

Resolution on Cooperation and Consolidation
The Council of the Suffolk Association
New York Conference
United Church of Christ

WHEREAS, every local church has experienced the challenges related to an overall decline in church attendance and participation in religious community; and

WHEREAS, small local congregations continue to expect to be served by a learned clergy, even though the compensation and benefits offered often do not reflect the time and expense of preparation for professional ministry; and

WHEREAS, the financial strain of supporting professional ministries and aging facilities often contributes to further decline in the local congregation even as it takes focus away from Christ's mission for his church; and

WHEREAS, shared ministries have been successful in many areas of our conference and denomination; and

WHEREAS, each member congregation with standing in the Suffolk Association is independent and inter-dependent through our voluntary covenant;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the Suffolk Association encourages member congregations to explore cooperation and consolidation with the goal of increasing the vitality of our churches and ministries, and considering the possibility of creating multi-point ministerial charges that can provide just employment conditions and compensation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Association Council requests that members of this council and all clergy with standing in this association share this resolution with the governing body of their local church; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Association Council requests that the Church and Ministry Committee convene conversations with local congregations holding standing with the Suffolk Association for the purpose of exploring cooperation and consolidation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Association Council requests the wisdom and counsel of the New York Conference in this important work.

Passed March 25, 2015