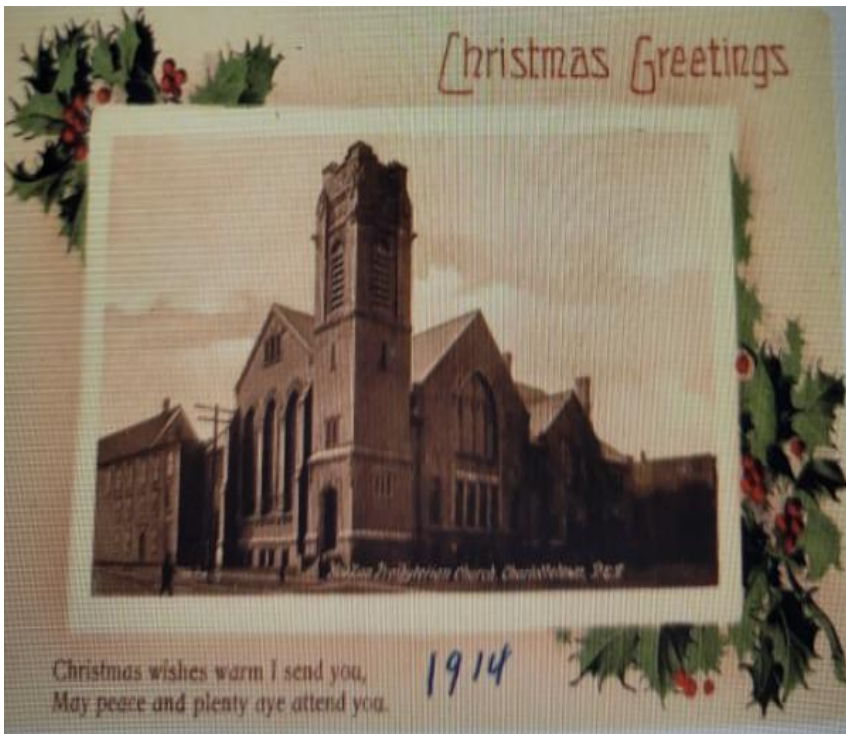




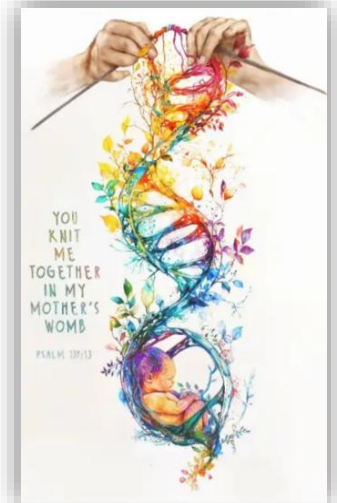
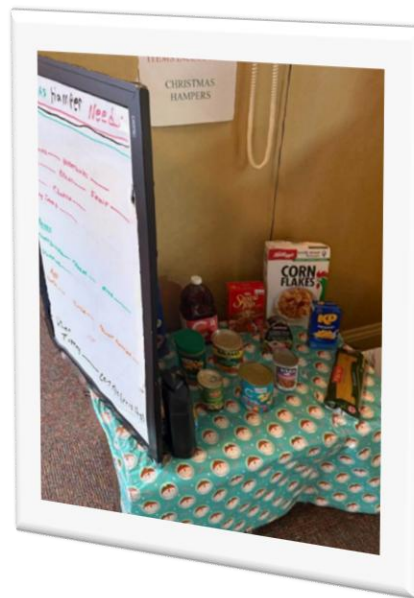
The Gathering

Zion Church Newsletter

December 2025

*When they saw the star, they
rejoiced with exceeding great
joy. Matthew 2:10*

The Christmas card of Zion is from
the Phil Culhane Collection.



GATHERINGS AND SIGNS OF THE SEASON

A happy Saturday evening group of 27 adults and kids enjoyed games night and pizza. It is time for us to give donations of food to fill 25 Christmas hampers to share with needy families and the knitters group are hoping to make a total of 300 pairs of mittens...so time to get out your wool and knitting needles to help them reach their goal!

Liz's Corner

Greetings Brothers and Sisters!

Merry Christmas everyone and Happy Birthday, Jesus!

