

# The Gathering

## Zion Church Summer Review 2025

### A look back at events in June, July and August

*The day is Yours, also the night; You established the sun and the moon.  
It was You who set all the boundaries of the earth; You made both summer and winter.*

Psalm 74 vs 16-17



Summer services  
were also held at  
Calvin Church in  
Mermaid...

“a little country  
church 10 minutes  
from Charlottetown”.



Summer at church brought  
a variety of soloists,  
performers, special  
speakers, events and sadly,  
a farewell to Zion  
Kindergarten after 40+  
years in existence.

Now it's time to look  
forward to Fall and the start  
up of our usual activities,  
reconnecting with friends  
we have not seen all  
summer and hopefully  
welcoming new ones!

## *Tribute by Dianne White to Kindergarten Director, Donna MacLean*

My name is Dianne, and I work in the office here at Zion. Today, we gather to celebrate a remarkable program and outreach that has touched many lives over the years. We are here to honor all the teachers—both past and present—who have dedicated themselves to this mission.

In 1979, the Session of Zion Church made a visionary decision to establish a Kindergarten here. They recognized it as an opportunity to serve the community and to share Zion's name and mission far and wide. The first teachers to bring this vision to life were Azalia Matheson and Lorraine MacLeod. In 1987, Azalia Matheson decided to retire from teaching here. She left behind a strong and well-established program for her successor. Azalia and I had the honor of interviewing a recent college graduate, and we both felt she was the perfect fit for Zion. That individual was Donna. Looking back, I can confidently say that we made a wise decision.

Donna, you have poured countless hours into this program—far more than what was ever compensated. You have invested your whole heart into this work, and the results speak for themselves. The program has flourished under your care and dedication.

Over the years, the program has evolved. As Kindergarten became part of the formal school system, we adapted by offering Junior Kindergarten and Playschool. When the challenges of COVID-19 arose, like many others, we had to rethink our approach. Through it all, the core mission remained unchanged: to provide a nurturing and educational environment for young children. Thousands of students have passed through our doors in the past 46 years. Each one has left here prepared for the next step in their educational journey. Zion's name has become well-known in the community, thanks to the time and effort invested in each student. We often hear from schools that Zion students are well-prepared and ready to learn.

Having children here has made Zion a vibrant and active church. Their voices and laughter are often remarked upon by those who visit. Just this week, visitors from a cruise ship stopped by and listened as the children practiced for their closing performance. They expressed how wonderful it was to hear them and commended the teachers for their outstanding work. Every child who has come to Zion has felt cared for, respected, safe, and important. That is a remarkable accomplishment. Donna has an innate ability to make each child feel special, knowing exactly how to comfort them and adapt to their individual needs. If a child required extra support, she ensured it was provided.

We have been truly blessed at Zion with all the teachers who have served here over the years. I won't attempt to name them all, as I would hate to miss someone. If you have been part of this program in any way over the past 46 years, please accept our sincerest appreciation for a job well done. The willingness of the staff to assist with various church functions—whether it's adjusting schedules during funerals or clearing spaces for events—has been invaluable. Your support has been a great help and blessing to Zion Church.

One day, I was out and heard a child exclaim, "Daddy, there's my principal!" I looked around to see who she was referring to, and her father said, "I think she's talking about you." It was a reminder that, as my job description states, there are always "other duties as required!"

On behalf of the congregation, as a parent whose children have all attended here, and as someone nearing the end of my tenure as principal, we thank you. You have made Zion a name well-known and respected in the community. I am confident that whatever you pursue next, you will excel.





Open House for the Kindergarten farewell attracted many former students, parents and teachers who enjoyed chatting over a cuppa, checking out the many photographs on display that brought back happy memories and watching videos of days gone by – Graduations and Christmas Concerts which I found fascinating.... kids waving at folks in the audience, forgetting to move when they were supposed to or not remembering what they were supposed to say. Displayed on the walls were colourful T-shirts, one for each year, printed with the name of every student attending that year. We will all miss the “joyful noise” of that activity downstairs. (ed.)



Donna thanking Dianne for the tribute and for her review of the Zion Kindergarten history and (right) visitors chatting and enjoying the displays and the cake.

