

The Gathering

A monthly newsletter from Zion Presbyterian Church

October, 2026

"For the Lord has chosen Zion. He has desired it for His home."

Psalm 132:13

Welcome back
to our readers
and a new
season of
worshipping,
learning,
fellowship and
gathering.



Summer is ending but Zion is gearing up for a busy season which kicked off with a Bar B Q (see the cooking crew above) which was well attended and an Expo which promoted all the church's programs and activities (see Sophie Webster and Erroll Affleck representing the children's program) . Thanks Everyone!

WELCOME BACK SUNDAY



SEPTEMBER 13TH, 2026

Greetings Brothers and Sisters!

God bless you! And may God continue to bless our home and native land!

I know you will have trouble believing this, because I do. I have been worshipping here at Zion Church for 70 years!! Hallelujah! Praise the Lord!! So many precious memories of friendships made, heartfelt sermons, Christmas pageants, arts and crafts, church dinners. Jesus.

Church in September was always exciting. Who was going to be your Sunday school teacher? Who would be in your class? What crafts would we make? What songs were we going to learn? Jesus and I believe that singing is a fabulous way of telling people stories of His life and times. It brings me great comfort and joy to be back amongst my family of friends singing in the choir with Faye. If you attend church, please give joining one of our church choirs a thought. No, a try! Give Faye a call. Show up for a practice and God will do the rest. No pressure. Pray on it. The Lord works in mysterious ways!

Back in November 2020, Joan Carr suggested that she thought it would be a good idea for me to share some of myself and my thoughts in a monthly contribution to the new church newsletter in the works. She told me that it was going to be called "The Gathering" and it would serve as a connection for those of us able to make our way to the sanctuary of Zion to mingle with the brothers and sisters and those who could not. Joan thought we could call my piece - LIZ'S CORNER. Our dear sister, Joan, saw a wonderful ministry opportunity that she could get behind and became the driving force behind the production of The Gathering.

My thoughts that appear on the pages of Liz's Corner show up after I converse with the Lord. I say, 'Jesus, what should I say in this edition of The Gathering?'. Sometimes He might have me tell of my faith. I might be moved to mention how much I love the Lord and that I believe in miracles. He might say, tell them about your belief that He loves sinners and will lovingly forgive anyone who asks for His mercy. Tell them that you always pray for them, God's people of Zion. Speak of your weekly drives crisscrossing your beautiful island. Speak of gratefulness and of letting go and letting God. Over the past six years, Jesus and I have conversed at length about what I should share with you, the readers. Best six years of blessing ever!! Joan has since relocated to another corner of God's country and the task of producing and distributing The Gathering has fallen to Joan Cumming. Thanks to Joan, we are still on the go and our readers seem to enjoy our efforts. Feed back is always welcome. Please contact Joan if you feel moved to contribute to The Gathering or aid in its production.

Two thoughts. People can be cruel. Remember, you are a child of God. Your value doesn't decrease based on someone's inability to see your worth. Life can be cruel and lonely; and it may be that life will go on without us once we are gone, indifferent to our departure. But believe this, God is never indifferent to our departure. He anticipates our arrival and welcomes us home. As we, His family at Zion, welcome a new church season, let's gratefully count our blessings and praise the Lord for His gifts of the Spirit. Amen! Keep the faith!

Godspeed

Elizabeth Ferguson

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

Genesis 8:32

Cake for Rev. Doug and flowers for Dana! A heart-warming ceremony featuring good cheer, tasty cake, sandwiches, cookies and drinks followed the Sunday, Sept. 20 service at Zion during which Rev. Doug Rollwage was installed as Zion's Minister Emeritus.



On September 20, 2026, the Session of Zion Presbyterian Church in Charlottetown, PEI, bestowed the honour of Minister Emeritus on the Rev. Dr. Douglas Rollwage. During this time of recognition, a letter from the Rev. Lara Scholey, Moderator of the 151st General Assembly was read and contained her kind words of **congratulations** and thanks on behalf of the denomination.

The following citation was read to the congregation:

“Called to Zion Church in March of 2026, Rev. Rollwage provided this church a strong emphasis on Bible Study. His considerable talents led the Zion congregation in Mission, through the Canadian Food Grains Bank; Education, through numerous pilgrimages to the Holy Land; Ecumenical Outreach, through the establishment of Prince Street Churches services; Technological Advancement, through online services; Exceptional Preaching, incorporating visual & musical enhancements and, through his leadership, extensive physical improvements to the entire church building. A devoted and active participant in Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly, his efforts were recognized nationally when installed as the 142nd Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.’



