

The Gathering

A Monthly Newsletter from Zion Presbyterian Church

June 2026



*Now there are varieties of gifts
but the same Spirit, and there
are varieties of service, but the
same Lord; and there are
varieties of activities, but it is the
same God who empowers them
all in everyone.*

1 Corinthians 12 4-6 ESV



THE
POWER
OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



The choir loft was filled with over 40 singers at Pentecost during a memorable service featuring favourite tunes; "For the Beauty of the Earth", "Morning has Broken", "Brother Sister let me Serve You" and "God be with You till we Meet again". On May 11th our choir was in concert with the Great George Street Band which raised over \$1800 for the lift fund. Sunday, May 31 was the 179th Anniversary of our congregation.

Liz's Corner

Greetings Brothers and Sisters!

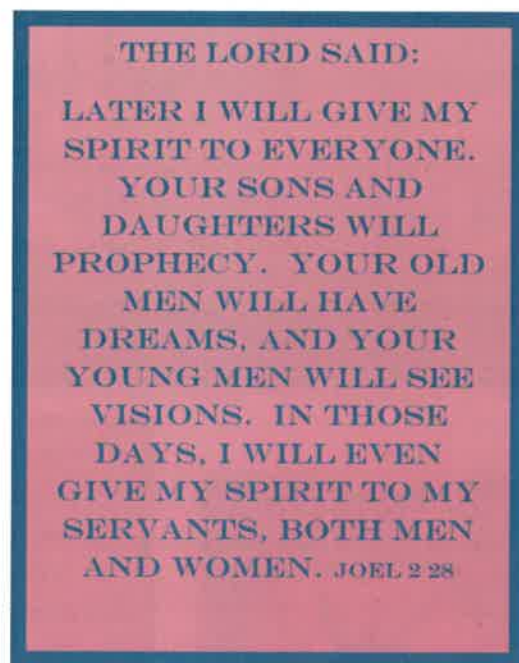
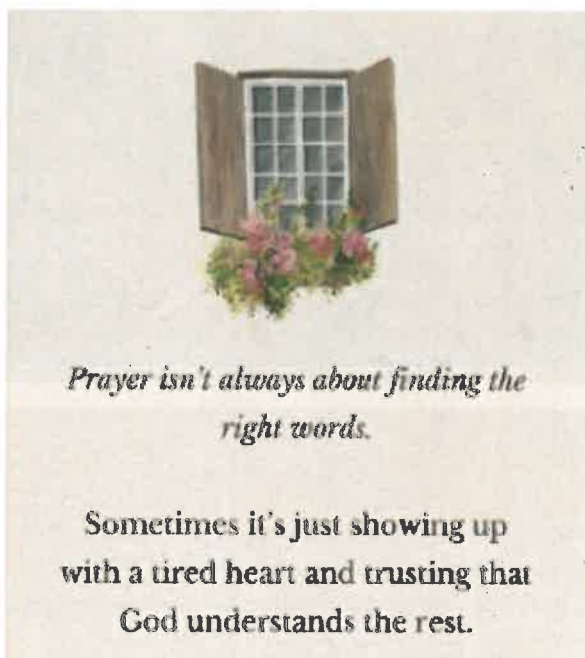
Summer is on the way!! Oh, how I pray you are able to enjoy these warmer days and brighter evenings as I do!! What a pleasure it is to set aside a few moments from an organized day to stop and be in the moment with Jesus relishing the sweet sounds of the birds and breezes playing in the trees. How grateful I am to be able to behold the beauty and inhale the sweet aroma of colourful flowers and shrubs as they come into their own. Let's pray for a fruitful season for our farmers and fishers making their way on the land and sea to provide us with food and sustenance. God's handiwork is everywhere. Praise God from whom all blessings flow!! Faye and Zion's choirs will soon be taking a well-deserved break for the season and we can look forward to the 8:30 a.m. Sunday services starting up again at Calvin in Mermaid.

