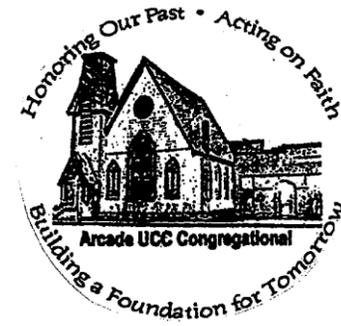


The Carillon

United Church of Christ, Congregational

(585) 492-4530

Editor: Kathy May



December 2015/January 2016

Interest rates are still very low – prices seem to go up every time we go to the store – our paychecks don't go nearly as far as they once did – credit card debt increases in leaps and bounds. For sure, the current economic situation has greatly and negatively impacted everyone, somehow, throughout the country – in fact, throughout the world! People say they are cutting back – **way** back – on purchases for this upcoming Christmas-buying season. Many of the major retail outlets around are trying to induce Christmas shoppers with early sales, longer shopping hours (what happened to Thanksgiving, you may well ask??) and the re-introduction of *lay-aways* - something we haven't seen in quite a few years. I know there are many who wonder, quite anxiously, what this Christmas will be like, since Santa's bag will probably not be quite as full as we've grown accustomed to. But may I be bold in saying that perhaps this is not a bad thing? Perhaps our inability (or at the very least our decreased ability) to buy, buy, buy as in years past will prove to be a **good** thing, not only for us who give, but for those who get!

When a poll was taken of kindergarten and first graders throughout our American north-east (and I confess I don't know the exact numbers polled), an overwhelming percentage and from my point of view, an **alarming** percentage, had no clue why we celebrate Christmas. An astonishing 83% of children only knew about Santa Claus and his merry band of elves, and nothing about the birth of Jesus!!! **83%!!** What is wrong with *THIS* picture?? That's why maybe – just maybe – the diminished ability to purchase Christmas gifts as in years prior is not such a terrible thing after all.

As an alternative to buying traditional gifts for everyone this year, may I suggest some alternatives? First, instead of giving a gift you have to purchase, then wrap, this Christmas, why not give a pledge to do some kind thing at least once a week? Now, ideally it should be every day, but if your list of people to give to is like many, you'd run out of time to do all these nice things – so once a week is a good start! As you might imagine, the possibilities here are endless: visiting someone, phoning, doing errands, telling someone how much you appreciate them, sharing a meal and the list goes on and on and on

and on.... This is a sneaky gift because after doing this for awhile, doing kind things becomes so second nature to you that it becomes your way of life! This gift I highly recommend!

Second, as an alternative to purchasing a gift for Christmas giving, share your faith with family and friends. Now, I can hear some of you saying: *but my family and friends already know I have faith.* And that's great!! But why not take this the "extra mile" and share on a **regular and intentional** basis the love, understanding, kindness and compassion that is yours through your faith? God does this all the time with us – it's what we call *grace*. Even when we least deserve God's love and understanding and kindness and compassion, it's ours through Jesus the Christ. That's why he was born! What a spectacular gift this would make for those we care about – a life filled with grace towards others. The reflection of Christ and through Him, the reflection of God in our lives would shine so brightly that it would become impossible **NOT** to see. And oh yes, this particular gift would last every single minute of every single day of the year!!

Lastly, why not give yourself a gift this Christmas and re-commit yourself to being a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ? How, you might be asking, does this work? Well, by giving yourself over to Christ and by being a regular and frequent supporter of his Church – I mean totally and completely – you free yourself from constantly struggling with making the right decisions and doing the right deeds. They will come naturally through your transformed life which Jesus brings to you. BUT, if you DO slip up - and because you're human, you will - with your life centered on Jesus, you are forgiven and given not a 2nd chance, but a fresh start like nothing ever happened. I don't know about you, but I can think of no gift that would mean more to me than this.

I realize that giving is almost as much fun as getting, so go ahead and carry on your tradition of Christmas giving this year. But as you do, try adding another dimension with these three gifts (and I'm sure, there are so many more) added on. You'll be spreading Christmas cheer and focusing on what Christmas is really all about: Christ Jesus!!

