



**Special
forever
invitations**

In the beginning

“I doubt not that **Wilson**
is a **hard place**. We must sow
in **hope**; the increase is the
business of God.”

Evangelist Virgil A. Wilson
March 12, 1871

This announcement courtesy of Morgan and Kathy Daughety.

1871 Go ahead!

Turn around and **walk backwards** one year at a time. Count back 150 steps. And look for a hard place. Past the Internet. Past satellites. Past black and white television. Past The New Deal. **Past Henry Ford**. Past Thomas Edison. Past vaccines. Past home refrigerators. Past the patented telephone. **Past the chain-pull indoor toilet**. Past paved roads and sidewalks.

Stop in 1871 at the dusty, agricultural Town of Wilson, North Carolina, a growing hamlet at the shoulder of the new Wilmington-to-Weldon railroad line and counting **1,036** souls, according to the census the year before.

President Ulysses S. Grant was nearing the end of his first term. Orville Wright was a newborn. And Welsh journalist Henry Stanley had discovered British physician and explorer David Livingston deep in uncharted Africa. **Dr. Livingston, I presume?** A great fire would turn Chicago to ashes.



In Wilson, a pound of lard was 6 cents. Milk, 7 cents a quart. Beef roast, 19 cents a pound.

Roll a new **road buggy with a top** off the lot for \$75 dollars. One living, snorting horsepower to pull it, \$150. Three men's shirts at the local mercantile might cost \$2.50. A **ladies hoop skirt** with bustle, \$1. A four-room tenement rented for \$6.06 per month. Weekly board for men, \$3.40. For women, \$2.90. In 1871, the average daily wage rested at **\$2.39**, on the precipice of a steep five-year plunge.



That year, on Thursday, April 27, **17 signers** placed their names on the original covenant that organized a congregation as First Christian Church. The roll of founders included elders Peter Edmund **Hines** and Moses Tyson **Moye**, deacons Robert J.



Taylor and Willis Napoleon **Hackney**, Mrs. Amos Johnston **Battle** (Margaret), Jesse Mercer **Battle**, Joseph J. **Bynum**, Mrs. Willis Napoleon **Hackney** (Orpah), Mrs. Mary M. **Hearne**, Mrs. Robert Williams **Hines** (Sarah), Dr. Robert W. **King**, John L. **Kitchin**, Mrs. John L. **Kitchin** (Lucy), Joseph Joshua **Lawrence**, Mrs. Moses Tyson **Moye** (Penelope), Mrs. William A. **Pearce** (Mary) and Charles Jenkins **Rountree**.

This month **on the very day**, those of us on the roll as members and friends of First Christian Church will begin a five-month celebration of the seventeen and their legacy, **aged faithfully for 150 years**. So join us on **Tuesday, April 27, at 7 p.m.** on our **YouTube** Channel* (where you find Sunday services) for a special Commemoration Ceremony from the Archives Room. Here's your chance to participate in our **Sesquicentennial's first event**. Miss it and you'll have to wait until Monday, April 27, 2071 for another chance to celebrate a milestone.

Then saddle up on **Thursday, May 6, 6-7 p.m.** for **Decoration Night** when we'll share a meal, trim First Christian with 150th decorations, explode some paper fireworks and much more. Bring a card with Sesquicentennial spelled correctly and enter to win a unique commemorative prize. And you can pick up **logo T-shirts**, yard signs and decals to help attract cheers our way. Return the enclosed **RSVP card by Friday, April 30**, to tell us you are coming. If you'd prefer, send your reply to **Officestaff2@fccwilson.org** or call the church office at **252-237-4125**.

Imagine what the **seventeen** thought, how they felt, what they dreamed on April 27, 1871. During the next five months, be present with them often to celebrate at the **Crossroads of Awe, Wonder and Love**, a single block from where today at First Christian Church all started ... just yesterday.

Maybe you'll hear their whispers.

 **Tuesday, April 27, 7 p.m.**

RSVP, please. See card enclosed.
 **Thursday, May 6, 6-7 p.m.**

*Go to www.fccwilson.org and click on the big, red **YouTube** icon.