

# In this number

MINNA HIETAMÄKI

## **Ecumenical Methods: Why, How, Where?**

This article discusses the development of ecumenical methods from the late 19th century until the present day. The article discusses ecumenical methods as the variety of ways in which churches recognise each other as true churches. In a very general sense, ecumenical cooperation can be divided into three approaches. The first approach is motivated by an evangelical awakening and emphasises joint mission. The second aims to strengthen a joint, Christian response to societal changes. The third approach focuses on the role of doctrinal agreement in ecumenical advance. Ecumenical methods are here discussed specifically in the context of this third approach.

TOMI KARTTUNEN

## **Interruption of the Theological Dialogue between the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland and the Russian Orthodox Church in Autumn 2014: Description of Events and Evaluation**

The theological dialogue initiated between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland in 1970, a dialogue of some international significance, was interrupted in autumn 2014. In general terms, this was due to a polarisation on value issues within and between the Churches. The rise of opinions critical of

ecumenical efforts since the collapse of the Soviet Union added to the development, but the immediate trigger was the debate over how to interpret the guideline adopted by the ELCF concerning freeform prayer “on behalf of and with” persons having entered into a registered partnership and the public debate about the concept of marriage in Finland. The views of the leaderships of the ROC and the ELCF concerning the means and ends of the theological dialogue diverged. However, relations between the two Churches were not completely severed. Dialogue between the ROC and the ELCF has been basically theological and spiritual, Internal pressures in the Churches and their various political and cultural contexts have complicated matters. Open and transparent discussion acknowledging our shared Christian foundation but allowing space for ‘legitimate diversity’ is important with a view to resuming the dialogue.

HETA HURSKAINEN

## **End of the Doctrinal Dialogue between the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland and the Russian Orthodox Church: The Process from 2011 to 2015**

The ecumenical dialogue between Finnish Lutheran and Russian Orthodox Christians has been described as successful because of its doctrinal orientation. However, the parties have announced that the dialogue has ceased. This cessation re-

vealed the fragility of the ecumenical dialogue, which encompassed dimensions other than doctrine. The reasons behind the end of the dialogue are manifold. Although differing attitudes towards homosexuality might be the most decisive question, underlying causes included divergence in views of the nature of the dialogue and its meaning for the Churches. The challenges to the dialogue rested on theological grounds: both Churches highly value tradition but, in the current context, understand it in very different ways.

TEEMU T. MANTSINEN

### **Change in the Relationship between the Finnish Evangelical-Lutheran Church and the Pentecostal Movement from the Perspective of Congregational Workers**

The Finnish Pentecostal Movement, the largest free Protestant movement in Finland, has a history of controversy with the Lutheran Church. As the Movement has developed into a more organised denomination and early radicalism has to an extent been replaced with moderation, relations between the Church and the Movement have also improved. The research I conducted on the subject reveals that congregational workers have now a relatively positive view of the opposite movement. The few current controversies are local and associated with certain people in positions of power, or are the result of differing congregational cultures. Change in society have ensured that both parties now emphasise their similarities. Furthermore, new generations of pastors and church workers have created new experiences, personal relationships and networks that have facilitated a better relationship between the two communities.

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