The world around us is changing so rapidly, it is difficult to keep up! In fact, keeping up with world events is not at the forefront of my daily routine. Lately, I've been leaning towards the "let go and let God" solution to the changes confronting humanity these days. Like Jesus said and is recorded in Matthew 26, 25-34

25 "That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear. Isn't life more than food, and your body more than clothing? 26 Look at the birds. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren't you far more valuable to him than they are? 27 Can all your worries add a single moment to your life? 28 "And why worry about your clothing? Look at the lilies of the field and how they grow. They don't work or make their clothing, 29 yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are. 30 And if God cares so wonderfully for wildflowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith? 31 "So don't worry about these things, saying, 'What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?' 32 These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. 33 Seek the Kingdom of God[a] above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need. 34 "So don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today.

Until we meet again, be kind to one another and keep the faith, my friends! Receive His unconditional love and His peace that passes all understanding! Shalom and Godspeed!

Elizabeth Ferguson



John's Thoughts

"I am the Way"

One day when I was in the real estate business, I became troubled over a certain legal matter for which I needed a fairly immediate solution. So, when I went home at lunchtime, after opening my bible, I was drawn to Psalm 143:8, where I read the words *"cause me to know the way wherein I should walk"*.

So, I prayed about these words, and before I got back to my office, I had the solution. It was perfect advice that I received from the Lord, and just at the right time. Problem solved.

Psalm 119: 105 tells us *"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path"*.

Sometimes we might feel that we are walking in darkness and just cannot find the right solution to a problem. These words remind us that the Lord will not only show us the pathway to walk, but will guide our every footstep. We might not find the answer right away, but all in His own right time.

Furthermore, He does not only teach us the way we should walk from day to day, with love, gentleness, humility, faith, and forgiveness, He tells us that He is the way unto everlasting life.

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the father but by me". (John 14:6)

So, as we travel through these seemingly troublesome times, we can be sure that God has the world and its problems in His hands, so, don't be dismayed, put your trust in Him who knows all things, and He will provide the right solution according to His will at the right time, even unto the end of the age.

(Jmf, June 2026)

Dear Readers

Since becoming editor of the Gathering in February of 2025, I have written 12 (a year's worth) of submissions on a variety of subjects to share some of my faith journey with you and I hope you have learned something new that perhaps may have encouraged you to become more familiar with your bible, moved you closer to God in some way or helped you with your prayer life. There is no formal mission statement for our newsletter and we rarely find out if our efforts are having any results, (or as the bible says, *"bearing fruit"*) but we are creating a visual and spiritual legacy/archive that will be available for years so those who follow us can reconnect with past events in Zion's history. Our main aim in this lay ministry is to connect you with the congregation hoping to lift your spirits when our words drop into your mailbox and let you know you are thought of as part of us although you may not be present in the pews. With our words, we try to encourage you and build you up. Let us know if it is working!

At my age it has been a challenge to handle the intricacies of formatting documents on my laptop-not just editing text but moving pictures around, writing in text boxes, selecting and capturing images to make them visibly appealing. When I began the process, I had more than my fair share of meltdowns trying to master the basics of the Word program but I have triumphed (90% of the time) and compiled a set of instructions in an easy to follow "How to Guide" which I use to remind me how to tackle the process each month as my memory frequently fails me .

I rely on a terrific team of people to provide content. Liz, John and Evan have the freedom to choose what they want to write about, so they witness to you by sharing what is on their hearts. They each have a unique writing style and have been contributing to the newsletter much longer than I have. In the process you must have got to know a lot about them and their love of the Lord. This is their gift to you and a ministry they put heart and soul into. I always look forward to their thoughts coming into my mailbox. I am glad our ministers have the time to contribute and so often enlighten us on their personal experiences adjusting to a new life here and I am blessed that Gary MacDougall never lets me down if I make a special request for a photo-he ALWAYS supplies a caption with the names of the people in the picture which is a big plus as I know very few of them. Erroll and Ann Affleck are a great support stuffing envelopes and sticking stamps on mailout day as well as keeping me company with interesting conversation. And of course, the mailout would not happen without the help of Dianne and Sadie in the office. Thankyou all.

