

“VISIONS”

Women of the ELCA 

A Closer Look at the Virginia Synodical Women's Organization

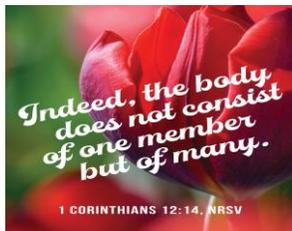
Winter 2023

Mark Your Calendars! Save the Date: July 21-22, 2023



The Virginia Synodical Women's Organization (VSWO) will be gathering for our 2023 convention/gathering at Roanoke College on July 21st-22nd. **Keep an eye out for the Call to Convention. It should be available in April.** It will have more information on awareness and business sessions and all the forms you will need to register.

Our convention theme is **“Weave us Together”** and our convention hymn is **“Weave”** by **Rosemary Crow**. This hymn was used at the Women of the ELCA's constitutional convening convention in 1987. If you are not familiar with the song go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xy6PIXb1dhwe> and listen.



The convention scripture is from 1st Corinthians 12 verses 12-14. This scripture embodies our theme as we are woven together as one body with many members. We will have a Bible study on Saturday morning around our convention scripture. We are pleased to announce that our chaplain will be the Rev. Laura Swanson. She serves at St. Philip in Roanoke.

Our housing and meals will be at Roanoke College. Brings back memories of dorm life. Only this time you can stay up late without having to pretend to study. Of course, you can't beat the food that we are served at the Colket Center!



We will have worship together 3 awareness sessions, have something for the non-voting members, entertainment on Friday night, do a little business and of course lots of fun and fellowship!

If you have any questions about convention, please contact the Convention Planning Team: Jody Smiley, Edith Blake, Diane Priestley, and Kathy Thompson.

Registration for 12th Triennial is OPEN!

Join Us At Our Gathering



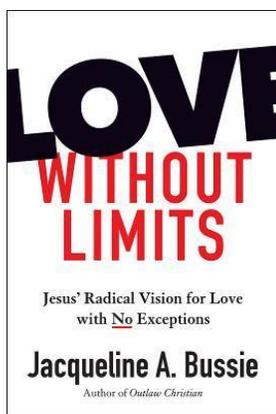
WOMEN OF THE ELCA GATHERING
SEPTEMBER 21-24, 2023 | PHOENIX
WELCATG.ORG

We invite you to experience a life-changing event with other bold women of faith in September 21-24 2023. Go to Triennial Event Page - [Women of the ELCA](https://welcatg.org) (welcatg.org) to register.

The Grand Canyon Synod will be our host synod. We will gather to worship, sing, learn, participate in service opportunities, and party together the week of September 18th, 2023 at the Phoenix Convention Center. Updated information on the gathering is also available at [Women of the ELCA](https://welcatg.org) (welcatg.org).



A Must Read for You!



Our VSWO Board is reading a book suggested by Pastor Colleen Montgomery entitled Love Without Limits: Jesus' Radical Vision for Love with No Exceptions, written by Jacqueline A. Bussie. We have started a book study and highly recommend it to our women. It is published by Broadleaf Books and it was previously published by Fortress Press. Publishers Weekly writes: "A must-read for all Christians interested in inclusivity for their communities." We are reading this book because we want to explore how to be allies, as well as advocates, to those in our communities who face discrimination and hate. Pastor Colleen will be leading an awareness session at our convention in July.

We also have exciting news: Jacqueline Bussie will be the retreat leader for the 2024 All Lutheran Women's Retreat, which is held in early November.

It would be great to hear of any books that are being read in our women's groups and in our homes that pertain to this subject. We could share these with each other and learn together how to be more inclusive in our churches and in our lives.

Lavelva, President, JoAnn Fawley, Secretary

Don't Forget Our 2023 Service Project!

We have a non-sewing and a sewing option. Both of these will benefit Project Horizon in Lexington, Virginia.



The non-sewing option is to purchase supplies that are needed for the clients of Lisa's House. These are paper towels, toilet paper, kitchen size garbage bags, and deodorant. From Amazon: Squishy Stress Balls 12 per pack for kids and adults and Hedgehog Finger Rings a stress relief fidget sensory toy 10 per pack. Wish List items can be brought to convention or ordered from Amazon and delivered directly to Project Horizon at 120 Varner Lane, Lexington, VA 24450.

You may also wish to contact an organization in your community who shelter and counsel domestic and sexual abuse victims and ask them for their most needed items as a local outreach, but please bring your Project Horizon items to the 2023 convention.

