VSWO 2025 Call to Convention

Virginia Synodical Women's Organization - Women of the ELCA
Thirty-seventh Annual Convention – July 25-26, 2025
Christ Lutheran Church, Fredericksburg, Virginia

CONVENTION THEME:	"Guardians of Creation"
CONVENTION SCRIPTURE:	Genesis 2:15 – "The LORD God took the human and settled him in the garden of Eden to farm it and to take care of it." Common English Bible
CONVENTION HYMN:	"Earth Was Given as a Garden"
IN-KIND DONATIONS:	Lap Quilts and Amazon Wishlist Items for Latisha's House (see information on page 2 regarding the 2025 Service Project)
OFFERINGS:	The 2025 Love Offering recipient is Latisha's House. The General worship offering will go to the Women of the ELCA.
CONVENTION CHAPLAIN:	Rev. Anne Jones, Christ Lutheran/Fredericksburg
SYNOD GREETINGS:	A representative from the Virginia Synod will bring greetings from the Synod Office.
BUSINESS:	All Voting Members **MUST** be present at 10:00 am Friday morning for the **ONLY** business session. This is **NEW** for this year's convention. The convention business will include the following elections: President (2-year term), Treasurer (2-year term), three (3) Board Members (2-year term each), three (3) voting members to the 2026 Virtual Triennial Convention , and the adoption of the 2025–2026 budget.
GRANTS:	The Sophie Wilson Grant program encourages first-time, non-voting member participants to attend the convention. Recipients will be notified by June 23. Please consider adding a donation to the Sophie Wilson Grant program on your registration form.
IMPORTANT:	**The Call to Convention (CTC) is only distributed via email, the VSWO website and Facebook page. Please help by copying the registration form portion of the CTC and distributing to others. Also, please promote the convention in bulletins and newsletters.**

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2025 SERVICE PROJECT:

The 2025 service project is Latisha's House in Williamsburg. Latisha's House provides survivors of sex trafficking with safe housing and services that enable them to be Free. Free from exploitation! Free from abuse! Free to make their own choices! Free to realize their dreams! Free Forever!

In case you do not care to navigate the Amazon Wish List, this is a list of self-care items needed:

packaged/new panties (various sizes)
packaged socks (various sizes)
sports bras (various sizes)
leggings (various sizes)
natural hair products
deodorant (sensitive skin)
cold & cough medicine (NO alcohol)
pain relievers
liquid soap
shampoo & conditioner (for all hair textures)
ladies disposable razors
sanitary items
make-up (all skin types and pigments)

Each new resident to Latisha's House is given a personal care basket. If you or your unit would care to fill a basket with self-care items, please feel free or just donate any of the individual self-care items above.
Before you start shopping please be aware and do not donate: bar soaps, travel size items, hotel products and it's very important not to purchase any Pantene (brand name) products.

Click **HERE** to access the Latisha's House Amazon Wish List to select items for purchase. The items may be shipped directly to Latisha's House by Amazon or brought to convention**.**

Lap quilts are also needed (size 36" x 48"). The lap quilts may also be brought to the convention.

Diane Priestley is coordinating the Latisha's House project and may be contacted at dmp625@aol.com with any questions that you may need answered.

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AWARENESS SESSIONS:

Care of Creation: We have come so far, but we have so far to go.

Jody Smiley, retired analytical environmental chemist, will take us on a journey through years of how we impacted God's creation, both bad and good. In the discussion of climate, we often only hear about our negative impacts on the environment, but Jody hopes to share with us some ways science and technology have counteracted those negative impacts. She will also discuss how future advancements by engineers and scientist will make them "Guardians of Creation".

What Can I Do?

In this session, you will learn ways you can make a meaningful impact on our environment - big or small. You will hear about and discuss ideas from small everyday actions to bigger lifestyle choices you can make.

Want to do more? We will talk about ways you can advocate and even volunteer for the cause. You will leave the session with realistic, doable ideas to help be a better Guardian of our Creation!

Mended Women

Mended Women Lifestyle Recovery is a 70-bed residential recovery program for women in Abingdon. It is the only facility of its kind in southwestern Virginia serving a 150-mile radius. Residents graduate from the program better equipped to navigate successfully lifelong recovery with the skills and healing necessary to reclaim a life of purpose and joy. The 2026 service project will benefit Mended Women.

BIBLE STUDY

Rev. Anne Jones will lead us in a bible study focusing on the convention scripture Genesis 2:15 and an additional scripture from Job 12:7-10. You are welcome to bring your bible, but it is not required.