John's Thoughts

Speak, Oh Lord

Sometimes we miss the message in the wonderful music that we sing.

Our choir sang this anthem not long ago, and as I reflect on the wonderful message, it reminds me that the Lord speaks to us in many ways. It speaks of the reverence of His holy Word, full obedience, humility, purity of our thoughts and attitudes, and much more. Hopefully, the words of "Speak, Oh Lord" will draw us all closer to the Lord and help us to recognize that we truly need Him every day and ways that we don't often recognize.

Speak, O Lord, as we come to You
To receive the food of Your holy Word
Take Your truth, plant it deep in us
Shape and fashion us in Your likeness
That the light of Christ might be seen today
In our acts of love and our deeds of faith
Speak, O Lord, and fulfill in us
All Your purposes for Your glory
Teach us, Lord, full obedience
Holy reverence, true humility
Test our thoughts and our attitudes
In the radiance of Your purity
Cause our faith to rise, Your majestic love and
authority

Words of pow'r that can never fail
Let their truth prevail over unbelief
Speak, O Lord, and renew our minds
Help us grasp the heights of Your plans for us
Truths unchanged from the dawn of time
That will echo down through eternity
And by grace, we'll stand on Your promises
And by faith, we'll walk as You walk with us
Speak, O Lord, 'til Your church is built
And the earth is filled with Your glory
cause our eyes to see

Songwriters: Keith Getty / Stuart Townend
Speak, O Lord lyrics © Thankyou Music, Thank You Music Ltd.

Who is She?

Who has dedication and determination to spare?
Who is a whirlwind whose passion is rare?
Who makes the choir a recognized sound
And plays the Lord's music to friends all around?
Who always shares the comments from fans?
Who seats us in rows with instructions and plans?
Who is precise with interpreting skills?
Who smartens us up with her scales and her drills?
Whose empathy displays an emotional soul
Who tears up at anything? (it's beyond her control)
Who keeps a chattering mob to the task
Of learning new Music each week as in class
Speaking of class this lady is tops
From her head to her toes, the style never stops
You know who she is.
Fearless leader.
Super talented musician.
Great baker. Personality galore.
Friend and mentor. The Lord's Own angel –
Faye Barrett No surprise there!!!!
Enjoy your well-deserved vacation, Faye!
Shalom and Godspeed!!!

The return of Fall brings our choir back to the loft
under the tireless direction of Faye Barrett who
inspired Elizabeth to compose this lovely poem
before summer break.

It is worth taking the time to listen on You Tube to
Keith and Kristyn Getty singing the song John is
highlighting for us so you can appreciate the
richness of the language and the intensity of the
content which speaks directly and prayerfully to
God with confidence and conviction. It is a
modern hymn but uplifting and worshipful like
the old hymns full of reverence that we love-so
different from some of the newer trendy
compositions that God however also uses to
reach needy hearts. ed.



A word from Evan

I'm not really a summer person. I'd much rather put on a sweater than put on sunscreen, and I always miss singing with the choir during our summer break. At least hiding from the sun inside where it's nice and air-conditioned did give me plenty of time to catch up on all the things I've been meaning to read or watch.

There's one storytelling cliché that I saw over and over, which seemed almost mandatory in certain genres. I bet you can think of plenty of books, movies, or TV shows that go like this: a brilliant doctor struggles to Save Lives, the sports team is losing the Big Game, or the action hero needs to defuse the bomb and Save The World. Just when things are looking grim, here comes the family member, friend, or mentor to give them the famous Hollywood pep talk, full of familiar lines about hard work, grit, and never giving up. Then comes the inevitable **"You have to want it!"** moment. On screen, it's usually delivered at maximum volume, maximum emotion, and with a closeup of some actor's face.

I guess I've been thinking about what **"you have to want it"** means to me. After all, everybody wants something. Some people want small and simple things, like our favourite drink and a comfortable chair to sit in while we're reading. Some want big things, like the student with a test on a Friday in December. Every fibre of their being is pleading for that one snowflake drifting past the window to turn into a massive snowstorm and a long weekend. Some people even want wild and outlandish things that will never happen. For example, our lovely editor Joan wants me to submit my pieces for "The Gathering" before the very last possible second. Sorry, Joan. (*You're forgiven. ed.*)

Maybe you're like me, and the biggest thing you want is salvation and eternal life in Christ.