Cathy and I extend to you the warmest and most sincere Christmas greetings. May you and yours enjoy a blessed and Christ-filled Christmas.

Shalom,
Pastor Bob



If you or someone you know would like to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion at home, please let Kathy in the church office know. You may reach the church office at 585-492-4530 or via email at arc-ucc@juno.com.



Anyone from 9th grade up is invited to share with us in our music ministry. Rehearsal is at 8:45am on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings at 6:00pm.

December Greeters

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 6 John & Carol Abel | 20 Jeff Mason & Tom Scott |
| 13 Jim & Sheila Vrenna | 27 Penny Rutledge
Gwen St. John |

December Readers

- | | |
|----------------|---------------------|
| 6 Bev Giles | 20 Skip Tillinghast |
| 13 Mike Tanner | 27 Leanne Pokigo |

December Nursery Schedule

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| 6 Amy Tillinghast | 20 Sheila Vrenna |
| 13 Children's Program | 27 Deb Wood |

December Worship Coordinators

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| 6 Shirley Kriedeman | 20 Ryan Bechdel |
| 13 Wally Lowth | 27 Jo Sixt |

December Birthdays

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 3 Randy Lutz | 16 Sheila Vrenna |
| 6 Diana Stiles | 17 Stacey Lund |
| 11 George Norton | 22 Davis Garlapo |

Bell Ringers Needed!

It is that time of year once again when we look ahead to Advent and Christmas. We are searching for Eager Bell Ringers for the Annual Salvation Army Bell Ringing Campaign.

Help us spread the word and look for volunteers to assist us in our efforts this upcoming season and then give your name(s) to Pastor Bob and he will forward them to the appropriate person for scheduling. Thank you!



December

December Bible Readings

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| 6 Bar 5:1-9 | 20 Micah 5:2-5a |
| Luke 1:68-79 | Luke 1:46b-55 |
| Phil 1:3-11 | Heb 10:5-10 |
| Luke 3:1-6 | Luke 1:39-45 |
| 13 Zeph 3:14-20 | 27 1 Sam 2:18-20, 26 |
| Isa 12:2-6 | Psalm 148 |
| Phil 4:4-7 | Col 3:12-17 |
| Luke 3:7-18 | Luke 2:41-52 |

WORSHIP IN DECEMBER:

- December 6: 2nd Sunday of Advent
The Sacrament of Holy Communion
Scripture: Baruch 5: 1-9
Luke 1: 68-79
Sermon: *Unlikely Places, Unlikely People!*
- December 13: 3rd Sunday of Advent
Youth Christmas Program
- December 20: 4th Sunday of Advent
Scripture: Hebrews 10: 5-10
Luke 1: 39-45
Sermon: *Baby Jesus*
- December 24: Christmas Eve
- December 27: 1st Sunday after Christmas
Service of Lessons and Carols

Pastor's Discretionary Fund

During the month of November contributions for the Pastor's Discretionary Fund have been given by: one anonymous donor and Pastor Bob.

This fund is used in helping area folk in times of need. Your donations are greatly appreciated and may be given to Pastor or mailed to the church, indicated for the Pastor's Fund.

January Greeters

- | | |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 3 Randy & Debi Lutz | 24 Diane Szpak & Sharon Hawley |
| 10 Lary Schafer & Dirk Norwich | 31 Tom & Deb Scott |
| 17 Gwen & Laurel Becht
Candy Hayden | |

January Readers

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 3 Penny Rutledge | 24 Sheila Vrenna |
| 10 Josh Taylor | 31 Jeff Mason |
| 17 Deb Scott | |

January Nursery Schedule

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| 3 Denielle Romance | 24 Shannon King |
| 10 Kathy May | 31 Sheila Vrenna |
| 17 Amy Tillinghast | |

January Worship Coordinators

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| 3 Bev Giles | 24 Jo Sixt |
| 10 Shirley Kriedeman | 31 Ryan Bechdel |
| 17 Wally Lowth | |

January Birthdays

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Karen Czesak | 24 Dirk Norwich |
| 8 Katelyn Rogers | 24 Sharon Hawley |
| 9 Jim Vrenna | 26 Mike Pokigo |
| 17 Paul Sanio | 27 Gordon Comstock |
| 18 Sue Kasprzyk | 29 Lloyd Knose |
| 19 Aaron Czesak | 31 Shirley Kriedeman |
| 23 Marilyn Piridy | |

January Anniversaries

- 1 Lary & Barbara Schaefer – 33 yrs.
- 1 Charles & Barbara Newman
- 3 Bill & Karen Schaper – 46 yrs.



