



Zion Presbyterian Church, Charlottetown, P. E. I.

The Gathering

Zion Church Newsletter

October 2025

Welcome Back!

Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

Romans 15: 7

Here are some glimpses of us **gathering** at Brackley Commons for a BBQ in September. The postcard from 1906 on the left is where our kin used to **gather**-the first Zion church on Richmond Street, with the roof of Trinity United in the background on the left. Photo is from the Phil Culhane PEI Postcard collection.



A big thankyou to all who helped us gather.

Liz's Corner



Greetings Brothers and Sisters!

Welcome back to my little corner of the conversation in The Gathering! Welcome Autumn! Happy Thanksgiving!

How blessed are we to be connected to each other in love and prayer! As I look back over the past few months, I wonder at the speed of the passing days. My, how time flies! If I had to tell you what I got up to from June till October, I would have to say that my days were easy and I did a lot of touring around our fair province. Also, I was fortunate to be invited to share the swimming pool of dear friends and so kept the hot days enjoyable! But the highlight for me this Summer was worship at Calvin Church in Mermaid. What a wonderful community of faithful Christians!! The music and message each Sunday were the perfect introduction to another week walking with Jesus. A special thank you to Diane and Alan Balderson and family for their leadership and the sharing of their spiritual gifts. I enjoyed every minute and felt the presence of the Lord abiding with each person present. Amen!

Throughout each day, I deliberately search out an awareness of that still small voice of the Spirit that renews my faith and fills me with gratitude and deep-seated joy. It was a life-changing, light bulb moment, when I realized that existence, with all its joys and sorrows, is meant to be lived one day at a time. Whether we live in a mansion having earned wealth and prestige or find it a struggle to manage the rent month to month; whether we enjoy good health or not, it is within our power to be fully satisfied and live a meaningful life with true joy one day at a time. I have always been a clock watcher. I like to know what time of day it is. Years ago, I decided that when the face of the clock showed me repeated numbers like 1:11, 2:22, 6:06, 11:11, etc., I would remember to say thank you to Jesus for wrapping me in His love and never leaving me alone. I know Jesus has my back. When chatting with Jesus, I take a few nice slow inhales and exhailes of breath and I remember who gave me breath in the first place. Praise the Lord!! I am blessed beyond measure!!

October directs our attention to the arrival of colder days. I enjoy the Autumn and am fortunate to have a handyman helping me prepare my garden for Winter's rest. Friends, I pray you can take time to enjoy the refreshing Fall air and the vibrant October colours! Many thanks to our island's farm families and workers who are bringing in this year's harvest. God bless you! For the roof over my head, the food in my cupboard, the people in my life, thank you Lord! I'm looking forward to Zion's on-line auction raising funds for our new elevator, the choir's participation in worship and for all the other activities that bring us closer together and joined as one for the glory of God!

Keep Faith my dear friends! Look after each other and be kind. Count your blessings!
Godspeed
Elizabeth Ferguson

John's Thoughts

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul:

Often, when I consider this portion of Psalm 23, I picture a shepherd with his staff, sitting under a shade tree, as he watches over the sheep on the green, grassy hillside which is surrounded by, or fenced in by bramble bushes and large rocks, and leading down to a stream of clear, cool, fresh flowing water. And sometimes I think of the hymn "The Ninety and Nine" when the shepherd leaves the ninety-nine to seek the one that was lost. I guess the stray sheep got through the opening in the bush.

Not only can the sheep find the opening to go out, but sometimes, other animals, prey animals, wolves for example, find the opening to come in to attack the sheep.

A while back, I wrote this poem:

Hole In The Fence (Psalm 23:1-3)

There's a hole in the fence where the wolves pass through,
How it got there, no one can tell,
It's just large enough, so it's hard to be found,
And it hides itself very well.

They will enter at dusk with the sun setting low,
Or at noon in the light of the day,
They creep in any time, with no reason or rhyme,
But to reap of the spoil in their way.

Well, they're not really wolves that go after the sheep,
And they're not really sheep that are prey,
And it's not just a hole in the fence that we see,
But relationships gone all astray.

It's a misunderstanding, a word said in haste,
Or a deed gone so careless awry,
Or a basket of hurts over years, many tears,
Not revealing the who, when, or why.

Now, the three score and ten fills the length of our years,
Though today is the one we behold,
So the hole in the fence needs a mending for sure
Lest the wolves eye the sheep in the fold.