Pep talks aren't anything new. After all, the best to ever do it was Jesus, and we've been copying him for two thousand years. Pick your favourite gospel: Matthew has

"I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:20, NIV),

and those of you who prefer John get

"I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die." (John 11:25-26, NIV).

I'm willing to bet I can guess the favourite Jesus pep talk of at least one of you, dear readers, and I think it's something short but perfect. From Luke:

"25 On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. 'Teacher,' he asked, 'what must I do to inherit eternal life?' 26 'What is written in the Law?' he replied. 'How do you read it?' 27 He answered, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" 28 "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."(Luke 10:25-28, NIV)

It's breathtakingly simple; six words that encapsulate the divine gift of salvation, the promise of victory over death. Those of us who want eternal life must love. Love God and love our neighbour. **"Do this and you will live."**



Liz's Corner

Greetings Brothers and Sisters!

Happy Thanksgiving and Welcome Autumn!

I want to share with you how I know the Lord watches over me. By the grace of God, my friend Shelly and I were spared from a collision with a snow plow while on a winter drive a few years ago. I told you about it in my Liz's Corner dated February 2021. Last month, we were recalling that experience while on yet another drive around the north shore with me saying how grateful I was that Jesus was in the car with us. Not thirty minutes later, I was taking her home driving towards town on Brackley Point Road signalling a left turn at the small roundabout onto Oak Drive. No one else was close to entering the roundabout so I had clear sailing around it; until I saw, out of the corner of my eye, a city ton truck barreling up from behind me jump up on the raised surface getting ready to crash into my drivers side. I slammed on my brakes and watched the drivers face as he frantically yanked on his steering wheel trying to turn down Oak to avoid hitting me. I said "thank you, Jesus" as he managed to barely miss me and ride up over the divider on Oak Drive to end up teetering into the ditch. As he backed up his truck and drove down the wrong lane on Oak, I looked over at my friend Shelly and said "isn't it great to have the Lord in the car with us". Cool as a cucumber she said to me, "it's always good luck to travel with a Christian". It was a welcome laugh to defuse the tension of a near tragedy.

It is a mystery and a miracle how the Spirit of God works in our lives after we invite Him in; when we keep the faith. Take love for example. Some people feel that love has passed them by or that it has disappeared from their lives. Some feel that they do not deserve love and live with some shame they feel will forever define them and make love unattainable. Not many of us ever get a chance in our lifetime to experience unconditional love. I believe this is because some people, as the old song says, are looking for love in all the wrong places. I have felt unloved and alone at various times throughout my life. Even amongst a group of friends in the middle of a party or at a church dinner, I have had feelings of detachment or exclusion from the love demonstrated in my midst. I know there are and have been people who care what happens to me. People who wish me well and pray for me. Friends who share my life's journey with me. Even so, I have felt unloved and lonely many times. But I have never felt alone. The Holy Spirit lives within us sight unseen but when you reach out to Him, you can feel the Spirit with you. I know the Spirit of God through Jesus my saviour fills my heart with His unconditional love, now and forever. Such a humbling experience and what a marvellous blessing. Hallelujah! Praise His holy name!

The air is filled with October expectancy. The island's farm trucks filled with their bounty from the earth are rumbling down the back roads in service from dawn to dusk. These are hectic times that bring in the harvest before the freeze. Many thanks to our farm families and workers who labor so hard to provide for our needs. God bless you! My friends, take time to enjoy the refreshing Fall air and the beauty of God's earth. Look after yourselves and be kind to each other. Count your blessings, be grateful, and keep the faith!

Love to all and Godspeed,
Shalom
Elizabeth Ferguson



Snapshots of summer visitors! Rev. Mary Fontaine from Hummingbird Ministries. Rev. Kent Burdett and Rev Dale Woods who preached when our ministers were on vacation.

