



THE HISTORY OF

First Presbyterian Church of Noblesville

Est. 1848 · Noblesville, Indiana

Founded in 1848 by twelve pioneer families, First Presbyterian Church has grown alongside Noblesville for more than 175 years — surviving a near dissolution, building three homes for worship, and weathering seasons of change while remaining a center of faith and community service. What follows are six defining moments in that story.

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1867 — Reorganization & Revival

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- The congregation traces its roots to December 20, 1848, when twelve pioneer members — including elders Curtis Mallery and Joseph Carlin — organized the church on the Indiana frontier.
- After five years of decline that left the church unable to function, members held a Rededication Service on June 7, 1867 to "reorganize & resuscitate the church."
- Rev. John S. Craig, D.D. arrived in 1868 as Stated Supply and grew membership from 20 to 74.
- Fifteen of the twenty reorganizing members were women, reflecting a leadership role that would continue for generations.

1893 — A New Sanctuary at Conner & 12th

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- A fundraising appeal by Dr. George F. Burroughs of Wabash College launched the building campaign, raising over \$4,000 in a single day.
- Committee members traveled to Elgin, Illinois to study the prototype design before construction began.
- The finished church, lot, and parsonage cost \$18,500 total — nearly all raised by the congregation itself.
- The Presbyterian Ladies' Working Society contributed \$500 toward the building plus nearly \$300 for carpets and finishes.

1958 — Expanding to Meet Growing Needs

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- Growing Sunday school, fellowship, and administrative needs led to a two-story addition designed by architect John G. Pescok.
- New spaces included a pastor's office, nursery, fellowship hall, kitchen, classrooms, and coat hall.
- A connecting corridor joined the addition to the original building's basement, creating a unified facility.
- An original but steep and unsafe staircase was closed as part of the remodel.

1988 — Saving the Craig House

- Expansion plans put the historic 1893 William Craig (East) House at risk of demolition, sparking strong objections from local preservationists.
- An outside donor stepped in to fund moving the house across the street instead of tearing it down. This move laid the groundwork for the FPC fellowship hall addition.
- The move on March 5, 1988 became a festive community event, complete with vendors and onlookers on a cold winter day.
- Mover Elmer Buchta famously won a steak-dinner bet by relocating the house without spilling a glass of water left on a windowsill.

1998 — 150th Anniversary Celebration

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- A year long celebration opened with a February pitch-in dinner and a "Pages from Our Past" photo display.
- Heritage Sunday on May 17, 1998 reunited eight former ministers and their spouses with the congregation.
- To mark the occasion, hymn writer and poet Jane Parker Huber composed a special commemorative hymn for the congregation.
- The celebration honored 150 years of ministry while affirming the congregation's path forward.

2012 — Debt Payoff Celebration

- On August 26, 2012, the congregation held a "Debt Payoff Celebration" marking the mortgage being paid in full.
- The celebration was led by Robyn Story and the church's Finance Team.
- A scrapbook was assembled containing copies of actual historical documents from the church's files.
- Small binder-ring keepsake booklets were made so any member of the congregation could take one home.

Other Key Moments?

- Are these the top 6?