January Bible Readings:

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3 | Jer 31:7-14
Psalm 147:12-20
Eph 1:3-14
John 1:1-18 | 24 | Neh 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10
Psalm 19
1 Cor 12:12-31a
Luke 4:14-21 |
| 10 | Isa 43:1-7
Psalm 29
Acts 8:14-17
Luke 3:15-17, 21-22 | 31 | Jer 1:4-10
Psalm 71:1-6
1 Cor 13:1-13
Luke 4:21-30 |
| 17 | Isa 62:1-5
Psalm 36:5-10
1 Cor 12:1-11
John 2:1-11 | | |

WORSHIP IN JANUARY:

- January 3: 2nd Sunday after Christmas
The Sacrament of Holy Communion
Scripture: John 1: 10-18
Sermon: *Be A Child of God*
- January 10: 1st Sunday after Epiphany
The Baptism of Christ
Scripture: Luke 3: 15-17, 21-22
Sermon: *Grace, Day by Day*
- January 17: 2nd Sunday after Epiphany
Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12: 1-11
John 2: 1-11
Sermon: *The Gifts That Keep on Giving*
- January 24: 3rd Sunday after Epiphany
Scripture: Luke 4: 14-21
Sermon: *Who Are You?*
- January 31: 4th Sunday after Epiphany
Scripture: Psalm 71: 1-6
Luke 4: 21-30
Sermon: *A Worthy Sequel!*

PAC ADVENT WORSHIP

Everyone is welcomed to share with our sisters and brothers throughout our area for PAC Advent Worship. On **Wednesdays, December 2, 9, 16 and 23** we will gather at Hope Lutheran Church, 2 E. Main St. in Arcade for worship each week at 11am. Many of the PAC Pastors will participate in these services.

Following worship each week, there will be a luncheon hosted by various churches. Arcade UCC will host the December 16 luncheon. Please, mark your calendars and set aside time to join in Advent Worship and lunch on these dates.

Christmas Eve Worship

Everyone (you, your family and friends) is invited to join with us as we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus, the Christ, during our Christmas Eve Worship Service, on Thursday, December 24.

This year we will join together in **ONE** Christmas Eve Service. Our worship will be at **7pm** - a time that will allow the entire family to worship together. This service will be focused on being together as family and will include familiar Christmas carols, scripture and special candle lighting.

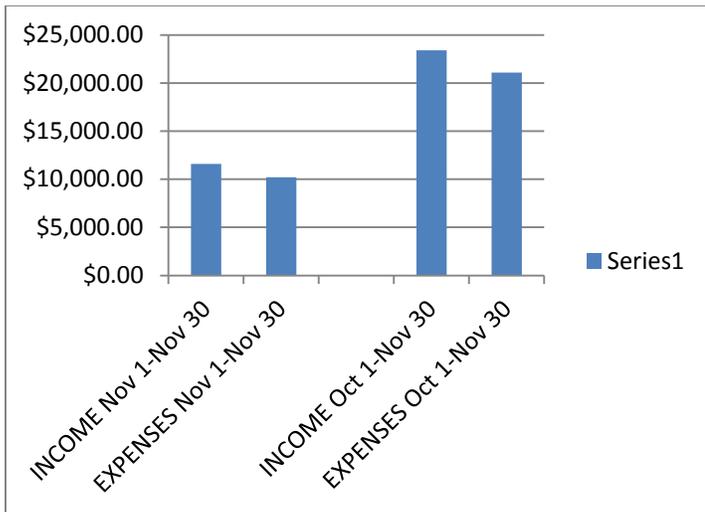
Make note and plan on being with us as we celebrate the coming of God's greatest gift to humankind – Jesus Christ!

Longevity Milestones

Congratulations to Bev Giles on the 40th anniversary of her church membership on December 21.