"The Lord is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit". Psalm 34:18

When mailout day comes for the Gathering and we stick the stamps on the envelopes, it strikes me how few of them go to couples-most are addressed to one person and I wonder about them. They are all strangers to me, so I am unaware of their story, but I assume a number of them might have lost their spouse and are broken-hearted. Sadly, in the short time I have been coming to Zion, several *couples* have changed into *widows* and *widowers* and in my own life this has happened recently to a number of longtime friends and family members who are now like me, facing the future without their best friend and soulmate. On the Island there are currently over 7000 individuals left behind to continue life alone and 6315 of them are women. I have written in the Gathering before about God's concern for widows and the topic returned to mind in June when I found out that International Widow's Day is June 23 and looking ahead, I discover there is a National Grief and Bereavement Day on November 17. I won't share with you the comments I recorded in my journal about these commemorations which are likely well intended and sincere, but a 24 hour long salute to something that will likely deeply damage you for the rest of your days in ways you never expected will not really do us who are grieving a spouse much good, although it may satisfy those who have no idea what that particular grief is like because they have never truly experienced it. The return to a single life with nothing but memories, plans unfinished, regrets and what can be a challenging future, swings you to and fro between joy and sorrow, punctuated by birthdays, anniversaries, special occasion days which once were highlights when you were together but are now overshadowed by the daily routine of a life that is empty of the presence, the voice, the support, the care that once were shared. Faced alone, life is full of stress under the pressure of responsibilities and a sadness that haunts you daily.

How do we manage to survive it? In the rising tide of grief that surrounds us, all we can do is count on others to be there for us if they are faithful but that is not always the case-many have no idea how to come to our rescue and when they ask how we are, we say "fine" even although we are living worn out and lost with quiet and emptiness surrounding us. God however, knows this and invites us to draw closer to him. In Matthew 5:4 Jesus says, *"Blessed are those who mourn for they will be comforted"*. And in Isaiah 53:3 it says prophetically of Jesus *"He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."* He wept over Lazarus, showed sympathy to a widow in Nain who had lost her son and then raised him to life. In Lamentations 3:31 it says *"For no one is cast off by the Lord forever. Though He brings grief He will show compassion, so great is his unfailing love. For He does not willingly bring affliction or grief to anyone."* Jeremiah chapters 30 and 31 are often referred to as the Books of Consolation or Comfort describing in dramatic terms God's intention to restore Israel after the captivity in Babylon and the establishment of a new covenant. Here is outlined his plan for a hopeful future for them by promising restoration, renewal and His enduring love. Sorrow and suffering are temporary and God's compassion can bring joy, comfort and a future filled with blessings. That can sound like pie in the sky for us given the state of our hearts at the loss we bear. For the words to be turned into action so that results can be seen and felt, these days, He has to use His people and not everyone sees themselves in that role. Lame as we are, those of us trying to manage our grief may need to acquire supernatural strength from God's promises to reach out to one another... if He can give us comfort, we may be able to comfort others.

The Living Bible puts it this way in 2 Corinthians 1:4 *"What a wonderful God we have. He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the source of every mercy and the one who so wonderfully comforts and strengthens us in our hardships and trials. And why does he do this? So that when others are troubled, needing our sympathy and encouragement, we can pass on to them this same help and comfort God has given us."*

Joan Cumming

Around the Church

Bible Study/ Small Groups is introducing a new course based on the Book of Acts. "In Action" is on Tuesday evenings at 7pm and Thursday mornings at 10 am preceded by half an hour of fellowship time.

Choir rehearsals have begun again on Wednesday evenings at 7pm for the Sanctuary Choir. Check the Calendar for dates of Legato and Marcato rehearsals which begin at 6.30. Come and sing along!

Prayer Group gets together on Tuesday mornings at 10am. Requests for prayers can be phoned in or placed in the box at the back of the sanctuary. Unless otherwise instructed, all prayers are guaranteed confidential.

First Place for Health Zion's new program WALK IN WISDOM with Kelley MacQueen is on Tuesdays at noon in the Doreen Gray Room. Contact KelleyMacQueen@yahoo.com or call 902 394 2453.

Special Days and Events

October 1 Choir ministry at the Garden Home 2pm. Children's Ministry Orientation at 7pm. **October 3** Congregational Potluck Supper, 5.30 pm. **October 4** Calvin Presbyterian Church, 1297 Fort Augustus Road is holding a Fall Song Fest. All welcome! World Communion Day, Elder Ordination. **October 11** Thanksgiving. **October 15** Board of Trustees meeting 6.30 pm. **October 22** Friends of Faith 1pm. Session Meeting 6.30pm. **October 24** Grades 4 and up Pumpkin carving. **October 30 and 31** Fall Sale-clothing, puzzles, books, baking and café 9am-1pm. **We always double check our copy for accuracy and try to avoid making errors like the following found in a church bulletin. "Potluck Supper on Sunday at 5 pm. Prayer and medication to follow". (Not one of ours! ed.)**



**Making Zion even more beautiful!
Come and see the results on Sunday!**



We keep busy. The mailout crew (and helpers) for The Gathering, the spring-cleaning crew at work and the huge display for the last bake sale.

