total of \$12,100 dollars was approved for disbursement.