My summer is looking very busy and in August I have friends and family visiting, so that is where my focus will be. I have had to slow down a lot lately so I will not be producing a Summer Review for September like I did last year, hence The Gathering will return in October in time for Thanksgiving. We would love to hear from you. Comments and suggestions can be sent to gatheringinfo2025@gmail.com

Grace and Peace be with you,

Joan Cumming

When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.....

At my home church in Scotland, every service began with the singing of a psalm. The Scottish Psalter (1564) was the primary hymnal used by the Church of Scotland. I own a copy that came with its pages cut in half between the music (above) and the lyrics (below) allowing you to choose any tune to match any of the psalms which are paraphrased to fit all the melodies. I had 3 favourites - Psalm 23 "*The Lord is my Shepherd*" to the tune "Crimond", Psalm 100 "*All people that on earth do dwell*" to the tune "Old Hundredth" and Psalm 121 "*I to the hills will lift mine eyes*" to a 15th century tune by Louis Bourgeois which is often used for the doxology that we sing at the offering. The traditional Passover hymns Jesus and his disciples would have sung after their last supper were probably from the Hallel, psalms 113 to 118.

I never really paid attention to any of the other psalms until Covid when I got hooked on Psalm 91 and read it every day asking for protection. We never did get Covid. I began to focus more intently on them after receiving a book by Eugene Peterson (author of *The Message*) called "*Leap over a Wall*"- a study of the life of David who wrote many psalms. Some spoke to a new part of me, so I began to convert sections of them into personal prayers. My own prayer life was pretty pathetic at the time and consisted mainly of routine intercessory ones for my family and a few friends. The psalms are full of imagery, adoration of God, thankfulness, confession and powerful emotion so I started writing down segments of the most meaningful parts and began my day reading them and felt closer to Him as I invited Him into my day-I even gave them new, specific names. Since David was a man "after God's own heart", I felt they would be something my Father in Heaven would like to hear. However it bothered me that the pronoun kept shifting from first person (I, me, my) to second and third person(you, your and he, his and him) which seemed to distance me from the Father I wanted to talk to so, I changed them all to I and YOU and the effect was immediate contentment. My list of favourites has grown to ones which contain powerful lines that rise high above the ordinary pronouncements of praise for me.

Here are a few samples of lines I love to repeat

Psalm 11

Your words O Lord are flawless like silver refined in a furnace of clay, purified seven times.

Psalm 17

Give ear to me and hear my prayers, Lord. Show me the wonder of your great love.

Keep me as the apple of your eye and hide me in the shadow of your wings.

Psalm 25

Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are my God and my Saviour and my home is in you all day long.

Psalm 30

Hear O Lord and be merciful to me. Be my help. You turn my waiting into dancing.

If you are having a dry spell in your prayer life, and would like some inspiration , I would be happy to send you a copy of ones I have been using to kickstart my daily communication with God. Each will have a short explanation of the circumstances around its writing and interpretation of its meaning. Just email me at gatheringinfo2025@gmail.com

Joan Cumming

A Word from Evan

One of the wonderful things about writing is the moment when you find just the perfect word to explain your idea and fit your phrasing. Sometimes that's a simple, modern word that everyone is familiar with, and sometimes I have to restrain myself from using the archaic English of the King James Version of the Bible. Not everything needs a thee and thou, or hath, wilt, and shalt.

From time to time, I like to reference James D. Nicoll's clever observation that "on occasion, English has pursued other languages down alleyways to beat them unconscious and rifle their pockets for new vocabulary." English is a rather dizzying mess of many languages that had their pockets picked, which is how we've ended up with so many words that are 'fun' to spell and pronounce, like *guerdon* (from Old German), *inchoate* (Latin), or *syzygy* (Ancient Greek). Yes, *syzygy* is an actual word. No, I did not make it up. Yes, I double-checked my spelling. No, it is not the Greek word for the noise a sneeze makes.

