

**No. 8747**

**RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE SUPPORT OF SMALLER CONGREGATIONS  
WORKING WITH OTHER COMMUNITY CONGREGATIONS**

**ADOPTED by the General Assembly**

WHEREAS, the Memorial Christian Church of Jacksboro, Texas, has been working with the First Presbyterian Church of Jacksboro in a "Parish Concept" ministry for fourteen years; and

WHEREAS, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is committed to causes of Christian unity, whether they be at the grass root level or on denominational lines; and

WHEREAS, the Christian church came into being to unite the body of Christ, understanding that "the Church of Christ on earth is essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one"; and

WHEREAS, we adhere to the principles of "The Last Will and Testament" which says that "this body (shall) die, be dissolved and sink into union with the body of Christ at large;" and;

WHEREAS, there are many communities today that cannot adequately support individual congregations with viable programs and ministry because of changing population patterns, limited financial resources and insufficient leadership; and

WHEREAS, individual congregations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) have natural theological and ecclesiological affinities with congregations of other mainline denominations and where a sense of cooperation and even organic unity would prosper the cause of Christ in local communities:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that this General Assembly **request Council on Christian Unity to convene appropriate persons representing Division of Homeland Ministries and the regions to consider the implementation of a program to encourage a venture into unity for small churches using the Jacksboro model and/or such other models as are in existence in communities where congregations engage in some type of shared ministry appropriate to their particular situation; and**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that these various models be studied and compiled into a manual to be made available through regional and area offices; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that counseling and training in the implementation of such programs ~~[Delete: be provided through a task force or a commission to provide leadership in establishing such parish ministries]~~ so that ministry in communities that cannot sustain adequate congregational life be encouraged to explore avenues of church life on a wider basis.