

Rejoice with Bold Women: VSWO 2013 Convention

Are you a bold woman? Do you appreciate the stories of the bold women of the Bible? Then, mark your calendars for July 19– 21, 2013 for a VSWO Convention at Roanoke College you won't want to miss! Convention highlights include:

Be Bold!

Our convention theme is ***Rejoice with Bold Women***. Find your bold and join us!

Our Guests

The Rev. Kathleen Miko will serve as our convention chaplain. Patti Austin of Decatur, GA will be our Churchwide Women's Organization representative and Julie Swanson, Executive Director of Lutheran Family Services, will be our keynote speaker.

Elections

We'll elect a president, treasurer and 4 board members. We'll also be electing delegates to represent the VSWO at 2014 Triennial Convention in Charlotte, NC. Watch for nominating forms in the Call to Convention coming out in April.

Make a joyful noise!

Our convention hymn is "*For All the Faithful Women*." Lavelva Stevens, Linda Hawks and Mary Kinser Hicks return as our wonderful musicians and song leaders!

Need a scholarship?

Is the cost of convention keeping you away? Would you like to encourage a new woman from your congregation to attend? We have money available to help through the Sophie Wilson Grant Fund. These funds are available for first-time, non-delegate attendees. Scholarship applications will be in the Call to Convention.

Calling all Young Women!

Eleven young women (one from each conference) will be our guests for a Young Women's Gathering at convention. Jody Smiley will coordinate this event. Contact your Conference Coordinator to nominate a young woman to attend.

Awareness Sessions

- * Sharing advice for young women
- * Sewing pillow case dresses
- * Anti-racism
- * Bible Study
- * Learn more about Women of the ELCA and more!

Love Offering

Our love offering will support *A Common Thread*—a program in Lexington that teaches weaving to victims of domestic and sexual violence. You'll also have a chance to buy their products which support the goal of independent, violence-free living.

Women of the Bible featuring Anita Gutschick

On Saturday afternoon, we'll have a special treat with Anita Gutschick performing "The Wife, The Witch and The Virgin." Anita has performed **Women of the Bible** over 750 times in 31 states and the District of Columbia. Since 1989, Anita has been known in the greater Baltimore/Washington, D.C.-area for her extensive stage work, as well as her work in radio and film. She has studied acting, voice and movement, and has worked with Burn Brae Dinner Theater's Student Enrichment Program and Maryland Hall Story Theater. Anita is a member of Christians in Theatre Arts (CITA) and the Network of Biblical Storytellers (NOBS). To learn about Anita and her roles, check out www.womenofthebible.com. This is a performance you won't want to miss!

A Word from Risse

True Faith

*We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end and confidence we had at first.
Hebrews 3:14*

Holding firmly to your faith and learning to trust God can be challenging at times, at least for me it is. I have had more than a few life situations where I sometimes doubted my faith and trust in God. But, as I look back on these times of struggle, heartache and pain I now realize that through these dark times something wonderful and good came from it. I struggled through divorce, but then God blessed me with the most wonderful husband a gal could ask for. I had a miscarriage, and then God gave me Jana. Our family had to move from Houston, Texas to Virginia leaving all of our dear friends and the church we loved. Then God showed us that it was necessary in order for me to be closer to my family. Shortly after our move my father and sister became gravely ill. Our move allowed me to help care for them and spend time with them before their deaths. I could go on and on giving you examples of the times my faith went south. Through these times I questioned God's motives and even found myself angry, bitter and yes even on occasions doubting if there was even a God at all. My faith certainly rolled in and out depending on the situation.

When my youngest daughter Jana was 5 she attended half day kindergarten. While she was in school I would drive to downtown Houston and teach a class at the community college. After my class I would rush back to pick her up always fearful that I would be late and she would be scared that I had forgotten her. One particular day I was over 25 minutes late picking her up due to bad traffic. I was hysterical and panicked. As I flew around the corner of her school I saw Jana and her teacher Mrs. Faletto sitting on the school curb waiting patiently for me to arrive. I apologized time and time again to Mrs. Faletto as she buckled Jana into the car seat. On our way home I said to Jana, "I am so sorry for being late to pick you up. I know you must have been so scared that mommy forgot you." Then Jana looked at me puzzled and said, "I wasn't scared mommy, I told Mrs. Faletto that you were probably shopping at Target and just lost track of time." She said, "I knew you would come get me sooner or later". My baby girl had all the faith in the world that her mommy loved her and would never forget her. Her faith and trust in me never faltered. I often think back of that day and wish that my own faith in God was as strong as Jana's during times of struggles.

