

03-GS-10 VOTED: The Twenty-fourth General Synod adopts the resolution “Affirmation of *Kirchengemeinschaft* with the Union of Evangelical Churches (UEK) in Germany.”

AFFIRMATION OF *KIRCHENGEMEINSCHAFT* WITH THE UNION OF EVANGELICAL CHURCHES (UEK) IN GERMANY

WHEREAS the Evangelical Church of the Union (EKU) in 2002 celebrated one hundred eighty-five years of witness and ministry; and

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ and the Evangelical Church of the Union have enjoyed more than two decades of a relationship of *Kirchengemeinschaft*, affirmed by the EKU in 1980 and by the United Church of Christ in 1981 (Thirteenth General Synod), a common expression of the message of reconciliation specially inherent in united and uniting churches; and

WHEREAS the members of the Evangelical Church of the Union voted at its penultimate Synod in June 2002 both to disband the EKU as an institution and to join fully in the newly-formed wider ecumenical German union of churches, the Union of Evangelical Churches; and

WHEREAS the current international situation begs for the affirmation of life-giving partnerships – relationships that build bridges rather than create barriers to human community;

THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED that the General Synod of the United Church of Christ celebrates its existing relationships with the churches of the former Evangelical Church of the Union and affirm the continuation of those relationships as the Union of Evangelical Churches comes into being; and

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED that the United Church of Christ welcomes the opportunity to engage in full communion with an expanded community of churches; and

LET IT BE FINALLY RESOLVED that the United Church of Christ expresses its firm commitment to the healing message of Christ, drawing attention to the lesson of history that people – especially through the Church – from “enemy” countries can overcome hatred and engage in building deep human relations.