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THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Charlotte Episcopal Area
WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE

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EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

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Dear Colleagues and United Methodist Members,

The Western North Carolina Conference and The North Carolina Conference have shared a deep Christian ministry and relationship with Armenia by means of Project Agape. Our relationship causes us to be deeply concerned with the conflict that has endangered so many lives among our Christian brothers and sisters.

As followers of the crucified and risen Christ, we know that peace often comes with a price. While the Russians have negotiated a peaceful end to the recent six-week-long war between Armenia and Azerbaijan, it comes with great cost to our Armenian brothers and sisters. Property that they've controlled since the early 1990's was retaken by the Azerbaijanis in a conflict that resulted in more than 1,300 Armenian deaths.

I mourn with the Armenians in the losses they've suffered over the past six weeks. I am thankful for our relationship and ministry with them through Project Agape and offer my support as United Methodists across North Carolina work with the Armenians to determine how we can best be in ministry with them at this time. I was thankful to learn that they were able to transfer the Christmas boxes and other humanitarian supplies that were stored in a warehouse in Artsakh, located within the recaptured territory, to a safer location.

I ask your prayers for those who have lost loved ones and for those who have been displaced because of this conflict. As we learn more about the needs in this area, there will be opportunities for local churches to offer tangible assistance. Please pray for the Project Agape Board as they discern where God is leading them to offer light in this time of darkness.

Bishop Ward and I are committed to the continuation of our partnership in supporting the people of Armenia through Project Agape as we also give thanks for your support of this important ministry.

With gratitude for all who support and serve Project Agape,

Paul L. Leeland
Resident Bishop