December 28th was another one of those days I struggled with my faith. I received the dreaded news that I have breast cancer. When I heard those words from my radiologist my first thought was *why on earth had God let me down again and would I be able to survive cancer*. Fear rushed through my body. After all, I did watch my sister suffer long and hard from this terrible disease. It was a lot to take in, but as I started sharing this news with my family and friends, I soon realized that God has blessed me with a wonderful support system. God has blessed me with great physicians and medical facilities. God has blessed me with each of you, the mighty prayer warriors of the VSWO. I know for a fact now that God has placed me here in the midst of you because your prayers, support and love will carry me through this journey. The overwhelming response of cards, emails, and phone calls has been amazing and I thank you. I have a long year of treatment ahead of me, but I know that with God and each of you on my side my journey will be a stroll to good health. I ask that you keep me and my family in your thoughts and prayers. Please join me on my journey to healing by visiting my Caring Bridge webpage at www.caringbridge.org/visit/rissesnelgrove.

True faith is constant; it doesn't roll in and out depending on the situation. Faith is staying focused on Christ and holding on to Him tenaciously. Focus your heart on Christ and strive to know Him better and better. Learn to trust Him...no matter what.

Who, me? A leader? ~ Judy Ann Fray, Leadership Development

Women of the ELCA and the VSWO as an organization within the ELCA, provides opportunities for women to grow in leadership skills which may be used in many situations BEYOND this Organization, be it the wider Church, one's family, community, school or social / civic organizations.

Most likely, if you are reading this newsletter, you are a leader in your Unit of Women of the ELCA. Women's leadership roles are not limited to holding elected office, and may be as discreet as having others ask your opinion and look to you for ideas and helpful suggestions. BOLD WOMEN leaders may even be those who use their abilities quietly to make a difference in the life of their organization.

Having some knowledge and experience with Parliamentary Procedure is a helpful tool for leaders. The Procedure provides for an orderly meeting and facilitates discussion, whether or not everyone is in agreement. Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised is the authority used by almost all organizations in conducting business. The 11th edition, printed in 2011, is a 'fat' little book of almost 700 pages: enough to turn most of us away by its intimidating size and detail of content. "Simplified" versions of this important and imposing book may be available and useful in most everyday situations.

A secretary or recorder who provides accurate minutes (proceedings) of the business also provides a historical record for the group as well as important information for subsequent meetings. This helps the presiding officer to prepare the meeting agendas and provides members with an idea of their expectations when presenting reports.

Business meetings can be interesting and challenging. Following an agenda provides a 'skeleton' for the meeting, and should allow for additions / adjustments in order that important subject matter is included. Business meetings allow ideas to be exchanged, plans to be made and action to be taken for a fulfilling leadership experience.

In order that the VSWO continue to grow, we must always be:

- **RECRUITING LEADERS** – Seeking new women for positions of leadership or active women for new positions
- **DEVELOPING LEADERS** – Preparing women to assume new roles and learn new skills; encouraging women to grow and stretch
- **GUIDING LEADERS** – Assisting and advising other women in their leadership activities AND
- **AFFIRMING LEADERS** – Expressing our appreciation for the gifts of other women and thanking them for their contributions

Yes, you just may be a LEADER!

Nominations are Needed !

Like the military looking for a few good men, the Nominating Committee is looking for a few GOOD WOMEN!!

At our Convention we will be electing 2 Officers, President & Treasurer, four Board Members and delegates for the 2014 Triennial Convention. I would like for each WELCA unit to prayerfully consider names to fill these positions. Our units have many talented ladies in all facets—business, religion related fields, social workers, communication, etc.

If each unit could send two or more names it would represent a slate of Officers and Board Members. It would also be a good representation of our Synod. Keep this in mind so that when you receive your Call to Convention you will readily have nominees.

Anna Barb & Imogene Ryman
Committee Members

Mission: Discipleship ~ *Imogene Ryman*

We would like to remind you that Lutheran World Relief wants more quilts! Because of all of the disasters we have experienced in the past year, there is a shortage of quilts. Lutheran World Relief is asking for 500,000 quilts nationwide. Maybe if we all make 5 more than we did last year, we can make their quota for this year.

