



Evangelisch-reformierte Kirche Schweiz
Église évangélique réformée de Suisse
Protestant Church in Switzerland

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President Präsidentin · Présidente

**Greeting message of Rev. Rita Famos, President of the Protestant Church
in Switzerland, to the Presbyterian Church of Korea,
on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of women's ordination**

Beloved sisters and brothers in Christ,

Today, we gather as a community of faith to celebrate a momentous occasion - the 30th anniversary of women's ordination within the Presbyterian Church of Korea. As the president of the Protestant Church in Switzerland and a pastor, I am deeply honored to address you on this significant day. Let me first offer you my heartfelt congratulations on this important step in the life of your Church. Although the majority of the WCRC member churches approve the ordination of women, there are still some that are yet to adopt this practice. Thus, I would like to share the following thoughts with you:

Why does women's ordination resonate with the very heartbeat of our faith? Let us reflect on the values that women's ordination brings to our shared ministry:

- Our sacred texts are replete with stories of strong, faithful women - from Deborah and Esther to Mary Magdalene and Phoebe. Women's ordination continues this legacy.
- The journey toward women's ordination has been marked by courage and resilience. Our sisters have overcome obstacles, shattered glass ceilings, and paved the way for future generations.
- When we ordain women, we affirm that God's call knows no gender boundaries. We recognize that all are created in the divine image and equally equipped for service in the church.
- Women's ordination enriches our leadership landscape. It reminds us that ministry is not a solitary endeavor but a symphony of diverse voices working together. As women step into ordained roles, our theology expands, and our understanding of God deepens. We grapple with questions of power, authority, and embodiment.

Hence, women's ordination is not merely about increasing the number of women in ministry; it is a profound recognition. Today, seeing women in pastoral roles is commonplace. When we began our journey as female pastors, we encountered both acceptance and resistance, norms evolved, and resilience prevails. As Swiss protestants our commitment to equality - whether in the pulpit or beyond - shapes our essence. We honor the legacy of those who paved the way in the past, like Rosa Gutknecht and Elise Pfister in my church, the Reformed Church of the canton of Zurich. The declaration of the WCRC of 2017 "God, through the Holy Spirit, calls both women and men to participate fully in all the ministries of the Church" urges us to dismantle barriers and celebrate the gift of the priesthood of all believers.

Dear friends, let us stand together - men and women, pioneers and followers. And let us celebrate the women who have answered the call - the shepherds, preachers, theologians, and caregivers. Indeed, the Presbyterian Church of Korea has built a Church where all are welcome, all are heard, and all are empowered.

May the Presbyterian Church of Korea continue to embrace all who seek to serve. And may we, as a global communion, stand united in our commitment to justice, inclusion, and the transformative grace of ordination.

Thank you, and God bless you.