Can it possibly be, can the fence be made new?
Without doubt, yes, I'm sure there's a way,
With a patient, kind word, understanding, and faith,
Yes, the mend of the hole wins the day!

In our daily activities, since we are humans, nasty things like anger, misunderstanding, impatience or selfishness or sadness, creep into our lives, like the hole in the fence where the wolves pass through. Sometimes it seems difficult to deal with these things on our own, and our lives are but a few short years. Like David, I'm convinced that Good Shepherd can help us retrieve those sheep that went missing and mend the hole in the fence. He can help us to forgive, understand, and be made new.... He restoreth my soul!

Jmf Sept, 2025



September Events



Members of the Wakelin family and friends gathered at Covehead Beach for the Baptism of the girls on September 7. It was a joyous occasion.



The Wakelin girls who were baptised - Maizie, Maddie and Marisa.



The front office has moved to the Ladies' Parlour to make room for the new elevator. Watch this space!



YOUTH GROUP HAS STARTED !!!

WHAT'S THE POINT.....?

It's not hard to find the "Mission Statement" for our church. It's on the outside of the building for all to see-very public.

"To know Christ and to make Him known"

Simple and direct, isn't it? "How are we doing that?" was Rev. Allyson's question at the start-up session of Bible Study (or as it is now called, 'Small Groups'). "How many of us are guided by this mission statement and take it seriously," I wondered. The "Great Commission", from Jesus is to make Him known. *"Go into all the world and proclaim the Gospel to the whole creation"* (Mark 16 v15). He was talking to ordinary folk, lay people, about spreading the word.

A mission statement is a concise declaration of an organization's fundamental purpose, goals and reason for its existence. I checked with Joan Carr, the former editor of The Gathering, to see if there was ever a [mission statement for this newsletter](#) and her reply was that it started during Covid *"to connect with people who are unable to participate in the life of the church for whatever reason- infirmity, illness or for whatever"*... and she added that it eventually began to include church members who were uplifted by the articles. This was a comfort to me, as those of us on the writing team are lay people, trying to share our faith with readers in the hope that it will encourage you and help your faith and knowledge to grow. Perhaps the newsletter could do more to support the church's mission and be part of the outreach. It is posted on the church website for others to read. Maybe you could reach out and give a copy to a friend.

How can we share our faith beyond our gathering group as the disciples did? Does it come easily to us or is it something we are reluctant to try? I must confess I do not score very high on the scale of '*witnessing*' or giving others the reasons for my belief. If somebody asked me about it, I might manage to sound confident without being too preachy, but no one has ever questioned me about why I believe what Scripture says, and Paul urges us to always be ready to give reasons for our faith. I may know Christ, but how do I make Him known to others-people who are questioning, hurting and need comfort, who are unfamiliar with Jesus and His saving grace (or what that even means?)

The New Bible Study series, *The 9 Arts of Spiritual Conversation, Walking alongside People Who Believe Differently*, is aimed at helping us to share our faith with anyone by adopting certain behaviours; noticing, praying, listening, asking questions, loving, welcoming, facilitating, even before we share! So, I am looking forward to learning how to improve and add to my communication skills, probably change my attitude and instead of just wishing I could get up enough courage to engage people about what they believe, to be an active and not a lazy disciple of Christ. In the Alpha program I was profoundly affected by the personal stories of participants who described how they changed from being disinterested in the message of the Bible and anything religious, to people with a new outlook on life and a love for Jesus. Don't we all know people who have not got themselves right with God, may ignore Scripture, never come to church to worship and are wondering what heaven is all about? They may be busy doing life in the world with little sense of purpose and some might be wondering "What is the point of it all?" This is where the people of Zion can fulfill the mission.

It is worth while learning how to be open to allowing God to use us for His purposes beyond worshipping, praying, volunteering, serving, giving. If we let Him, He will work through us to make Jesus known to others and we will be able to confidently add "making Him known" to our list of activities.

Joan Cumming



A WORD FROM EVAN

Much of how you and I define ourselves as people, as Christians, comes from what groups we consider ourselves to be part of. Being a single piece in a greater whole, shapes how we see ourselves and who we feel connected to. Think about how we introduce ourselves to someone we're meeting for the first time. We start, of course, with our name, but then we tell them about which groups we are part of. Usually, we use groups like our families, the organizations we work for or volunteer with, and the city, province, or country we live in. If you happen to have a bit of social courage, maybe you've been brave enough to introduce yourself to strangers as a follower of Christ.