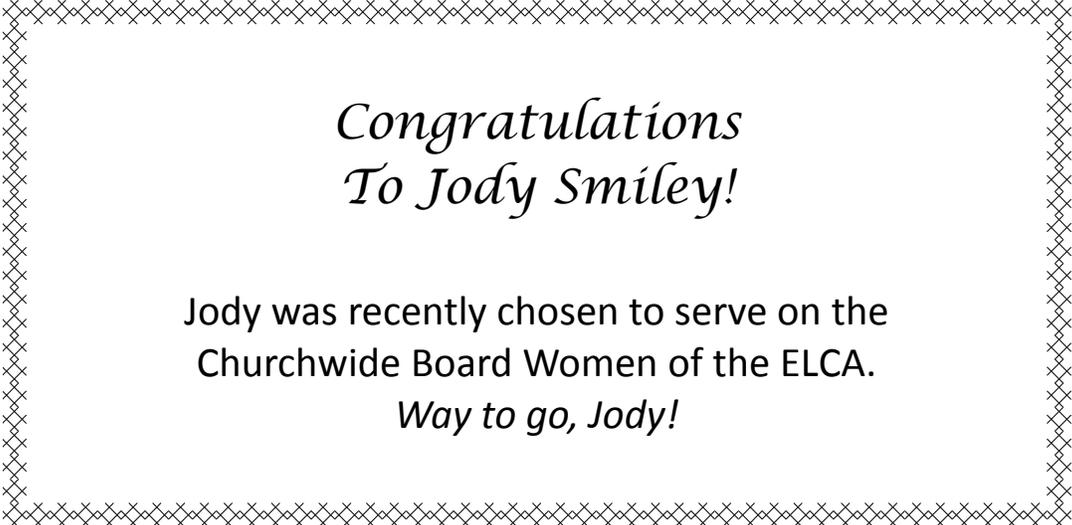
We are also asking women to subscribe to the “Gather” magazine. This a great read—has great helps—and a wonderful Bible Study. It has also won several awards as an outstanding magazine.

Finally, we will be promoting the pillow case project (making dresses for 3rd world countries out of pillow cases) at convention. Watch your call to convention for more information. In the meantime, start collecting pillowcases (thrift stores can be great sources for gently used pillow cases) and come to convention ready to sew!

“Like” the VSWO

CALLING ALL FACEBOOK USERS – If you aren’t already part of the community, I invite you to “Like” the VSWO Facebook page. The link can be found through our webpage – which should soon be getting a makeover. Can we achieve 100 “likes” by convention? And feel free to post, or send to me to post, - news, announcements, pictures – from your circle and/or conference. Let’s make this a vibrant, inspirational, informational page that serves as a wonderful outreach of the VSWO.

Helen Weaver vsw@comcast.net



Congratulations To Jody Smiley!

Jody was recently chosen to serve on the
Churchwide Board Women of the ELCA.

Way to go, Jody!

Triennial Gathering—Charlotte 2014

Have you ever been to a Women of the ELCA Triennial Gathering? If not, 2014 might just be your year! Women of the ELCA from all over the country and guests from all over the world will gather in Charlotte, NC for the Triennial Convention in 2014. It’s not too early to start saving for your trip. Check out www.womenoftheelca.org for more information .



From the VSWO Conference Coordinator ~ *Anna Barb*

Many of the Spring Conference Gatherings have not had their President's Planning meeting as of this date. All of the Fall Gatherings were well attended & had challenging and informative subjects.

- New River Conference was Sept. 23, 2012
- Highlands Conference Gathering at St. Paul/Rural Retreat was Oct. 13, 2012.
- Southern Conference Gathering at St. Philips was Oct. 14, 2012.
- Southern Valley Conference Gathering at St. Jacob's Spaders was Oct. 14, 2012.
- Tidewater Conference Gathering at St. Timothy Lutheran was Nov. 3, 2012.
- Richmond Conference Gathering at Christ the King Lutheran was Nov. 17, 2012
- Page Conference-date not confirmed may be April 7th 2013
- Central Valley date not confirmed may be in April 2013
- Germanna Conference Gathering at Grace & Glory Lutheran will be April 20, 2013
- Peninsula Conference Gathering undetermined
- Northern Valley Conference Gathering undetermined

Conference Responsibilities for Convention are as follows:

Central Valley	Banner
Germanna	Banquet table decorations
Highlands	Table Prayers
New River	Name Tags & Registration
Page	Sunday Worship Ushers
Richmond	Pages (to distribute bios & ballots)
Southern	Friday Worship Greeters & Ushers
Southern Valley	Assign Sunday Worship Assistants
Tidewater	Communion Elements

Update on the Pine Ridge Reservation

At the VSWO convention in 2012, Rex Hartman, our keynote speaker, spoke about the plight of the Lakota People who are living on the Pine Ridge Reservation. The VSWO Love Offering collected during the convention was donated to the One Spirit organization to help build the Allen Youth Center at Pine Ridge.

