

Director of the Church's Office for Global Mission Risto Jukko appointed to a top international position

Dr. **Risto Jukko**, director of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland's Office for Global Mission, has been appointed the new director of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) of the World Council of Churches (WCC). The position is currently held by Dr. **Jooseop Keum** from South Korea, whose term ends in August. The WCC is headquartered in Geneva.

Dr. Jukko is a pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland (ELCF). Since 2011, he has acted as Director of the Church's Office for Global Mission. Before this position, he worked in the Paavali Parish in Helsinki and the Joutjärvi Parish in Lahti. Dr. Jukko has also acted as a mission pastor in immigrant and parish work in France and taught theology at the Protestant Faculty of Theology in Paris. Moreover, he holds an adjunct professorship in ecumenics at the University of Helsinki and the University of Eastern Finland.

CWME supports churches' mission work

The main objective of the CWME is to support churches and mission bodies in their mission work. The CWME director has traditionally also acted as the editor-in-chief of the *International Review of Mission*, the WCC's missiological journal.

"The World Council of Churches is the world's largest international and ecumenical fellowship of Christian churches. Although the Roman Catholic Church is not a member church, it belongs to the CWME, just like many Evangelical and Pentecostal churches," explains Dr. Jukko.

Dr. Jukko emphasises the importance of the CWME's support for churches in Africa, Asia and South America, because these continents house the clear – and growing – majority of Christians. Questions of mission, evangelism and unity are, however, also important in Europe and North America, which is why their churches also require support.

In March, the CWME organised its fourteenth conference in Arusha, Tanzania, with more than a thousand participants from all over the world. At the conference, Dr. Jukko acted as adviser to the ELCF delegation. He explains that the conference's impact on the world mission and its contribution to the churches are at the core of his future post.

The WCC also has another representative from the ELCF: Bishop of Lapua **Simo Peura** is a member of the WCC executive and central committees. Bishop Peura also chairs the ELCF's mission committee.

"Risto Jukko's upcoming position is one of the most important at the WCC. His appointment shows that the ELCF is engaged in modern mission work and able to promote an understanding of mission work worldwide. Having one of our own in the CWME also promotes communication with the commission, whose objective is to advance the theology of global mission work. This, in turn, affects how churches conduct their mission efforts. I hope that all of the ELCF's mission agencies keep in close contact with Risto in Geneva and inform him of the developments in mission work," Bishop Peura says.

The CWME was founded in 1961 when the International Missionary Council (founded in 1921) merged with the WCC at the New Delhi assembly. The CWME organises a conference on world mission and evangelism between two WCC assemblies, generally once every seven or eight years.

The CWME has approximately 40 members and advisers, and it meets every 18 months. Between meetings, the CWME staff and working groups work on current themes in world mission efforts.