Being able to gather in fellowship, as a group, is a central part of Christian life. We are blessed at Zion to have many special groups which fill our church calendar with opportunities to gather together beyond our Sunday worship service. As we move into fall, many of these groups and their events are starting back up after taking a break over the summer: Zion's youth ministries are back in full swing with the start of a new school year, the ladies of Friends of Faith have had their first outing of the fall, and Bible Study has resumed their regular meetings at the church. The church calendar for October is full of these regularly scheduled events, with the photo directory picture-taking Oct. 14th through 18th and the Atlantic Synod worship service at 7:00pm Monday Oct. 20th adding to the plentiful opportunities to be part of Zion's church family.

Gathering together multiple times a week, even daily, has been a common tradition of Christians since the first days of the church, when believers would gather together in individual homes or in public spaces. We see this in Acts 2, when on the day of Pentecost, all of Christ's followers had gathered in one house: *"1 When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting."* (Acts 2:1-2, NIV). This habit of gathering continues after Pentecost, both publicly and privately: *"Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts."* (Acts 2:46, NIV).

If I can persuade you to emulate the early Christians and make time for any of the weekly events on the church calendar in October, I naturally have to recommend you join us for Wednesday choir practice. We would be delighted if you took the plunge and tried a full evening of choir, but if I can't sell you on that idea, perhaps you could try one half-hour every second week for Marcato (lower voices) or Legato (higher voices). If it makes any difference in your decision to give choir a try, I can offer some perks: we have all the binders of music you could possibly want, snazzy blue choir gowns, and the most comfortable seats in the building on Sunday mornings.

I ask also that you take time to remember and pray for those who are unable to attend in person for Sunday worship and weekday events. There are many whose time is not their own to direct, with obligations to family, work, or school. Remember those separated from us by sheer distance, far away from us but not from our love or the love of God. Think especially of those who are prevented from gathering with us by illness or infirmity; pray for their healing and wholeness, that we might one day be together with them again.



THE LAST WORD.

Rev. Kirk MacLeod

“Dry as a Bone”

As I’ve lived most of my life off the Island, I’ve been asking long-time residents if they have ever seen it this dry. “Not in my lifetime,” many have told me. All I can do is look out my window and measure where the water from Glenfinnan Lake was last year versus this year which is at least 25 feet further off the shore than it was.

But it’s not just the shoreline that has changed. I’ve mowed my lawn a lot less this summer than I thought I would. This doesn’t necessarily make me sad, but again, it shows how the lack of rain has affected the grass. We’ve also noticed our flowers shrinking back and how one little pine tree didn’t survive the summer.

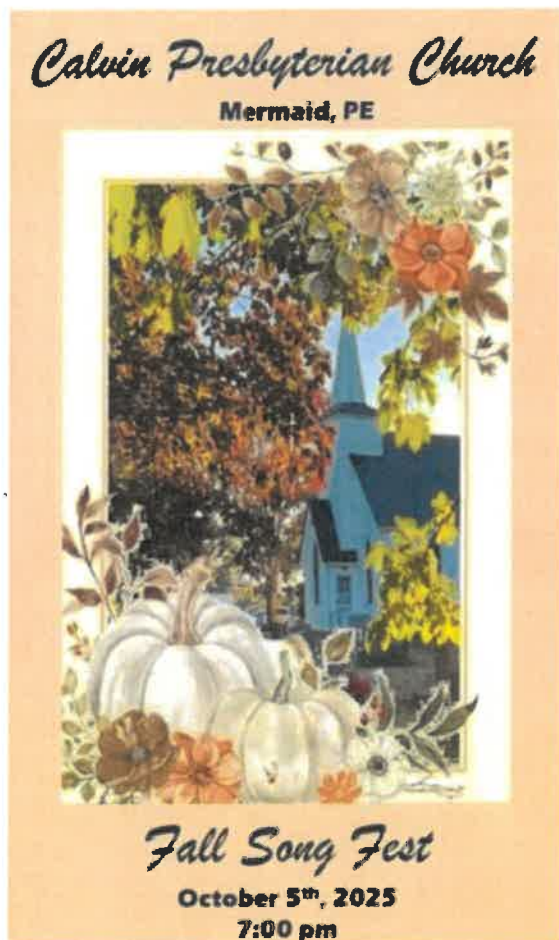
Now lack of rain is not new here or anywhere else for that matter. I do dislike using the term “drought,” primarily because of what happens in other parts of the world on a regular basis and how our lack of rain holds no candle to it. So, I prefer to use a phrase my grandmother would say, “It’s as dry as a bone.”

