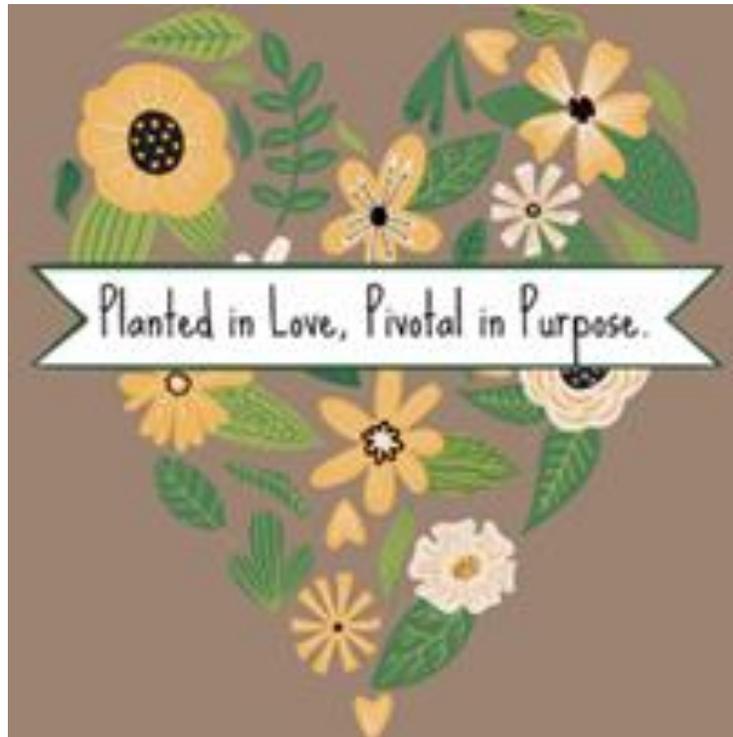


# Convention Visions



A Closer Look at the Virginia Synodical  
Women's Organization



Colossians 3:17

“And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”

# The Virginia Synodical Women's Organization

## Meet Virtually

Over 50 women gathered virtually for the 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Virginia Synodical Women's Organization (VWSO) Convention on September 25<sup>th</sup>. This year's theme was "Planted in Love, Pivotal in Purpose" following the convention scripture verse, Colossians 3:17. The theme embraced the fact that change is enviable but must be done with purpose and keeping God at the center of all we do.

The event opened with a wonderful worship service that celebrated 50-40-10 ordination of women, women of color, and members of the LBGTQI+ community. Those taking part included Pastors Barbara Krumm, Michelle Stramiello, Karen Casperson, and Tobi Fleck (joining from the NC synod). Pastor Jeniffer Tillman, the convention chaplain, delivered a very inspiring message. Amazing music was provided by Deacon Lavelva Stevens and Linda Hawks.

The keynote speaker was Pastor Colleen Montgomery, Director for Digital Ministry and the Mission Developer for All Places Together, an innovative and experimental digital ministry designed to reach those who are not currently connected to a worshipping community and are seeking to connect faith and life. She shared with the group the foundation of this digital ministry and how it connects to individuals. Her talk was very enlightening and showed the many ways ministry can be done.

Greetings from the current executive board of Women of the ELCA (WELCA) were delivered by Becky Shurson from her home in Eugene, Oregon. Becky is the outgoing Vice President of the churchwide organization. She shared ways to stay informed and connected to WELCA, changes in staffing as well constitutional changes that were passed at the virtual convention held in August.

Bishop Robert Humphrey opened the afternoon session with prayer and brought greetings from the Virginia Synod. Jody Smiley, the outgoing president, delivered her message. She thanked all the women of the Virginia Synod for their support of her and the VSWO.

During the business session a budget for 2022-2023 was passed and a new board was elected. The officers elected were Sylvia Eley-vice president, JoAnn Fawley-secretary, Lavelva Stevens-treasurer. The board members elected were Carol Bailey, Theresa Thomas, Edith Blake, June Nabors, and Patricia Seelenbinder. The VSWO thanks the outgoing board members and the newly elected for their willingness to serve.

The convention closed with a liturgy to celebrate bold women, a Women of the ELCA resource. The Bulletin of Reports for the 33<sup>rd</sup> annual VSWO convention can be found at [vswowebby.com](http://vswowebby.com).

The VSWO would like to thank all those that made this unique convention possible, especially Pastor Colleen Montgomery. Without her assistance this event would not have been possible.

## Contact Information for Your New VSWO Board

### Officers:

Vice-President: Sylvia Eley Email: [seley2005@msn.com](mailto:seley2005@msn.com)

Secretary: JoAnn Fawley Email: [fawley6409@gmail.com](mailto:fawley6409@gmail.com)

Treasurer: Deniese Powell (Term ends 1/31/22) Email: [deniese.powell@yahoo.com](mailto:deniese.powell@yahoo.com)  
Lavelva Stevens (Term begins 2/1/22) Email: [lstevens01@verizon.net](mailto:lstevens01@verizon.net)

### Board Members:

Edith Blake: Email: [EJBWWB@aol.com](mailto:EJBWWB@aol.com) Carol Bailey: Email: [tcmtnest@comcast.net](mailto:tcmtnest@comcast.net)

June Nabers: Email: [jnabers@hotmail.com](mailto:jnabers@hotmail.com) Theresa Thomas: Email: [prof\\_tsquared@yahoo.com](mailto:prof_tsquared@yahoo.com)

Pat Seelenbinder: Email: [pnseelen@cox.net](mailto:pnseelen@cox.net)

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Subscribing to Gather magazine is another way of supporting Women of the ELCA. Each issue contains a monthly Bible study which is already planned out in timed increments and ready for your group to use. Also, there are wonderful inspirational articles written by women of faith. Gather is published ten times a year with combined issues in January/February and July/August. Your print subscription comes with free access to the digital edition as well.

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