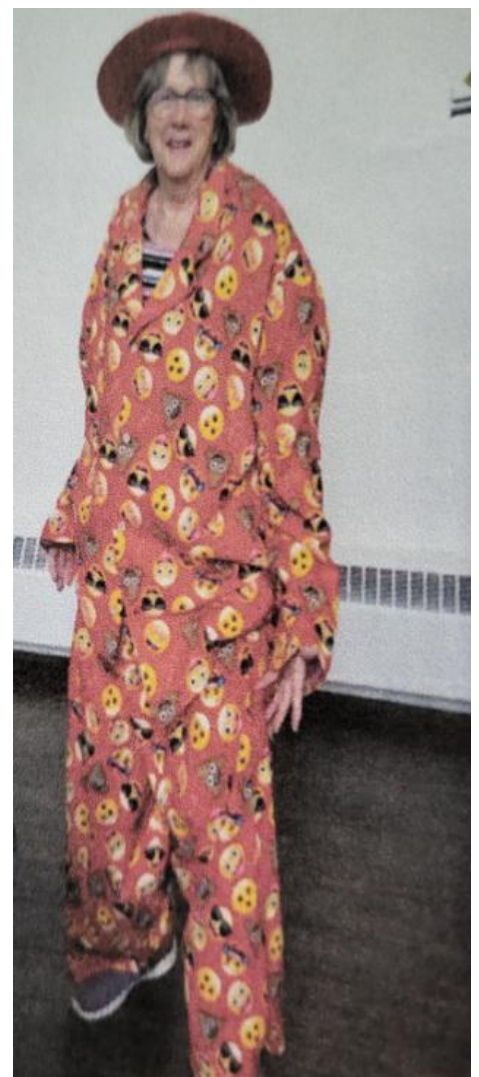


Members of the Kindergarten Staff from years gone by



## The Spring Clothing Sale

I try to resist going to sales, but I wanted some pictures for the newsletter, so I headed over to Zion praying “lead me not into temptation” under my breath. Decorations outside the church were designed to entice passers-by, but I was more attracted at the thought of having tea and goodies at the Café. The merchandise was spread over areas of the building I didn’t even know existed! What a lot of work must have gone into setting it up and I was overwhelmed by the selection and LOW prices. The only reason I didn’t come home with jewellery and that red straw hat was my head was too large for the latter and my cabinet was too full for the former. But I snapped up a bargain on a beautiful blouse and others must have done likewise because I heard the sales topped \$3000! Well done, ladies- your hard work organizing it paid off!



On the right, Roylean at her best. Too bad there was no fashion show.

## John's Thoughts

### Psalm 3 O Lord, how many are my foes!

King David's son Absalom, with an army of tens of thousands of men had risen up against him in a plot to take away the throne. David could have trusted in his own army to defeat Absalom, **but** instead, he depended upon God's mercy, even though many doubted that God would deliver him. "**But** you are a shield around me, O Lord; you bestow glory on me and lift up my head." And as David cries out to God, the Lord answers him from his holy hill, and David could be confident that the Lord would sustain him and deliver him from his troubles.

How many foes rise up against us, day by day!

Foes such as temptations, regrets, guilt, greed, selfishness, immoralities of many sorts, unrighteousness of all kinds, impatience, anger, ...could these be like the tens of thousands of foes that rose up against King David? We can often recognize some of these things that we would rather not be part of our lives, and we can try to rationalize our action, or try to work things out by ourselves, **but** we can also bring them to the Lord who is a shield around us, and He can help us to have peace within our minds so that we can lie down and sleep, then awaken, knowing that He sustains us, and delivers us from our foes, helping us to grow in His knowledge, love, peace, and mercy. This psalm tells us that we can be confident in God's protection and peace when we let him into our lives. August, 2025.

It's a small word with only three letters, **but**, and it often appears in the Bible to highlight a turning point where something impossible or hopeless is made possible through God's intervention. Scripture is full of **BUT GOD** moments. How many *But God* moments have you had in your life? Be glad for them!

*"My flesh and my heart may fail **but God** is the strength of my heart and my portion forever."* Psalm 73 v 26

*"You killed the author of life, **but God** raised him from the dead."* Acts 3 v 15

### "BUT GOD" (Lyrics by Larnelle Harris. Sung by Jaycee Sabapathy, Sunday, July 27)

Abraham and Sarah never thought they'd have a son, then descendants came as countless as the stars.  
Moses and God's people had nowhere left to run, Then the waters of the Red Sea stood apart.  
So many times the light of hope was setting like the sun And it seemed to the faithful it was over, it was done.

BUT GOD sees some way when miracles are well beyond our view. His love saves the day when fear would tell us there is just no use.

You can look the whole world over for the meaning of it all, For the purpose that mankind has always sought.  
In the end you'll discover there is no other answer BUT GOD.

I know your heart is breaking, the pain just comes in waves. Everywhere you look it seems like there's no peace.  
You try not to give up, but the tears will not relent. Any minute now you might accept defeat.  
And you stand there with "impossible" the next work on your lips, And your vision has been blinded and nothing making sense, BUT GOD.

In the end you'll discover there is no other answer BUT GOD!



## Music filled the air at Zion this summer

Linda Matthews amazed us with her handbell ringing, a young Christian band, 'Upstream', from Toronto lifted our spirits, Miya Luo, Mosha Tomang and David Sabapathy accompanied Jaycee and son George in a song and the 'Great George Street Band' with the 'Four Hoarsemen' entertained the public in their annual fundraiser. We were blessed with many other musical contributors but your editor missed a lot (*I was too sick to attend church, and most performers were positioned beyond the pulpit which blocked them from my view when I tried to take a picture from the pew.*)



## *New Responsibilities for John Barrett*

As many in our congregation may have heard, John Barrett, an Elder at Zion Church, has recently been appointed to lead the **Congregational and Community Ministries** Department for the Presbyterian Church in Canada as Associate Secretary. Curious as to what is involved in this position, we thought we'd include some of John's responsibilities in this article, so our readers had a clearer understanding of what he's been up to since he started this role on July 21, 2025. When not travelling to various parts of the country to fulfill his responsibilities, John will divide his time between his primary office at 50 Wynford Drive in Toronto and his satellite office located at Zion Church in Charlottetown.