Congratulations to our pastor, Rev. Bob Dievendorf, whose pastorate here began late in the winter of 2009. Later this month, he will become the fifth-longest serving pastor in our 202-year history. Earlier this year he passed Rev. John Ellis (1972-78), and now he will pass Carlton Talbot (1983-90), making this the longest pastorate since Rev. John Wetzel retired in 1972.

The four pastors ahead of him are Rev. Henry Mosley (1921-29 and 1934-48), Rev. Wetzel (1960-72), Rev. Walter Blackmer (1911-21), and Rev. William Dunstan (1949-57). Congratulations, Pastor Bob!



FINANCIAL NEWS

Our non-pass-through expenditures in November included \$5,517.48 pastor's salary and benefits; \$2,246.01 other salaries on November 13 and 30; \$529.34 insurance; \$400 Our Church's Wider Mission to the state and national United Church of Christ; \$320 village utilities; \$163.80 postage; \$160 cleaning; \$143.83 custodial and office supplies; \$136 travel; \$131 gas bill; \$120.97 ink cartridges and online service; \$100 Pioneer Association of Churches dues; \$99.59 Sunday School supplies; \$84.78 phone bills; and \$46.35 baptism and Outreach expenses.

We thank Debi Lutz for coordinating the Thanksgiving turkey centerpiece drawing and Cathy Dievendorf for organizing the "That's My Pan" fundraiser. We also thank the Women's Fellowship for donating \$125 of the profit from their bazaar at the Fall Festival to the church general fund.

The Neighbors in Need offering in October totaled \$470, which has been sent to the New York Conference office.

We recently received a \$1,500 grant from the Department of Community Ministries of the Western New York Area Churches in Covenant. This grant is for our monthly free community dinners and will allow the dinners to continue without being subsidized by the church budget.

Youth Lead Worship

On Sunday, December 13, our youth will present their Christmas Program during our morning worship. The traditional Christmas story will be creatively and dramatically told as our youth lead us in worship.

Also, Wyn Roll and members of his school choir will be worshipping with us this day, sharing song for the season. You are ALL invited to come along with your friends, family and neighbors as we support our youth in this presentation!!



Christmas Fund Gifts Provided...

The generous gifts of all UCC congregations and individuals to the Christmas Fund enabled the Pension Boards' Ministerial Assistance program to provide some form of assistance to approximately 1,700 persons during the past year.

- Christmas "Thank You" Gift Checks were sent to *approximately* 453 persons in December 2014. The 453 gifts total \$181,200.

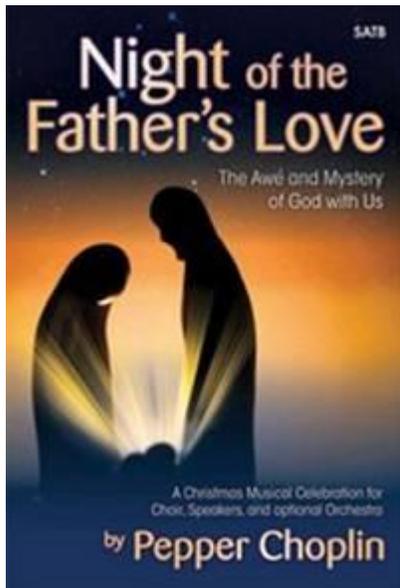
- Monthly Pension Supplementation is being provided to 325 persons. These gifts totaled \$1,415,732.58 in 2014.

- Quarterly Health Premium Supplementation is being provided to 240 families totaling \$495,896.00. All of the funding for Health Premium Supplementation is derived from the Christmas Fund (2014 data).

- Emergency Grants totaling \$76,430.29 were provided to 50 individuals and families

The numbers of persons receiving assistance and the totals of assistance payments fluctuate on a monthly basis.

Please give generously to this worthwhile fund.



***Cantata presented by
Arcade UCC Choir & Friends***

**Sunday, December 20
3:00pm**

United Church of Christ, Cong.
Corner of Church & Main St.

WORKERS UNION

Workers Union met November 11 in the Great Room. There was no October Workers Union meeting due to the busyness of Fall Festival, so we had a lot of catching up to do!