ROCK PAINTING

A fun activity is planned in which all will be able to participate in painting rocks. Please bring 1 or 2 rocks with a smooth surface for painting.
All other art supplies will be provided.

VSWO 2025 Call to Convention

Official notice is given that the 37th annual convention of the Virginia Synodical Women's Organization (VSWO) of the Women of the ELCA will be held on July 25-26, 2025 at

Christ Lutheran Church, Fredericksburg, VA

VOTING MEMBERS

NEW CHANGE for voting members. Voting Members MUST arrive at 10:00am on Friday for the ONLY Business Session.

The constitution of the VSWO includes the following provisions for representation at convention: *Article VI, Section 2*: Representation *Item 1:* Voting members of a convention shall be the elected officers or SWO leaders and board members of the synodical women's organization and one voting member from each unit on the roll of this synodical women's organization. *Item 2*: Those congregations not represented by a unit shall be invited to send to the regular convention one representative who shall have seat and voice.

Voting members ***must*** **register** for convention using the enclosed Registration Form by **July 1**. The Bulletin of Reports will be sent electronically and available on-line by **July 7**. Please indicate on your registration form if you would like a **hard copy of the Bulletin of Reports for $10.00**.

FRIDAY SCHEDULE

Voting Members arrive at 10:00am for the
ONLY Business Session
Non-Voting Members Registration 11:00am-12:30pm
Lunch is at 12:00pm (included in registration)
Opening Worship at 1:00pm

FAIR SHARE TRAVEL FUND

Voting Members attending the entire convention will be reimbursed under the guidelines of the Fair Share Travel Fund, providing their unit has sent **$35 by June 30** to VSWO Treasurer:

Jody Smiley
901 Brattle Lane
Blacksburg, VA 24060

Travel reimbursement requests must be turned in by **4:00pm on Friday, July 25.**

LODGING -HOTEL ARRANGEMENTS

A block of rooms has been reserved for Friday night at **Hampton Inn & Suites, 1080 Hospitality Lane, Fredericksburg, VA 22401.** Cost is $149+tax/fees per night for 2 Queen Beds Nonsmoking. Individual attendees will make their own reservations directly with Hampton Inn & Suites **prior to June 25, 2025 by calling 540-786-5530.** Hampton Inn & Suites
You must mention VSWO, Virginia Synodical Women's Organization to receive the group rate. Check-in time is 3:00 PM and check-out time is 12 p.m. **Deadline to reserve rooms at the group rate is June 25, and there is no guarantee of a room after this date.**

MEALS

All meals are included in the registration cost. This is lunch and dinner on Friday, and lunch on Saturday by Andrea of Divine Lunches. Complimentary Breakfast at the hotel on Saturday morning. Please mention any dietary needs on your registration form.

GUIDE TO ENCLOSED FORMS

Registration Form - *All* participants (visitors, guests, board members, conference coordinators) must return the Registration Form, along with a check (if applicable) to **Jody Smiley,** Registrar, at the address on the form by **July 11**. **Voting members are encouraged to return the registration form by July 1.**

Board Nomination Form - Use the enclosed form for nominations for President, Treasurer, Board Members and Triennial Voting Members. **Send to JoAnn Fawley by June 20 at fawley6409@gmail.com.**

Sophie Wilson Grant - This grant was established to encourage first-time, non-voting member participants to attend the convention. **Mail to Jody Smiley by July 1.**

Health Form - Bring to convention.

QUESTIONS REGARDING REGISTRATION?

Contact registrar, Jody Smiley at jdsmiley29@comcast.net or 540-250-6149 or JoAnn Fawley at 703-727-7957 or fawley6409@gmail.com

REGISTRATION FORM

VSWO – Thirty-seventh Annual Convention ~ July 25-26, 2025

MAIL OR EMAIL COMPLETED REGISTRATION FORM
VOTING MEMBERS BY JULY 1 AND PARTICIPANTS BY JULY 11 TO:

Jody Smiley
901 Brattle Lane
Blacksburg, VA 24060

Questions? Contact Jody at jdsmiley29@comcast.net or 540-250-6149

Name_____Pronouns_____

Address_____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Church/City_____

Conference _____ Email _____

Registration	**Fee**	**Amount due**
Full Participant (Includes all meals see page 3)	**$100.00**	
One day Participant	**$ 70.00**	
Bulletin of Reports (hard copy)	**$10.00**	
Opportunities to give below:		
I've included a gift to the **VSWO Thrivent Endowment Fund**		
I've included a gift to **Katie's Fund**		
I've included a gift to the **Roanoke Scholarship**		
I've included a gift for the **Sophie Wilson Grant Fund**		
Total amount due		**$**

