

# NEWS FROM CLUSTER SEVEN

**Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

**Cluster 7 of AOK Synod  
Report - May 2017**

Cluster 7 organized on February 6, 2016. Churches in the Cluster included Cherokee Village Lutheran, Cherokee Village; Christ by the Lake, Bull Shoals; Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Mountain Home; Hope Lutheran, Heber Springs; Lord of the Lake Lutheran, Diamond City, and Our Savior, Jonesboro. Hope Lutheran since that time has requested and been granted leave to join with Cluster 8 due to geographical proximity. Even so, the churches are spread far apart mile-wise but close in heart and make up of congregations. Communication is primarily through technology, i.e. email, newsletter, Facebook, and Dropbox. The phone is handy, too.

The Cluster has met together four times to deliberate on mission, share projects which have been successful in individual parishes, and plan activities that can be accomplished together. A planned celebration for a Cluster 7 Reformation observance is underway. Holy Cross will host this event with all churches assisting. It was decided at the last meeting in March that the Cluster would meet quarterly. The next meeting will be in Cherokee Village on June 17th.

Clusters 7 and 8 WELCA groups met on April 22<sup>nd</sup> hosted by Holy Cross.

When first organized, the Cluster had one ordained pastor, Pastor Sherman Gordius, serving at Christ by the Lake in Bull Shoals. Holy Cross in Mountain Home was served by an interim pastor; Lord of the Lake in Diamond City by a Synodically Authorized Ministry Team (SAM), and the rest by supply pastors.

Currently, the five churches have two ordained ministers and three SAM teams. Pastor Lynne O'Shea was welcomed to Holy Cross in March. SAM teams receive instruction from the Bishop online through modules. Members of these teams may preach and preside at communion in the church they serve as lay ministers.

Mike Clark, member of Holy Cross and a retired Pastor, currently serving as pastor for a sister church of the Presbyterian faith serves as our Dean. He facilitates the mission and ministry of Cluster 7 and Synod as a liaison between the Bishop and the various churches in Cluster 7, either using electronic means or in person.

Shari Marshall, SAM Lead Minister for Lord of the Lake Lutheran in Diamond City was chosen as Cluster 7 Coordinator. Dar Wiggers from Holy Cross was appointed secretary.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mike Clark, Dean  
Shari Marshall, Coordinator