Joys and concerns were the first order of business. Various Christmas missions and gifts were approved by consensus. The giving includes visiting our members who are housebound. Our treasurer, Sharon Hawley, reported that a great amount of pennies for Pennies for People was received last month. Keep those pennies coming! Thanks to Sharon for rolling them up.

After dessert and coffee, Pastor Bob presented a program on the first Thanksgiving. We had a question and answer time that revealed our lack of Thanksgiving Day history. We learned that the pilgrims had no pumpkin pie in 1621!

The December 9 meeting will be held at Lois Yauchzy's home on Haskell Avenue at 1pm. The program promises to be very entertaining. As always, all women of the church are welcome!

Gwen St. John, Secretary

Mary Hosford Fisher Women's Fellowship

Mary Hosford Fisher Women's Fellowship met on Monday, November 2 in the annex at 1pm. Nine members were present.

Devotions by Gwen St. John included our many cares and concerns followed by a brief meditation on our "Golden Rule."

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved. The treasurer reported that 15% of the proceeds from the bazaar at the Fall Festival were given to the general fund. The treasurer's report was approved.

PAC news included the Thanksgiving Service to be held at Arcade UCC on Sunday, November 22 at 7pm. Cookies will be needed for the reception following. Hope Lutheran Church will again be hosting the Wednesday morning Lenten Services. A light luncheon will follow the worship service. Arcade UCC Women's Fellowship will host on December 16. Anna Hope will be retiring as head of the PAC Food Pantry in early 2016.

Gwen St. John is planning the Christmas Luncheon to be held on Monday December 14 at noon at Chanderson's. Anyone interested in attending, please sign up on the sign-up sheet provided in the back of the sanctuary.

Our December meeting will be used to fill the Christmas Bags for the PAC Food Pantry. Last year 90 bags were filled for the pantry. Angel Action will also be one of our Christmas giving projects. Our next meeting will be held on December 7 at 1pm.

Margaret Homan, Secretary

Blue Christmas

Christmas can be a painful time for some. It may be the first Christmas without a loved family member who has recently died; it may be a time that has always been difficult.

The constant refrain on the radio and television, in shopping malls and churches, about the happiness of the season, about getting together with family and friends, reminds many people of what they have lost or have never had. The anguish of broken relationships, the insecurity of unemployment, the weariness of ill health, the pain of isolation - all these can make us feel very alone in the midst of the celebrating and spending. We need the space and time to acknowledge our sadness and concern; we need to know that we are not alone.

Our spirits sink, as the days grow shorter. We feel the darkness growing deeper around us. We need encouragement to live the days ahead of us. For these reasons, Arcade UCC, Congregational offers a special "Blue Christmas" service on Sunday, December 6, 2015 at 3 pm.

Come out, and join with us in sharing and hearing prayers, scripture, and music that acknowledge that God's presence is for those who mourn, for those who struggle - and that God's Word comes to shine light into our darkness. Everyone, regardless of church background (or lack of it) is welcome. The short service will be followed by a brief time for light refreshments and fellowship.

Who's Packing Your Parachute?

Charles Plumb was a US Navy jet pilot in Vietnam. After 75 combat missions, his plane was destroyed by a surface-to-air missile. Plumb ejected and parachuted into enemy hands. He was captured and spent 6 years in a communist Vietnamese prison. He survived the ordeal and now lectures on lessons learned from that experience.

One day, when Plumb and his wife were sitting in a restaurant, a man at another table came up and said, "You're Plumb! You flew jet fighters in Vietnam from the aircraft carrier Kitty Hawk. You were shot down!"

"How in the world did you know that?" asked Plumb.

"I packed your parachute," the man replied. Plumb gasped in surprise and gratitude. The man pumped his hand and said, "I guess it worked!" Plumb assured him, "It sure did. If your chute hadn't worked, I wouldn't be here today."

Plumb couldn't sleep that night, thinking about that man. Plumb says, "I kept wondering what he had looked like in a Navy uniform: a white hat, a bib in the back and bell-bottom trousers. I wonder how many times I might have seen him and not even said 'Good morning, how are you?' or anything because you see, I was a fighter pilot and he was just a sailor." Plumb thought of the many hours the sailor had spent at a long wooden table in the bowels of the ship, carefully weaving the shrouds and folding the silks of each chute, holding in his hands each time the fate of someone he didn't know.