Remember to move your clocks back on Sunday, November 1

The Last Word by Rev. Allyson MacLeod

Gathering and Scattering

Fall has arrived! The fields of hay have been cut and baled and moved from field to barn. The leaves are beginning to show their colours. And every morning at our house, we are awakened to the sound of a growing number of geese flying in from a nearby farm field to spend the day at the lake. They are practicing for the journey south: practicing their V formation, growing and getting stronger, learning how to communicate with one another, all in preparation for the journey ahead.

I've been thinking about these things as we gather together again after the summer: from time at the cottage, family reunions, trips that took us far from home or on local adventures, reuniting with old friends and making new ones. It has been wonderful to reconnect and share stories of where we have been and what we have been up to. And at the same time, it is now wonderful to look forward to what this next season of ministry and mission at Zion will be.

As we begin reading the Acts of the Apostles together, I have been noticing a pattern. Those early Christians had what seemed to be a regular practice: gather then scatter; gather again and scatter again. They gathered together for worship, fellowship, for the breaking of bread and for prayer and then they scattered. It wasn't that they went to the cottage or away on vacation and then came back to church when they got back home. But they gathered together for worship on Sunday and then they went back into their neighborhoods, not just to go and wait for next Sunday, but to do what Jesus told them to do: to go and make disciples. And that is what Jesus invites us to do: to gather and scatter. As we gather on Sunday mornings for worship, prayer, teaching and fellowship, we are strengthened and encouraged for the week ahead of us but also for the conversations and encounters we will have through the week with our friends, neighbors, even strangers; opportunities where we can be the face or the hands of Christ.

The geese come to the lake every morning and every evening. They are practicing their skills, they are growing in number and in strength and they are certainly more vocal! There is a lot honking going on! They are preparing for the journey ahead of them. How is God preparing us and will He use us as we gather and scatter?



WORDS OF WISDOM

"If you are ignorant of God's Word, you will always be ignorant of God's will"

October 2026 at Zion Presbyterian Church

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 9:30 am Social Time/ 10 am Bible Study 2 pm Choir Ministry Garden Home 7pm Children's Ministry Orientation	2	3 5:30 pm Congregational Pot Luck Supper
4 10:30 Worship Service, Children's Min. World Communion Elder Ordination 11:30 am Fellowship 7 pm Fall Song Fest Service at Mermaid	5	6 10 am Prayer Group 12 noon First Place for Health 6:30 pm Social Time/ 7 pm Bible Study	7 6:30 Marcato Choir 7 pm Sanctuary Choir	8 9:30 am Social Time/ 10 am Bible Study	9	10
11 10:30 Worship Service, Children's Min. Thanksgiving Sunday 11:30 am Fellowship	12	13 10 am Prayer Group 12 noon First Place for Health NO BIBLE STUDY	14 6:30 Legato Choir 7 pm Sanctuary Choir	15 NO BIBLE STUDY 6:30 pm Board of Trustees Meeting	16	17
18 10:30 Worship Service, Children's Min. 11:30 am Fellowship	19	20 10 am Prayer Group 12 noon First Place for Health 6:30 pm Social Time 7:00 pm Bible Study	21 6:30 Marcato Choir 7 pm Sanctuary Choir	22 9:30 am Social Time/ 10 am Bible Study 1 pm Friends of Faith 6:30 pm—Session Meeting	23	24 6:30 p.m. Youth (grades 4 & up) Pumpkin Carving (watch the bulletin for more details)
25 10:30 Worship Service, Children's Min. 11:30 am Fellowship	26	27 10 am Prayer Group 12 noon First Place for Health 6:30 pm Social Time 7:00 pm Bible Study	28 6:30 Legato Choir 7 pm Sanctuary Choir	29 9:30 am Social Time/ 10 am Bible Study	30 Fall Sale (clothing, shoes, purses, jewelry, books, puzzles, bake sale, café) 9—1	31 Fall Sale 9—1 Remember clocks fall back this evening