

## FRIDAY AFTERNOON

gifts and partnership documents were signed.

### 11. EXECUTIVE COUNCIL REPORT (continued)

Ms. Allen called the attention of the delegates to the Resolution "Affirmation of the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East as a Partner in Mission" and moved the adoption of the resolution.

Assistant Moderator MacDonald asked for discussion. There was none.

97-GS-13 VOTED: The Twenty-first General Synod adopts the Resolution "Affirmation of the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East as a Partner in Mission."

#### RESOLUTION "AFFIRMATION OF THE UNION OF THE ARMENIAN EVANGELICAL CHURCHES IN THE NEAR EAST AS A PARTNER IN MISSION"

WHEREAS, the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East has shared with our church a history and a mission since the founding of the Armenian Evangelical Church 150 years ago;

WHEREAS, that history has included the establishment and nurture of churches, the building of seminaries and hospitals and the fostering of an ecumenical spirit in the part of the world where the church first experienced division;

WHEREAS, the Armenian Evangelical church has been a faithful part of the Armenian nation, experiencing both the tragedy of genocide and the miracle of rebirth and resurrection of the Armenian nation, including the establishment of the Republic of Armenia;

WHEREAS, the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East maintained a faithful presence and witness in Lebanon during the long Civil War there, consistently refusing to be drawn into sectarian conflict;

WHEREAS, the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East has made significant contributions elsewhere in the Middle East, including Syria, Egypt, Iraq, Turkey and Iran; and has participated significantly in the challenge of nation-building in the new Armenian Republic;

WHEREAS, the United Church Board for World Ministries has been in partnership in mission with the Armenian Missionary Association of America, which in turn has its roots in the Middle East and in the Union; and

WHEREAS, the Armenian Evangelical Church has just celebrated its 150th Anniversary;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Twenty-first General Synod of the United Church of Christ affirms with joy and thanksgiving and celebrates our historic partnership with the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East as an expression of our shared faith and shared history and our oneness in Christ's mission;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twenty-first General Synod gives thanks for the faithful witness of a church that has lived under the cross and has lived out the resurrection; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twenty-first General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages our churches and members to become aware of the historical association of our church with the Armenian people, the first Christian nation, a people who have lived out the drama of suffering and rebirth to the glory of God, and calls upon our church to manifest our love for and partnership with the Armenian Evangelical Church through shared mission and shared life.

Subject to the availability of funds.

### 12. RESPONSE TO THE AFFIRMATION OF UNION

Assistant Moderator MacDonald called upon the Rev. Dr. Dale Bishop, the Area Executive for the Middle East, to introduce the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches of the Near East and to present the representative of the General Secretary of the Union. Mr. Bishop spoke of the work of the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Church of the Near East and introduced the Rev. Nayiri Karjian, who represented her father, the Rev. Hovhannes N. Karjian, the General Secretary of the Union.

Ms. Karjian brought greetings from her father and spoke of the history of the Union of Armenian Evangelical Church in the Near East, stating that the church is only 151 years of age, having been begun by missionaries from the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions composed of Congregational and Presbyterian Missionaries. Ms. Karjian said that since then we have been connected to one another and we have been in partnership, in mutuality and in solidarity. Ms. Karjian stated that this action is a continuing celebration of our mutual affection and our partnership as we stand in solidarity with one another and as we try to live the good news of the Gospel.

President Sherry and Ms. Karjian exchanged gifts and signed partnership documents.

### 13. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND RECESS

Assistant Moderator MacDonald called on Ms. Edith Guffey for announcements. Following announcements, Assistant Moderator MacDonald declared the Third Plenary of the Twenty-first General Synod to be in recess.