The sewing option is Charity bears which are given to the children of domestic and sexual abuse. The bears will be a comfort and a healing tool used by counselors when working with a child. The pattern can be found at this link:

<https://www.shinyhappyworld.com/2014/04/warren-charity-bear-free-teddy-bear-pattern.html>

IMPORTANT: Two pockets have been added to the bear that are not on the original pattern. A small pocket on the front sewn over the heart, and a larger pocket on the back between the bears shoulders. These pockets are very important, so please don't eliminate them. They are used by the counselors when working with a child.



Contact Judy Castele with questions at ph@rockbridge.net.

Have you visited the WELCA website lately? If you haven't go to [Lutheran Women, Faithful Women, ELCA Advocacy | Women of the ELCA](https://www.welca.org) (welca.org). There are publications you can subscribe to, boundless information and inspirational articles. **Visit the site today!**





Plan To Attend Power in the Spirit

Put the following dates on your calendar for **Power in the Spirit 2023 at Roanoke College, July 13-15, 2023**. Our keynote speaker is Mary Hinkle Shore, bible study leader Steven Tuell, music leader Michael Benschish. Our theme for this year is Seeking and Finding using the story of Zacchaeus in Luke 19:1-10. A variety of workshops will be available for you to choose from to attend. Look for more information to follow.

Rev. Wes Smith, Donna Gum and Edith Blake
Leaders

Help Increase Our Social Media Outreach

It is very important that the Virginia Synod Women of the ELCA stay current by having a presence on social media. Social media is a valuable outreach to highlight our many ministries and all the good works that Lutheran women are doing locally, nationally and around the world. Here are easy ways to help:

1. INVITE others to LIKE the VSWO Facebook and/or Instagram. Please take time during your monthly meetings to help others connect to our social media pages.
2. SHARE VSWO posts on your Facebook and/or Instagram.
3. SEND pictures of events and projects that your group has organized and completed to: vswo.virginiasynodicalwomen@gmail.com. This is your Facebook and Instagram pages and we need your pictures and a brief description of the event to bring our social media pages alive. Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/VSWO.WomenoftheELCA>
Instagram: vswo_virginia_synod



NEW CAMPAIGN HOPES TO BUILD WOMEN'S MINISTRIES INTO NEXT CENTURY

(From womenoftheelca.org)

2122 is a \$1 million campaign for Katie's Fund that is designed to support the organization into the next 100 years of mission and ministry. Learn ways you can give to the campaign at <https://www.womenoftheelca.org/katiesfund>

The fund was established in 1997 to honor the legacy of Katharina von Bora Luther, raise up bold leaders for the women's organization and support bold and creative ministry for generations to come.



Contact Information for Your 2023-2024 Board

Officers – term expiring 2023	Officers – term expiring 2024
President – Lavelva Stevens 1369 Beth Scott Dr. Pulaski, VA 24301 Phone: 540-320-3369 Email: lstevens01@verizon.net	Vice President – Sylvia Eley 417 Meadow Creek Drive Chesapeake, VA 23323 Phone: 757-582-0966 Email: seley2005@msn.com
Treasurer – Judy Castelee 726 W. 4th Street Buena Vista, VA 24416 Phone: 540-460-7376 Email: jlcasteele@comcast.net	Secretary – JoAnn Fawley 6409 W. Old Mountain Road Louisa, VA 23093 Phone: 703-727-7957 Email: fawley6409@gmail.com
Board Members – Term expiring 2023	Board Members – Term expiring 2024
Carol Bailey 12706 Cavalryman Ct. Fredericksburg, VA 22407 Phone: 571-438-0273 Email: cobailey42@gmail.com	Pat Seelenbinder 1605 Pennywhistle Arch Virginia Beach, VA 23464 Phone: 757-479-2544 Email: pmseelen@cox.net
Theresa Thomas 247 Mount Pisgah Road Mount Sidney, VA 24467 Phone: 540-476-0578 Email: prof_tsquared@yahoo.com	Diane Priestly 116 Norman Davis Dr. Toano, VA 23168 Phone: 757-561-5491 Email: DMP625@aol.com
Kathy Thompson 205 Monument Avenue Harrisonburg, VA 22801 Phone: 540-058-4830 Email: thompskb@jmu.edu	
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There will be elections at our 2023 convention for both officers and board members. There will also be opportunities for you to join committees.

Please prayerfully consider joining the VSWO Leadership team or if you know of someone that would like to join the team, please ask them to consider being nominated. If you have any questions about what it means to serve just ask one of your board members.