But this too is not new, because I, like you, have seen “dryness” in other areas as well. Let’s just call it “spiritual dryness”. It happens to us all at one point or another. It comes when we get away from worship, even for a summer. It happens when life is hard and joy is forced to push deeper looking for some relief. It occurs when people are not seeing in us dry bones that can actually dance as Ezekiel dreamed in Ezekiel 37.

When things are dry, when the world seems dry, it is then that disciples of Christ seek the refreshment of the One who renews. It happens when people make the time for worship, become part of Bible Study, attend events with other believers, seek God daily on their own and even be bold to reach out and speak new life into others as we learning now learning in small group.

Maybe most important is to know that God will send rain. The Island will again be refreshed in God’s time. And yes, the dryness you might feel, even now, need only last for a season, for in God alone we find the One who offers us, “living water.”





LOOKING AHEAD

Sunday, October 05, Fall Song Fest at Mermaid Church, 7pm.

October 14-18 Church Picture Directory (photographs).

October 20-22 Synod hosted at Zion including a

Worship Service on Monday, October 20 at 7pm.

FALL SALE, Friday, October 31 and Saturday November 1, 9am to 1pm there will be a large selection of clothing for adults and children as well as shoes, jewellery and handbags. There will also be a café, book sale and bake sale. If you have any questions, contact Roylean Keizer at 902 368 2922.

ONLINE AUCTION November 3-8. We are excited to announce this event to raise funds for the installation of the lift. We already have a number of donate items, services and gift cards. Watch this space for more details and contact Roylean if you have any questions.

THANKS to all who contributed to this edition of The Gathering. We are always glad to hear from our readers-just contact us at gatheringinfo2025@gmail.com

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

AROUND THE CHURCH

Choir Rehearsals for Sanctuary Choir are on Wednesdays at 7pm with Legato or Marcato choirs at 6.30.

Prayer Group meets on Tuesdays at 10am. Your requests for prayer are welcome and kept confidential.

Friends of Faith meet monthly on Thursday at 1pm. Check the calendar for dates.

Knot All Knitters now meet the second Wednesday of the month at 9.30 am.

Youth Group is on Thursday evenings from 6 to 8pm. Check the calendar for dates, location and special events

Young Adults has started up again. Check the calendar for dates, times and special events.

JUST A WEE REMINDER...leaders of the groups above and event organizers are invited to keep us informed of the dates, times, locations of their activities and let us know if there are errors. We just highlight what we see in the calendar. We depend on you to keep in contact with us about special occasions you want to publicise, that would be of interest to our readers and to send us pictures of your group in action with a little information, otherwise you run the risk of remaining invisible to us and we would miss you!

PRAY, PONDER AND PRAISE

The Wondrous Faithfulness of God. Selected verses from Psalm 89

I will sing of your great love forever, O Lord. With my mouth I will make your faithfulness known through all generations.

I will declare that your love stands firm forever-that you established your faithfulness in heaven itself.

You said you had made a covenant with your chosen ones.

The heavens praise your wonder O Lord, your faithfulness too in the assembly of the holy ones.

For who in the skies above can compare with you, Lord? Who is like you, Lord among the heavenly beings?

In the council of the holy ones, you are greatly feared. You are more awesome than all who surround you.

O Lord God Almighty, who is like you? You are mighty, O Lord and your faithfulness surrounds you.

You rule over the surging sea. When its waves mount up, you still them.

The heavens are yours and yours also the earth. You founded the earth and all that is in it.

You created the north and the south.

