

Visions



A Closer Look at the Virginia Synodical Women's Organization

2011 Convention Edition



Renewal for the Soul was the year's theme of the VSWO Convention held **July 22– 24, 2011** at Roanoke College in Salem, VA.

Ready for renewal, women came from congregations across the synod to form a convention voting strength of 28 (4 officers, 6 board members & 18 delegates) and 47 others for a convention total of 75. Special guests **Mary Irasua & Miriam Muyambe** from the Islands District of Papua New Guinea attended our convention and were a blessing to all they met.

We were pleased to have **The Rev. Linda Mitchell Motley** of the Floyd-Willis Lutheran Parish to serve as convention chaplain. She kept our worship and devotions centered on our biblical theme from Isaiah 40: 30-31.

Convention highlights

- ◇ We enjoyed uplifting opening and worship music by **Lavelva Stevens, Linda Hawks and Risse Snelgrove**.
- ◇ **Awareness sessions** were offered including Creating a Safe Space for Victims of Violence; Finding Reliable Health Information Online ; The Hope of Restoration: Ecumenism; Bible Study; Seeking Justice; Face to Face in Cyberspace and Beyond; Renewal for the Spirit: Don't pencil God time in...use ink!
- ◇ **Officers and board members were elected** including Risse Snelgrove, president (Northern Valley); Anna Barb, treasurer (Central Valley); and board members Sherry Frye (Richmond); Imogene Ryman (Central Valley); Christel Williams (Richmond) and, Sherry Casteele (New River).
- ◇ We admired a **beautiful quilted banner** based on the convention theme and Triennial symbols made by the Central Valley Conference.

- ◇ **Miranda Hawkins** was recognized as a Sophie Wilson Grant recipient for first-time non-delegate attendees.
- ◇ We thanked out going board members **Sherrill Miller & Ellie Hirsh** for their faithful service.
- ◇ We honored outgoing president **Jody Smiley** with a video presentation and photo book highlighting her 4 years as VSWO president.
- ◇ **Judy Casteele** served as our keynote speaker reminding us that our convention scripture spoke of waiting on God and that waiting was not passive resignation, but a real sign of faith.
- ◇ We honored **The Rev. Jean Bozeman** for her 50 years of ministry and contributed over \$500 to The Jean Bozeman Christian Formation Endowment Fund.
- ◇ **Ellen Bain, Triennial Gathering Promoter**, shared highlights of the 8th Triennial Convention held in Spokane, WA. Ellen was a delegate and was joined by Connie Saunders and Jody Smiley. Also attending the gathering from Virginia were Genie Brown, Judy Casteele, Anjanette Hodges, Erin Bain and Doug Smiley.
- ◇ **Bishop Mauney** delivered the sermon for our Sunday morning worship.
- ◇ **Sharon Heck** of California, Women of the ELCA Executive Board member, brought greetings & news from the Churchwide Women's Organization;
- ◇ We enjoyed a lovely banquet and entertainment by the **Church Ladies of the New River Conference** who reminded us that it's ok to laugh at ourselves.
- ◇ We gave a **love offering of \$1,752** to Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance.
- ◇ **It was a wonderful convention** and we hope to see you all at VSWO Convention 2012!

Young Women's Gathering

Connie Saunders

Ten young women came from all over the Synod to participate in the VSWO Convention & Young Women's Gathering at Roanoke College. They were greeted by the sweet and talented Mary Kinser Hicks. These young women experimented on Facebook to see the possibilities of maintaining new relationships across Virginia and Papua New Guinea as well.

We had a coffee house on Friday night using the Café resource from Women of the ELCA as our theme. Participants were treated to fair trade chocolate and coffee and shared information about what young women are looking for and how they can become involved in their community and their church family.

Our churchwide representative, Sharon Heck, shared what it is like to travel to so many different churches and meet women of all ages. She discovered they are a lot alike and have much in common.

We learned about the ministry of Micah's Backpack from Jennie Hodge of St. Michael Lutheran Church in Blacksburg & how it feels to give back to the community in such a concrete way.

The women of the VSWO found our young women to be interesting, refreshing and fun! We hope they will have fond memories of Café and the beginning of new relationships. We wish God's blessings upon them! And, we are hopeful that these young women and many more will join us at Roanoke College next summer. Thank you, again, to Mary for providing such a wonderful experience for our young women!

A note from Jennie Hodge, Director of Micah's Backpack

July 29, 2011

Dear VSWO,

Micah's Backpack continues to make a difference in the lives of low-income children in Blacksburg with help like your generous gift 424 juice boxes and 242 cans of tuna! Your tremendous offering filled the back of my car and will soon be in weekend bags of food for the upcoming school year.

Thank you again for your generosity and helping hungry children in Blacksburg.

Peace and hope,

Jennie Hodge
Director of Micah's Backpack





VSWO Committee Day

If you'd like more information about how you can be involved in a VSWO committee, contact Risse Snelgrove at rsnelgrove@aol.com or 540-338-0579.

Prayer Chain

To receive the weekly prayer requests, send your name and email address to Judy Castele at casteele@rockbridge.net

Visions

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