Believing that congregations are of vital importance and that presbyteries have a pivotal role in the oversight of their constituencies, **Congregation and Community Ministries** provides resources to support and enhance the mission and ministry of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. **Congregation and Community Ministries** engage with church leaders, supporting them as they seek to continue Christ's ministry in Canada.

The nature and scope of the Associate Secretary's role in this department is to support the church by providing effective leadership for the department, assisting congregations, presbyteries, synods and committees of the General Assembly in bolstering discipleship initiatives and congregational ministries, and to work with other departments of the national office to accomplish these same foundational goals.

The **Congregational and Community Ministries Department** supports all aspects of congregational life including evangelism, Christian education, youth, street level mission, congregational development, change & transition, worship and leadership development. The Associate Secretary draws upon the gifts and talents of leaders in The Presbyterian Church in Canada and connects them and their ideas to the wider church through leadership opportunities and print resources. The department is expected to provide accessible, thorough, and prompt responses to requests for information in all aspects of congregational and community ministry life.

Additionally, this position oversees the production of online and print resources for the church in all the previously mentioned areas. **CCM** assists presbyteries and synods as they evaluate, envision, and execute programs as a part of their pastoral oversight and strategic planning; supports presbyteries and synods in the development of workshops, consultations, conferences and other programs for growth, renewal and health; supports and provides grants and programs to congregations and to presbyteries as they oversee new church development, renewing ministries, ministries with Indigenous peoples, rural and remote ministries and other specialized ministries; aids presbyteries in their search for new and innovative mission and ministry initiatives by providing programs, advice, resources and grants from various sources within the church; aids presbyteries in initiatives to strengthen congregational health by providing programs, advice, resources and grants from various sources within the church; facilitates ministry appointments based upon presbytery requests and the discernment of the Life and Mission Agency. The entire department is expected to be current, creative, responsive, proactive and innovative in all aspects of congregational ministry when seeking to carry out this mandate.

During the early weeks of assuming his new position, John will be visiting the eight National Indigenous Ministries in Canada, all of which receive funding through the **CCM** Department. These ministries are in Kenora Ontario, Winnipeg Manitoba (2), Mistawasis & Saskatoon Saskatchewan, Edmonton Alberta, Vancouver and Duncan (Vancouver Island) British Columbia.

We wish John well in this new undertaking and know that the Zion congregation will be prayerfully supportive of him as he faces the many challenges that this position will bring. We look forward to updates from his department in future issues of 'The Gathering'.

*Please contact us at the Gathering if you would like to watch the video of the Meet and Greet Session with John.*





### *The Last Page of Pictures*

Anders and Howie gave the children a lesson about Jesus, Rev. Jeff Loach was one of our special speakers, Friends of Faith enjoyed lunch at Chez Yvonne in North Rustico, new members were welcomed into the church family and Dianne's office was moved to the ladies' parlour to make way for the construction of the new elevator. Summer was short, now welcome Fall!





## Looking ahead to the Fall

**As the days grow shorter and the nights cooler, we return to the fall and winter rhythm of church life at Zion.**

**Welcome back Sunday** is September 7 with Sunday School Kick Off, the Sanctuary Choir back in the loft, the BBQ at Brackley Common and the slide show of pictures sent in by the congregation featuring summer activities and memories made.

**Prayer Group** begins again on Tuesday mornings at 10 am. New members are welcome and prayer requests can be placed in the box at the back of the church. These are all kept in confidence unless advised otherwise.

**Choir rehearsals** start at 7pm on Wednesday, September 3 and Legato and Marcato choirs meet at 6.30 pm rotating from September 10. If you love the Lord and love to sing, come and join us!

**Bible Study** Tuesday, September Tuesday 23 at 7pm will feature the start of a series called “*Conversations with Jesus*” which will teach us how to share our faith with others. This is repeated on Thursday morning, September 25 at 10am. As usual there is a fellowship time of half an hour before each session. Come along and learn how Jesus engaged people.

**Friends of Faith** meet on Thursday, September 25 at 1 pm with “Tea Time and bring a friend”, so invite an old friend and make some new ones. It’s a wonderful time of fellowship and fun.

**Knot all Knitters** take up their needles, crochet hooks, quilting materials and wool on the second Wednesday of the month at 9.30 am. Call Valerie Shaw at 902 569 3446 for more information about this ministry.

## Special events

On Sunday, September 14, at 3 pm there will be the Memorial Service at Calvin Church, Mermaid.

Fellowship time after the morning service on the 14<sup>th</sup> will feature ice cream... and lots of conversation.

## A word of thanks

My thanks to those of you who have contributed to and helped me to compile this Summer Review. The Gathering team are always glad to have feedback, suggestions and articles you write that will help us to grow spiritually. You can contact us at [gatheringinfo2025@gmail.com](mailto:gatheringinfo2025@gmail.com)

## Genesis 8 v 22

*As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease.*



**If you would like a visit from one of our ministers, just call the church office at 902 566 5363.**