Now, Plumb asked his audience, "Who's packing your parachute?" Everyone has someone who provides what they need to make it through the day. He also points out that he needed many kinds of parachutes when his plane was shot down over enemy territory - he needed his physical parachute, his mental parachute, his emotional parachute and his spiritual parachute. He called on all these supports before reaching safety.

Sometimes in the daily challenges that life gives us, we miss what is really important. We may fail to say hello, please, or thank you, congratulate someone on something wonderful that has happened to them, give a compliment, or just do something nice for no reason.

As you go through this week, this month, this year, recognize the people who pack your parachutes!



A Friendly Reminder

It's painless and it's so easy – no strings, no fuss, no muss!! It's the continuing opportunity YOU have to give to the church.

You know those refundable bottles and cans you accumulate and aren't quite sure what to do with or how to dispose of them? All you have to do is take them to *Isaac's Redemption Center* at 34 Liberty Street, Arcade, NY (bagged and rinsed clean and counted, if you can). When you take them to Isaac's, just tell them you wish for your refund to go to the UCC Church. Instead of getting a refund for your cans/bottles, our church will get the monies periodically AND our Church Council is considering matching these monies in some fashion. All these funds will be used for Ministries at Arcade UCC. And, if you are unable to get your cans/bottles to Isaac's yourself, if you call the church office, we will make arrangements to pick them up once a month and take them for you! How much easier could this be??

Bible Study

Bible Study meets each Wednesday evening at 7:00pm in the Great Room and everyone is invited to join us! We will not meet on December 30 or January 6, but will resume our weekly gatherings on January 13, 2016.

This study is for everyone – young and not-so-young alike. Bring your friends, your neighbors, your relatives. We have a great time of fellowship and we even learn something along the way!! How much better can it get??? See you there!



December Gatherings

- 1 Worship/Music – 6:30pm
- 1 Outreach – 7pm
- 2 Christian Education – 4pm
- 2, 9, 16, 23 – PAC Advent Services – 11am @ Hope Lutheran Church with luncheon following.
- 2, 9, 16, 23 – Choir Rehearsal – 6pm
- 2, 9, 16, 23 – Bible Study – 7pm
- 6 “Blue Christmas” Worship – 3pm – Arcade UCC
- 9 Workers Union – 1pm – at the home of Lois Yauchzy
- 9 Building & Grounds – 7pm
- 14 Women's Fellowship Christmas Luncheon – Chanderson's – noon
- 14 Community Band Christmas Concert – Sardinia Meeting House – 7pm
- 18 Southern Tier Saxophones – Christmas Concert 7pm – Arcade UCC
- 19 Community Dinner - 4-6:00pm
- 20 “Night of the Father's Love” – Christmas Cantata – 3pm Arcade UCC
- 22 Council – 7pm
- 24 Christmas Eve Worship – 7pm

January Gatherings

- 4 Women's Fellowship – 1pm
- 5 Worship/Music – 6:30pm
- 6, 13, 20, 27 – Choir Rehearsal – 6pm
- 12 Outreach – 7pm
- 13 Building & Grounds – 7pm
- 13, 20, 27 – Bible Study – 7pm
- 26 Council – 7pm
- 30 Community Dinner – 4-6pm

The Carillon is being compiled, printed and mailed by a committee of three – Audrey Erick, Margaret Homan and Sheila Vrenna. Please continue to watch for the deadline date for your articles and reports and give them to any of the above members. We hope to produce a quality newsletter. Any suggestions are welcomed. The deadline for the February issue is January 24, 2016.

The Carillon

Published 10 times per year by the United Church of Christ, Congregational, 297 Main St., Arcade, NY 14009.

- Pastor:** Rev. Robert C. Dievendorf
- Office Phone:** (585)492-4530
- Office E-mail:** arc-ucc@juno.com
- Website:** arcadeucc.org
- Office Hours:** 9:00am – 3:00pm (T-Th)
- Worship Schedule:** 8:45am – Sunday School
9:00am Choir Rehearsal
10:30am Worship

United Church of Christ, Congregational

297 Main St.
Arcade, NY 14009