Please check all that apply:

☐ My check is enclosed. *(Make registration checks payable to VSWO)*

☐ My registration will be paid by the VSWO*

☐ I would like a hard copy of the Bulletin of Reports ($10.00)

☐ **Special dietary needs (please specify)**_____

Please check all that apply: ☐ This is my FIRST time attending VSWO Convention

☐ Voting Member ☐ Participant ☐ VSWO Board Member* ☐ Invited Guest or Speaker*

☐ VSWO Officer* ☐ Conference Coordinator*

Virginia Synodical Women's Organization
EMERGENCY CONTACT AND MEDICAL INFORMATION FORM
VSWO CONVENTION

First Name _____ M.I. _____ Last Name _____

Home Address _____
Street City State/Country Zip Code

Gender (optional)_____ Pronouns_____

Age: 34 and under ____ 35-49 ____ 50-65 _____ over 65_____

Blood Type _____ Date of last tetanus shot _____

Do you wear glasses or contact lenses? _____ Are you hearing impaired or wear hearing aids?_____

Describe treatments you are receiving for a current illness/condition (including chronic illnesses, i.e. asthma, diabetes, seizures) _____

_____

List any allergies (e.g., insect stings, food, medication, etc.) _____

_____

List any medications you are currently taking _____

_____

Emergency Contact #1 _____ Relationship _____

Home Telephone _____ Work _____ Cell _____

Emergency Contact #2 _____ Relationship _____

Home Telephone _____ Work _____ Cell _____

PERMISSION TO TREAT

I give permission for Medical personnel to treat me in the event that I am unconscious or otherwise unable to give consent.

_____ _____ _____
(printed name) (signature) (date)

Please bring this form with you to convention in case of an emergency.

NOMINATION FORM
OFFICER/BOARD MEMBER

Virginia Synodical Women's Organization ~ Women of the ELCA
SEND COMPLETED NOMINATION FORM
TO: JoAnn Fawley, 6409 W. Old Mountain Rd, Louisa, VA 23093 or
EMAIL: fawley6409@gmail.com **BY June 20, 2025**

Individual must consent to serve if elected. This nomination is for:

☐ **President (2-year term)** ☐**Treasurer (2-year term)**

☐**Board Member (**Three (3) board members are needed all are a 2-year term.)

☐ **Triennial Voting Member** (Three (3) to be elected to the Zoom Convention July 13-14, 2026)

Name: _____Pronouns_____

Address: _____

City: _____ State_____ Zip_____

Phone (home) _____ (work) _____

Email address: _____

Age range ☐ 34 and under ☐ 35-49 ☐ 50-64 ☐ over 65

Ethnic/racial heritage ☐ Caucasian ☐ Black or African American ☐Hispanic ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native ☐ Middle Eastern or Arab ☐Asian

Church/City _____ Conference _____

Occupation/Vocation _____

Women of the ELCA Experience (Check all that apply.)
Local unit: ☐ participant ☐ officer

Conference: ☐ participant ☐ conference team ☐conference coordinator

Synodical: ☐ attended convention ☐ convention voting member ☐ VSWO board member ☐ VSWO officer

Churchwide: ☐ attended Triennial ☐ Triennial voting member ☐ Churchwide board member ☐ Churchwide officer

Hobbies: _____
Volunteer Work: _____

Form submitted by Name: _____ Phone _____
Unit and conference
_____

SOPHIE WILSON GRANT APPLICATION

Virginia Synodical Women's Organization ~ Women of the ELCA
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The Sophie Wilson Grant is available to encourage
FIRST-TIME, NON-VOTING MEMBER PARTICIPANTS
to attend the convention.

Applicants will be notified of the committee's decision no later than **July 10, 2025**

MAIL OR EMAIL COMPLETED GRANT APPLICATION FORM BY July 1, 2025 TO:

Jody Smiley
901 Brattle Lane
Blacksburg, VA 24060
jdsmiley29@comcast.net

Name: _____Pronouns _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip_____

Phone (home) _____ (work) _____

Email address _____

Church/City _____ Conference _____

Occupation/Vocation _____

To what extent are you currently involved in Women of the ELCA? _____

_____

Why is attending this convention important to you?_____

_____

How will you use this experience when you return home?_____

_____

If chosen as a grant recipient, we ask that you attend the entire convention.

Signature of applicant: _____ Date _____