In a recent e-mail from One Spirit, information about The Allen Youth Center indicated the group is now working with architects and contractors to design the Center. The facility will be a haven for kids who need warmth, food, and the love of their people.

One Spirit is also working with the Food and Wood programs to make the food program a co-op run by the Lakota. Every month healthy food is delivered to about 2500 hungry people across the entire reservation. There are 15 volunteers and it takes three days to deliver the food. The group is in need of a 4-wheel drive truck and has collected about \$4200; their goal is \$15,000.

For more information, visit **www.onespirit.com**. If you can help, please send donations to: ONE Spirit, P. O. Box 3209, Rapid City, SD 57709.

Sherry Frye

VSWO Board & Officers

Name & Position	Contact Information	Board Assignments	Church/Conference/date of birth
Risse Snelgrove <i>President</i>	35781 Bowen Place Purcellville, VA 20132 540.338.0579 540.454.1273 rsnelgrove@aol.com	Long-Range Planning Leadership Training Northern Valley Liaison	Bethel, Winchester Northern Valley DOB: 7/14
Carol Bailey <i>Vice President</i>	604 Gold Valley Rd. Locust, VA 22508 540.972.0371 tcmtnest@comcast.net	Convention Planning Long Range Planning Page Liaison	Resurrection, Fredericksburg Germanna 7/11
Sherry Frye <i>Secretary</i>	5800 Harbor Bluff Terrace Midlothian, VA 23112 804.739.4801 (h) 804.539.1914 (c)	Leadership Training	Christ the King, Richmond Richmond 11/5
Anna Barb <i>Treasurer</i>	5501 Alum Springs Rd Edinburg, VA 22824 540.856.2976 (h) 540.459.2154 (w) Barb.anna@yahoo.com	Conference Coordinator Southern Valley Liaison	St. Jacobs, Edinburg Central Valley 6/23
Judy Ann Fray	PO Box 263 Madison, VA 22727 540.948.4220 Ja.fray@verizon.net	Discipleship Leadership Training Resource Promoter Germanna Liaison	Hebron, Madison Germanna 8/5
Imogene Ryman	14785 Back Rd. Strasburg, VA 22657 540.465.8184	Discipleship Central Valley Liaison	St. Stephen/North Mtn. Parish Central Valley 10/29
Sherry Castelee	5646 Chicwood Drive Pulaski, VA 24301 540.980.3625 (h) 540.577.2040 (c) Sherry.castelee@baesystems.com	Justice Leadership Manual New River Liaison	Trinity, Pulaski New River 4/23
Nia Indelicato	3940 Crabapple Rd Radford, VA 24141 540.553.2035 (c) 540.382.7262 (w) Life.in.liminal@gmail.com	Discipleship Long Range Planning Highlands Liaison	St. Michael, Blacksburg New River 12/20
Helen Weaver	14705 Ridge Point Drive Midlothian, VA 23112 804.639.4554 (h) 804.467.8026 (c) bnhmom@me.com	Stewardship Communications Long Range Planning Southern Liaison	Lutheran Church of our Saviour, Chesterfield Richmond 3/30
Christel Williams	6316 Gatesgreen Drive Chesterfield, VA 23832 804.748.3298 Christl234@aol.com	Justice TDTR trainer Richmond Liaison	Our Saviour, Richmond Richmond 12/29
Ellen Greene	1533 Lea View Ave #1 Norfolk, VA 23503 757.717.9524 Clemgreene@aol.com	Stewardship Convention Planning Peninsula Liaison	St. Andrew, Portsmouth Tidewater 11/24
Bonnie Mantta	2041 Cherry Lane Chesapeake, VA 23323 757.935.7199	Justice Tidewater Liaison	St. Timothy, Norfolk Tidewater 11/1

Virginia Synodical Women's Organization
Genie Brown
Visions Circulation Manager
5517 South Village Drive
Roanoke, VA 24018

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