Rejoice with me that the Spirit has led us through to the final month of 2025! Advent reminds us of what is most important in life and prepares us for what is to come. My dear friends, the world around us is changing rapidly and radically and we need, as never before, to put our faith in the One who will never leave us or forsake us. Matthew 11: 28-30 ***"Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls".*** God sent His Son to free us from our sins and to love each one of us unconditionally unto death. From the moment of His birth, the countdown has been on! John 3:16 ***"For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."***

As we celebrate the birth of Jesus and remember the humble entry of God into His earthly realm, let's acknowledge and live out the true reason for the season. Not the decorated tree, not the gifts, but Jesus - the truth and the life - meant to bring us all closer to the love and companionship of the Holy Spirit! The birth and life of Jesus our Saviour is truly the greatest story ever told! Worship services at Christmas time reach many Christians and non-Christians alike who are separated from Jesus for whatever reasons, to bring them to the knowledge of the miracle of God's saving grace. Ephesians 2: 8 ***"For it is by grace you have been saved through faith, and this, not of yourselves. It is the gift of God."*** Let's share the Good news with our families and friends! We walk this path together with the Holy Spirit and so we are never alone! Praise the Lord!

Please pray with me Rick Warren's Christmas prayer.

"Dear God, thank you for sending your Son, Jesus, so I could get to know you. Thank you for loving me. Thank you for being with me all my life even when I didn't know it. I realize I need a Saviour to set me free from sin, from myself and from all the habits, hurts, and hangups that mess up my life. I ask you to forgive me for my sins. I want to repent and live the way you created me to live. Be the lord of my life and save me by your grace. Save me from my sins and save me for your purpose. I want to learn to love you, trust you, and become what you made me to be. Thank you for creating me and choosing me to be a part of your family. Right now, by faith, I accept the Christmas gift of your son. Fill me with your peace and assurance so I can be a peacemaker and help me to share this message of peace with others. In your name I pray, Amen."

Christmas means unconditional love from God! The best gift ever! Hallelujah!! Wonderful people, look after one another, be kind, be generous and be grateful. From Rick Warren ***"There is nothing you can do that will make God stop loving you. You could try, but you would fail - because God's love for you is based on His character, not your conduct."*** Amen to that! I know that wherever life casts a shadow, there is always a source of light. His name is Jesus!! Give us the grace we need to wrap up 2025 in Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. Renew our sense of holy anticipation as we wait eagerly for Jesus to come again! Keep the faith, dear friends!! Feel His Love!

Godspeed.



Faces from the Fall Sale, October 31 and November 1, which raised \$4741. Bravo! The church was filled with good cheer and hospitality for the event. Thanks to our photographer, Gary MacDougall for these smiles from the volunteers. From the left, Naomi Bondt, Beryl Holden, Lynn Trowsdale, Valerie Shaw, Anne Partridge and Erroll Affleck and below, Phyllis MacMillan, left, and Roylean Keizer were sporting Hallowe'en attire. icture in the bottom right corner was taken from a post on Facebook and shows John Barrett at the service recognizing his new ministry with volunteers in Presbyterian churches all across Canada.



A Word from Evan

As the Christmas season begins, we prepare for Christ's birth by celebrating hope, peace, joy, and love during the four Sundays of Advent. In the years before His coming, hope was about all that Israel had left after many tough centuries of death, destruction, and foreign occupation. As Luke makes sure to point out at the beginning of his second chapter, the only reason Joseph and a heavily pregnant Mary travelled to Bethlehem and took shelter in a stable was because Caesar had demanded a census of all Roman-controlled lands.

For the parents of Jesus and their neighbours, all they could do was hope that God's promise of a Messiah would come true. They envisioned a glorious and mighty king, sent by God, to restore the throne of Israel and rule in His name. Of course, Jesus instead came humbly, born in a manger; a servant king sent to fulfill God's promises through his life, death, and resurrection.

I sometimes wonder why people spend so much time talking about hope, and the sort of things we hope for. It seems to me that it would be better to know, than to hope. If you're planning to spend some time outside but hope you don't get rained on, wouldn't it make more sense to check the weather report and know whether to bring your umbrella and raincoat? If you see someone slip and fall on winter ice, would it not be better (and kinder) to go check on them and know that they're unhurt, rather than just hoping that they're alright?

In his letter to the church in Rome, Paul the Apostle includes the lines ***"But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have?"*** (Romans 8:24, NIV)

Hope was a wonderful comfort for the ancient Israelites; they did not know Christ and were forced to cling to the promise that he would come some day. You and I do not need that hope, because we know! Christ has come, has saved us from sin, and lives within us. As Paul wrote, who hopes for what they already have?

Therefore, when we call ourselves Christians, we tell the world that we know the Son of God who was born for us. Born of God's great love so that Jesus would live, die, and be raised for our salvation and eternal life. Those who waited for Christ to come lived with a great and expectant hope, but because we know Christ, our greatest hopes are fulfilled and all our worst fears are wiped away. We have a sure and certain knowledge that all God's promises have and will come to pass because, one night so long ago, a tiny babe was born in Bethlehem.

