

“Visions Lite”



A Closer Look at the Virginia Synodical Women's Organization

September 2017

2017 VSWO CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS



St. Philip Lutheran Church, Roanoke was the gathering site for our VSWO Convention August 18-19, 2017. Seventy-nine of our sisters in Christ came together for worship, celebration, joy, fellowship – and of course, business. The Reverend Kelly Derrick served as Convention Chaplain, conducting three worship services over the two-day event.

The Convention theme this year, “Renewal of Spirit – All Anew,” guided presentations from our churchwide WELCA representative Gwen Edwards, Keynote speaker Bishop James Mauney, and our now-past president Lisa Taglauer. In the Spring issue of *Visions*, Lisa expanded on the theme to Reform and Renew, and indeed, the five awareness sessions offered exactly those opportunities. Colleen Carrell presented a physical and spiritual renewal session combining yoga and prayerful meditation practices. We learned from Jody Smiley of the reforming and renewal of spirit at Virginia Tech ten years after the horrific shootings on that campus. Chaplain Kelly Derrick led us in a Bible study based on our convention scripture Romans 12:1-2. Participants’ creative side had an opportunity to flourish through coloring and writing about our inner needs in Create Amazing Relaxing/Restful Experiences (C.A.R.E.), a session led by Ellen Greene and Edith Blake. And Mindy Reynolds presented Healthy Families, Healthy Congregations, bringing awareness of Healthy Congregations, Inc. ministry within the Virginia Synod.

Of special interest was Judy Wifong’s video and overview of the Synod’s **Forwarding Faith** initiative, an endowment being launched to provide permanent funding for youth events, our Ambassadors Community for Theological Study (ACTS) program, and the July Power in the Spirit annual gathering, ministries crucial to sustaining and carrying our faith into future generations. Donations to this endowment were encouraged through September 30, 2017 as a retirement gift to Bishop Mauney from women of the VSWO.

For us Lutherans, food and fellowship are practically synonymous, and the meals catered by Veranda Bistro of Roanoke and the women of St. Philip were perfectly delightful. It’s not every event at which the food service receives a standing ovation!

Virginia Women of the ELCA always amaze, and this year was no different. The global ministries project for Sole Hope provided 941 pairs of shoe parts and \$10,493.79 in monetary donations. Our local ministry focus, the GraceInside Prison Chaplaincy program, received 18,449 cards plus 670 stamps, notepads, and \$590 cash donation. Looking forward to 2018, our service project is walker caddies and non-slip socks for residents in nursing homes.

In addition to the service projects, the offerings received were as follows:

Worship Offering: \$1457.00 50% designated for VSWO and 50% designated to WELCA.

Love Offering: \$1625.00 divided between Elijah’s Backpack and Katie’s Fund.

Forwarding Faith: \$528 for the Forwarding Faith campaign in honor of Bishop Mauney

Bold Women’s Day Offering (Bold Women’s Day February 26, 2017): \$314.47

A very special THANK-YOU to our musicians Sarah Melendy and Lavelva Stevens, the women of St. Philip, the planning committee, and everyone who worked together to make this a smoothly running, memorable, and all-around GREAT Convention experience!

CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS (CONT)

ELECTIONS AND BUSINESS

The following persons were elected:

President – Jody Smiley

Treasurer – Edith Blake

Board Members:

Two-year terms – Ellen Greene, Michelle Poore, Sylvia Eley, and Linda Lowry

One-year term – Bonnie Mantta

Officers and Board of Directors for 2018

President - Jody Smiley

Vice President – Renée Ballentine

Secretary – Helen Weaver

Treasurer – Edith Blake

Members of the Board - Zelda Whetzel, Judy Wilfong, Ellen Greene, Michelle Poore, Linda Lowry, Sylvia Eley, and Bonnie Mantta.

LOOKING AHEAD

Carol Bailey announced that the 2018 Annual VSWO Convention will be at Bethel Lutheran Church, Winchester, August 3-4, 2018. More information will be forthcoming in the Spring 2018 *Visions*.

ALL LUTHERAN WOMEN'S RETREAT



The 2017 All Lutheran Women's Retreat will be held at the Fredericksburg Hospitality House and Conference Center in Fredericksburg, VA, October 13-15, 2017. All women are welcome!

The theme, "Important Stories and Pointless People", will revolve around important Biblical stories as told by Biblical Storytellers throughout the event and retreat sessions led by Pastor Brett Davis from Muhlenberg Lutheran Church. Pastor Brett's sessions will draw from Dan Erlander's book, TALES OF THE POINTLESS PEOPLE. There will be opportunities for fellowship, prayer, worship and LOTS of music.

Registration deadline: September 8, 2017.

Register online at alwretreat.wix.com/alwr

Questions? Email alwretreat2015@gmail.com

FROM THE EDITOR

You may have noticed that the title of this issue is "*Visions Lite*" — not only is this issue lighter in content, focusing only on highlights of the 2017 VSWO Convention — but it also weighs only half as much, saving postage. But not to worry! The Fall 2017 *Visions*, which will come out around Thanksgiving, will include complete board and staff listings with contact information, more extensive articles from individuals, updates and reports from the Justice, Stewardship, and Discipleship Mission Teams, and more. Any Virginia Lutheran woman is invited to contribute to *Visions*. You can email me at sunlion7@gmail.com or send snail mail to Carol Johnson, 1589 Rocky Hollow Rd., Atkins, VA 24311.

2018 SERVICE PROJECTS



As announced at the 2017 VSWO Annual Convention, the service project for 2018 will be walker caddies for our aging senior population. We encourage each unit or conference to adopt a local assisted living facility/rehab center/retirement community in their area to which these useful items can be gifted. Keep a count of the caddies your unit makes and bring that along with pictures and a few samples of your handiwork to the 2018 convention in Winchester. Caddies brought to convention will be distributed to Lutheran Homes retirement centers in Virginia. Walker caddy patterns will be available on the VSWO website.

As a non-sewing alternative , non-slip socks can easily be made to include with the caddies. This is as simple as taking new socks and adding designs with puffy paint on the soles.



Virginia Synodical Women's Organization
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STEWARDSHIP

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Sharing ourselves
Time studying God's word
Easily providing
Working together
Abilities used wisely
Reaching out to others
Daringly stepping out to serve
Serving those in need
Honestly caring
Individual response
Promises fulfilled

We are grateful to Edith Blake for sharing her talents as a poet and look forward to more of her inspiring poems in future Visions.

Women of the
ELCA 