Fortunately for us all, the word I have in mind right now should be familiar to most of us. I've been thinking about the word 'sincere' since I read the origins of the word recently. Like so many other English words, experts can trace it directly through the French word of the same spelling to the Latin origin, in this case, *sincerus*. To you and I, sincere is a wonderful word for describing someone who is a good person. They might be the kind of person who values honesty and tells the truth, or the sort of person to offer to help not out of obligation or expectation but because they truly mean it. If you said someone was sincere about their Christian faith, you might be describing someone who makes a genuine effort to emulate the love and kindness of Christ.

Sincere is also a perfect word to describe Jesus, for the same reasons we might apply it to anyone we know today. We know also that he loved sincerity in others, especially those who came to him because they had faith he could heal a loved one. It shows in Luke 7, when a centurion's servant is healed without Jesus ever seeing the servant because the centurion truly believed Jesus could do it. We read it in Mark 5 when Jairus, a synagogue leader, pleads with Jesus to save his daughter; or Matthew 15, when a Canaanite woman begs for healing for her child. When the friends of a paralysed man can't get him through the crowd surrounding Jesus, they cut a hole in the roof above Jesus' head and lower the paralysed man down. "When Jesus saw their faith, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven."" (Luke 5:20, NIV)

The old Latin word *sincerus* carries a slightly different meaning than what we would ascribe to sincere today, but is even better for describing Jesus Christ. Something that is *sincerus* is pure, clean, whole. When I began by talking about finding the 'perfect word' for something, this is the word I found that was perfect for our Lord and Saviour. Jesus the Son, born to complete our salvation; pure and holy, a sacrifice to cleanse us of the stain of our sins. Therefore, we who proclaim our faith in Christ must be doubly sincere, earnest in our faith and cleansed of our sin, that we too may be called the children of God.



Around the Church

Looking ahead to the month of June, **Choir Ministry** is at Park West Lodge at 2pm, **Spring Clean Up** is on Saturday the 6th at 9am, **Services at Calvin Presbyterian Church, Mermaid** begin June 7 at 8.30 am, the **Pop up Study Group on Spiritual Gifts** is Thursday, the 11th at 7pm, **Graduate Recognition Day** is June 14, **First Place for Health Group** will be Tuesdays at noon and the meeting for **Friends of Faith** will be the last Thursday of the month for lunch (location to be announced).

Please check the calendar for times and dates of Bible Study (Believe), Choir, Prayer Group, Knot All Knitters, Youth Activities and meetings as our summer break approaches.



Activities at the end of May included a Scavenger Hunt for grades 4 to 12 and the Spring Sale, Café and BBQ. Donations were collected for the Baby Bottle Campaign of the Island Pregnancy Centre and (left) Marion and Ron thanked Mary Beth Malone, Director of Marketing for Cows Creamery, PEI for their welcome support for the Chowder, Chili and Cows fundraiser for Atlantic Foodgrains coming up this fall. (Below) Emma and her puppet successfully promoted the Fill the Loft event.

The Church Picture Directories have finally arrived, so newcomers to Zion, (like your editor) will finally be able to put names to faces. Some extra copies are available for \$25 if you didn't order one. Anyone interested in having a visit from the ministers can phone the office at 902 566 5363.



The Last Word-Rev. Kirk MacLeod

Change is Possible

Last Summer was difficult - difficult in so many ways. If you remember, there was a drought. It was hard on farmers. It was hard on the land. It was hard on our lake. When we moved to the Island, nearly two years ago now, we wanted to be near water but we also wanted to be near to the church. When a place in Webster's Corner showed up on the market, it fit both those essentials. And other than the mosquitoes, we loved our new home and distance from the church. But last spring and summer we watched the lake slowly go down. I know it's an exaggeration, but in some ways, it was like watching a death, someone slowly getting weaker and weaker and weaker. We measured the decrease in the lake by watching our raft, which, when I dragged it out in the spring, had a cinderblock attached to a line in the water as a weight so it wouldn't float away. Slowly the raft made its way lower. And slowly the water crept away from the shore - 10 feet, 15 feet, 20 feet, 25 feet and maybe even more. So low in fact that the dock was now on dry ground and you could easily see the bottom of the barrels that once bobbed in the waves as they carried the raft. Neighbours, who have lived in the area for decades told us, "We have never seen the water this low."

