



# CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS (CONT)

## ELECTIONS AND BUSINESS

### The following persons were elected:

President – Jody Smiley

Treasurer – Deniese Powell

### Board Members: (2 yr terms):

Sylvia Eley

JoAnn Fawley

Shelia Sanchez

### (1 yr terms):

Lavelva Stevens

Edith Blake

### Triennial Convention Voting Members

Sylvia Eley, JoAnn Fawley, Lisa Somerville

Alternates: Gloria Fennell, Carol Johnson, Shelia Sanchez, Ellen Bain Gunter

### Continuing in office:

Vice President: Judy Wilfong

Secretary: Judy Castele

Board Member: Theresa Thomas

### Treasurer's Report

Love Offering \$1,601.00 (1/2 going to Ghent Area Ministries and other 1/2 to Alzheimer's Association)

Convention Worship Offering \$807.00

Wilson Triennial Scholarship raffle \$130.00

## LOOKING AHEAD

The 2020 Annual VSWO Convention will be at Salem Lutheran Church in Mt. Sidney, VA July 31-AUG 1. More information about the theme, accommodations, etc. will be forthcoming in the Fall 2019 *Visions*.

## SERVICE PROJECTS FOR 2020

Our focus for the coming year will be on Lutheran Family Services group homes and day-care support centers. Two suggested projects are Birthday Baking Kits and board games. More details including item lists will be forthcoming in the Fall *Visions*.

## FROM THE EDITOR

The Fall 2019 *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](mailto:sunlion7@gmail.com) or send snail mail to Carol Johnson, 1589 Rocky Hollow Rd., Atkins, VA 24311. A submission date of November 9 would be much appreciated.

## FROM OUR CHURCHWIDE REPRESENTATIVE, BARBARA TORMONDSEN

*“On behalf of churchwide Women of the ELCA, I want to thank all of you for your discipleship and service to our church to Women of the ELCA. I thank you for unswerving commitment and dedication, which on many days I’m sure has left you feeling weary. I thank you for trusting in our Good and Gracious God to give you the strength and fortitude you need for the work at hand. Because of your generosity and the generosity of other like-minded women, Women of the ELCA are engaging in many meaningful ministries and advocacy across the country.*

*We are especially grateful for your commitment to fund a voting member’s attendance at our next convention and your commitment to increase your giving percentage to churchwide.*

***A quick look at our finances.** As you know churchwide has been experiencing a continued decline in offering revenue, as have many SWO’s and CU’s. And that decline is significant. For the 2018 fiscal year Offering revenue was \$1,095,056 (a 20% shortfall vs. budget!) \$447,360 from SWO and cluster offerings and \$647,696 from Thankofferings.*

***The women of Virginia are very generous, and we are very grateful.***

*For 2018, your SWO regular, cluster and convention offerings totaled \$4,487, approximately 4% drop over last year. Other WELCA gifts (such as Katie’s fund) were \$26. At the unit level, Thankofferings were up 3% totaling \$3,731. Thankofferings provide a significant revenue stream for Women of the ELCA and I strongly encourage all of you to start planning a Fall Thankoffering service in own congregations. It’s a great way to increase awareness of Women of the ELCA and our ministries as well as to financially support our organization. One hundred percent of Thankoffering revenue goes directly to churchwide Women of the ELCA. Visit the Women of the ELCA website for resources on Thankofferings.*

*We have a new campaign for Katie’s Fund – The All Anew Campaign with the goal of raising an additional 3 million dollars by 2020. As an endowed fund, the money held in Katie’s Fund is invested carefully to generate income. The annual income, which is generally 4% of the amount invested, may be used by churchwide for leadership development, living theology, and global connections. Your generous support of Katie’s Fund, through regular gifts and through the All Anew Campaign, really makes a difference in women’s lives.*

***Faithful Friends** is a monthly recurring gift program. Super easy to join and provides consistent, sustainable support. In 2018 we had over 120 Friends registered. I encourage you all to sign up. The minimum amount required is \$10 each month.*

***Where do your offerings go?** Well, they help fund program resources, publications, leadership development, advocacy and other ministries supporting the overall health and welfare of women and children.*

*- **Program-Related Resources:** Bible study and leadership tools available on our website*

*- **Publications:** Gather – our Magazine (available both in print and digital), Café – our award-winning, online magazine, Interchange – a seasonal newsletter published four times a year, Bold Connections – monthly e-newsletter, and Daily Grace our daily devotional app.*

*- **Leadership Development:** Scholarships for Lutheran Lay Women and Women in Seminary*

*- **Advocacy-** supporting all the work we’re doing to combat human trafficking*

*- **Raising Up Healthy Women and Children grants.***

*(Again, you can read more about these programs on our website.)*

***Board/Staff Updates:***

*In April 2018, Jennifer DeLeon, was hired as our new director of Justice. Jennifer served at Lutheran Social Services of Illinois for 12 years as director for government relations and advocacy.*

*Exploratory Committee: In response to declining membership and revenue, the board approved the formation of an exploratory committee to look at how Women of the ELCA is organized and what changes might make us more effective in today’s ever-changing religious climate.*

*In closing, I want to remind you all of our next triennial July, 2020 in Phoenix, Arizona. Be on the look out for more information and I hope to see many of you there.*

*Thank you for your generosity. Thank you for following Jesus. You are indeed blessed and a blessing to Women of the ELCA. God’s peace be with you all.”*

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

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

Non-profit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit# 212  
Roanoke VA

## **CHOICES**

© Edith Blake

**There are so many choices to be made daily**

**Right from wrong**

**What to do or not do**

**Who to believe or not believe?**

**Go this way or that**

**How do you choose?**

**Do you pray or just act?**

**Do you seek out someone?**

**Do you do nothing?**

**Our choices make a difference to ourselves and others**

**Make your choices wisely**

**Seeking not to harm but help**

**Reaching out to those in need**

**Lending a helping hand**

**Guiding those who need guidance**

**And above all make your choices pleasing to God and not man**