By all means, let us celebrate the hope that the world who waited for Jesus felt, but better yet, let us rejoice because we know that Christ lives.

"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness, a light has dawned." (Isaiah 9:2, NIV)



Thoughts from a country porch

I sigh deeply as I sit on my porch chair looking out over what has become a very familiar scene. I see the bay, once an azure blue in the bright sun now, grey, its light is less bright and at a lower temperature. The trees that were once bright with reds and yellows now dull with leaves brown and beige (those that remain and clinging to the branches). This isn't my favorite part of the year although the autumn has been beautiful until now. I whisper a prayer of thanks for my view here on the porch no matter what season I am in...

Some years ago, a faithful friend (who has since passed away) gave me a book entitled "Meet me in the Meadow" (Moments with God.) I picked it out just after moving here. It is filled with daily readings and I have been reading them each morning on the porch with a warm cup of tea. I want to share with you the reading from October 26th -

In His Time

Be patient, we don't need to know everything right now. In this life we won't be able to resolve every question, solve every problem or understand every situation. In time everything will be made clear.

Not every promise of God is intended for now. Some things will be for another time and another season. We don't need to fret over God's timetable. We will inherit all the promises of God through faith and patience.

For we know in part and we prophesy in part. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known. 1 Corinthians 13:9,12

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. Romans 8:18

God is good all the time and his work is a lamp unto our feet.

Joan Carr

Also looking back to November

This is a Bill McGuire photo from Facebook. It was taken at Gail Somer's cornfield near Montague, November 3 where 6.5 acres was harvested in support of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. It shows Gail with Kent Brown (elder at Zion) and his dog, Marty, Kent Myers (CFB Ambassador for PEI) as well as project supporters Frank Nabuurs, Joel Hancock, Anthony Nabuurs, John Vos and Dawson Higginbotham as well as Ron MacMillan, convenor at Zion.



Around the Church



GREAT GEORGE STREET BRASS BAND
proudly presents
Brass the Halls!
Christmas music the way you remember it
Monday December 8, 2025 at 7pm
Zion Presbyterian Church - Charlottetown
This concert is open to all and free of charge.
Voluntary donations at the door are gratefully accepted.



We are hiring!
CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRY LEAD
Zion Presbyterian Church in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island is a vibrant community that is passionate about Jesus. **We are looking for a Children & Youth Ministry Lead** eager to share their vision with the next generation of disciples.

- 20 hours per week
- Salary range: \$18 - \$22 per hour
- Deadline for applications: December 5, 2025

Visit zionpres.org/news for more information and to apply.

Choir rehearsals continue on Wednesdays till December 17th and prayer group on Tuesdays till the 16th. Bible study is over for this year. Check the calendar for dates and times of youth events.

The Prince St. Churches
present
Advent Series 2025

Nov 26	The Salvation Army 158 Fitzroy St
Dec 3	St. Paul's Anglican 27 Church St.
Dec 10	Zion Presbyterian 135 Prince St.
Dec 17	Trinity United 220 Richmond St.



Wed 12:10 pm – 12:30 pm
A short worship service followed by a light lunch.
All are welcome!

Special Services

Memorial Angel Service, 7pm December 7

Family Christmas Eve Service, 3pm December 24

Traditional Christmas Eve Service, 7pm December 24

Sing We now of Christmas, 10.30am December 28

Join us as we gather for fellowship every Sunday at 11.30 in Matheson Hall after the service.

Take home an extra copy of The Gathering to give to a friend or family member.

Call the church office at 902 566 5363 to arrange a visit from one of the ministers.

The Last word

Rev. Kirk MacLeod

So many spend, not just hours but days looking for the perfect gift but rarely finding it. And then add the cost of that perfect gift and it makes gift-giving that much harder. Like most, I love to give gifts. I think I learned that from my Mum. But ask Allyson and she will tell you I don't like to get gifts. In other words, I'm hard to buy for. I explain it away by saying, "I don't need anything." And I really don't. But as I once told my Mum. "You need to be as good a receiver as you are a giver" I need to take that to heart.

But what if this year, we all tried to do things a little bit differently? What if we decided to not just buy more presents, but to be more present? In other words, consider ourselves as the gift God made us to be and be more present with those we love, rather than giving more presents or gifts. Or as Allyson suggested in our family this year, to spend less on giving gifts for one another and bless someone else. It's why this year we are going to bring the items for an entire hamper to be given away to someone who needs it this Christmas. We know not every individual or family can do this, so giving even one of the items, like a jar of peanut butter is enough too.

This Christmas let's all be a little more present to our family, friends and even that stranger as we give the gift of a food hamper for those who may be finding this season challenging because gift giving is a great reminder to us and the world, that the greatest gift was God coming to be present with us.