We wondered if the lake would ever recover. But we hoped that in a few years it would heal and return to what it once was. We knew this year that we had more snow than the previous winter by counting the number of times we had our driveway plowed. And it has been a wet Spring so far. But I wouldn't say we had a year of a lot of snow or that it's been raining buckets this spring. But we have noticed, to our surprise and amazement, Glenfinnan Lake has slowly filled up again. In fact, the water may be even higher than it was the year before. The water is again at the shore, the dock (although not yet out where it should be) is beckoning us to take her back out into deeper water. We are overjoyed. But at the same time, like many things which happen to us, we wonder if there is a lesson to be learned here. So here a few things that are on my heart as I think about the Lake and think about life.

1. There is season for everything. That's a phrase from Ecclesiastes. Yes, we have seen a time of drought and a time of rain. A good reminder for us all who are in the midst of a "season" and waiting for another season to come, but it hasn't quite arrived yet.
2. There is always hope and sometimes that hope can be realized more quickly than we thought. We prepared ourselves that it might take years for things to change but it didn't take years. I know I didn't play a part in raising the water level of the Lake (that was God's doing) but maybe a good lesson is that in other situations we do play a part. Sometimes we might think a broken relationship will take a long time to be restored but it can happen and sooner, if we are willing to forgive or ask for forgiveness.
3. God is in control. Worry was not helpful here. God had a plan in this situation and God chose when to fill the Lake. I'm glad He did. So I want to pray, *"Thanks God for filling up the lake for us to enjoy. Thank you for the beautiful home you've have provided for us and to witness the way you have restored life to the lake again. May you bring refreshment to my dry soul and the souls of those reading this, who might feel dryness."* Amen.



June 2026 at Zion Presbyterian Church

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>Ushers June 7—Scott & Kent June 14—Judy, Lloyd June 21—Gary, Ken June 28—Edison, Elaine</p>	1	2 10 am Prayer Group 12:00 noon—First Place for Health 6:30 Social Time 7 pm Bible Study	3 7-8:30 pm Sanctuary Choir	4 9:30 Social Time 10 am Bible Study 2 pm—Choir Ministry at Park West Lodge	5	6
7 8:30 Mermaid Worship, Communion 10:30 -Worship, Children's Min. 11:30 Fellowship	8	9 10 am Prayer Group 12:00 noon—First Place for Health 6:30 Social Time 7 pm Bible Study	10 7-8:30 pm Sanctuary Choir	11 9:30 Social Time 10 am Bible Study 7 pm Pop-Up Study on Spiritual Gifts	12	13
14 8:30 Mermaid Worship 10:30 -Worship, Children's Min. 11:30 Fellowship 6:30 pm Summer Music Rehearsal	15	16 10 am Prayer Group 12:00 noon—First Place for Health 6:30 Social Time 7 pm Bible Study	17 7-8:30 pm Sanctuary Choir	18 9:30 Social Time 10 am Bible Study 6:30 pm Board of Trustees	19	20
21 8:30 Mermaid Worship 10:30 -Worship, Children's Min. 11:30 Fellowship 6:30 pm Summer Music Rehearsal	22	23 12:00 noon—First Place for Health	24 7-8:30 pm Sanctuary Choir	25 11:30 am Friends of Faith going out for lunch (watch bulletin for more info) 6:30 pm Session	26	27
28 8:30 Mermaid Worship 10:30 -Worship, Children's Min. 11:30 Fellowship 6:30 pm Summer Music Rehearsal	29	30				