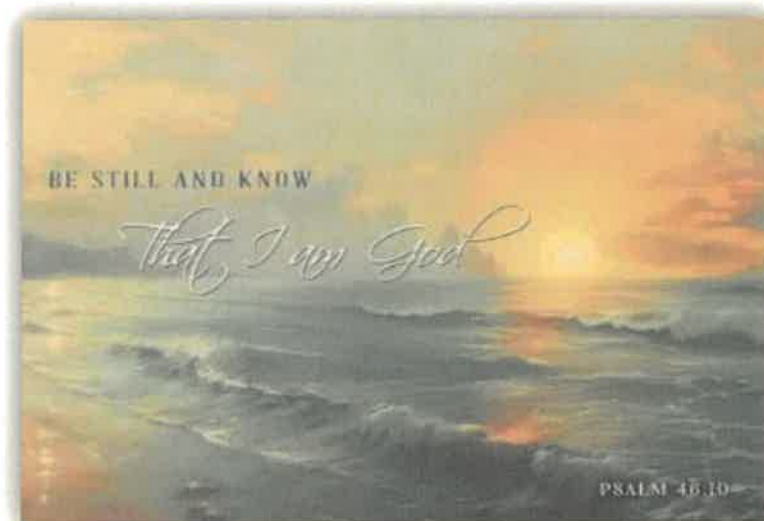
Your arm is endued with power; your hand is strong, your right hand exalted.

Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne. Love and faithfulness go before you.


Blessed am I among those who have learned to acclaim you, who walk in the light of your presence, O Lord.

I rejoice in your name all day long. I exult in our righteousness, for you are my glory and strength.

(This is a powerful prayer in times of crisis as it is a reminder of God's promises and faithfulness in all circumstances. It is said to be written by Ethan, the Ezrahite in the time of the rebellion of Absalom, David's son.)



October 2025 at Zion Presbyterian Church

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
USHERS Oct. 5—Alisha, Charlotte Oct. 12—Jaycee, David Oct. 19—Elmer, Kent Oct. 26—Anne, Gary	Sunday, October 12 7:00 pm Song Fest Service At Mermaid Church <i>Everyone Welcome!</i>	Sunday, November 2 3:00 p.m. <i>Service of Recognition of John Barrett By the Life & Mission Committee of the Presbyterian Church in Canada</i>	1 6:30—Marcato Choir 7-8:30 pm Sanctuary Choir	2 9:30 am Social Time 10 am Bible Study Sanctuary Choir 2 pm—Choir Ministry Garden Home 6-8 pm Youth Group—	3	4
5 10:30 am Worship WORLD COMMUNION Children's Ministries 11:30 Fellowship 7 pm Song Fest Service Mermaid	6	7 10 am Prayer Group 6:30 pm Social Time 7 pm Bible Study	8 9:30 Knot All Knitters 6:30—Legato Choir 7-8:30 pm Sanctuary Choir	9 9:30 am Social Time 10 am Bible Study 6-8 pm Youth Group— Belfast	10	11
12 10:30 am Worship THANKSGIVING Children's Ministries 11:30 Fellowship	13  This is PICTURE DIRECTORY Week—Book Your appointment and be in our picture directory	14 10 am Prayer Group 2- 7:40 pm PICTURE DIRECTORY 6:30 pm Social Time 7 pm Bible Study	15 12- 7:20 pm PICTURE DIRECTORY 6:30—Marcato Choir 7-8:30 pm Sanctuary Choir	16 9:30 am Social Time 10 am Bible Study 12- 7:20 pm PICTURE DIRECTORY 6-8 pm Yth Group 6:30 Board Meeting	17 12- 7:20 pm PICTURE DIRECTORY	18 10- 4:40 pm PICTURE DIRECTORY
19 10:30 am Worship, Children's Ministries 11:30 Fellowship	20 Noon—till 7 p.m. SYNOD MEETINGS START TODAY HERE AT ZION 7 PM Worship Service	21 10 am Prayer Group 8:30 am—9 pm Synod Meetings Continue today 6:30 pm Social Time 7 pm Bible Study	22 8:30 am—1 pm Synod Meetings Continue today 6:30—Legato Choir 7-8:30 pm Sanctuary Choir	23 9:30 am Social Time 10 am Bible Study 6-8 pm Youth Group— Belfast 6:30 pm Session Meeting—Coles Hall	24	25
26 10:30 am Worship, Children's Ministries 11:30 Fellowship	27	28 10 am Prayer Group 6:30 pm Social Time 7 pm Bible Study	29 6:30—Marcato Choir 7-8:30 pm Sanctuary Choir	30 9:30 am Social Time 10 am Bible Study 6-8 pm Youth Group— Belfast	31	Sunday, November 2 nd 6:00 pm Young Adults & Young Families A Dessert Potluck Children welcome!