



John A. & Jane Wilson

## John A. Wilson Center for Urban and Global Outreach



John A. Wilson was born August 30, 1912, in Marysville, Missouri. His parents taught him to respect authority, work hard and stay true to his word. Early in life John wanted to be a farmer, but God had other plans.

After graduating from high school John spent the summer selling Bibles door to door, and he met a minister named C. S. Kleckner who taught John about the dangers of denominationalism and showed him his need to be baptized into Christ. John was baptized the next week and was directed to a little seminary in Cincinnati, Ohio.

John showed up in Cincinnati with a whopping 35 cents to his name. The gracious hospitality of the folks at Madisonville Christian Church helped John during that first semester. Paying for college was tough because of the Depression. John made a living by carrying coal from the street up to the basement windows of houses. His pay was 50 cents a ton. John soon realized he didn't have enough money to enroll for the second semester and would have to drop out, but two students made him a deal. They let him stay in their apartment with free room and board if he agreed to be their cook and housekeeper. It was an answer to prayer. Many times John faced the bleak realization that he had no money, no food, no shelter and no way to pay for school. And yet time and time again God provided for John's needs.

In the spring of 1933 as John was trying once again to sell Bibles, Leta Wolverton, John's girlfriend, signed him up to preach at a little church in Taylorsport, Kentucky. John didn't want to go, but Leta convinced him. The church offered John \$7 a week to be their preacher. He took the job, and he and Leta were married that year. John graduated from Cincinnati Bible Seminary (now known as Cincinnati Christian University) in 1934 with a Bachelor of Arts degree.

John stayed at Taylorsport for two years, and then Bridgetown Church of Christ called him to be their minister. John and Leta served for nine and a half years building that church, and God continued to provide. Whether it was milk for their children, food for supper, or a car to drive, God always came through.

John loved teaching about missions and personal evangelism and began teaching at the seminary in 1941. He was glad to serve as both an adjunct instructor and a trustee for the school where he had graduated.

In 1944 John accepted the call to minister with First Christian Church in Springfield, Ohio. Weekly worship attendance was 200, and the weekly offering was \$300, 10% of which went to missions. Along with preaching and calling, John taught a Sunday School class for newly married couples called the Keystone Class. Under John's leadership the church began to grow. There were many joys during those days and many gut-wrenching agonies.

When Leta passed away the church rallied around John. John's church secretary for 25 years, Jane Shaffer, had been very close to Leta, and John realized he and Jane shared the same values and goals and both respected and appreciated each other. John married Jane on August 11, 1978.

John and Jane Wilson's ministry continued to flourish in Springfield. John has conducted over 1,400 weddings, even four in one day. He has presided over more than 2,000 funerals and has been instrumental in sending at least 80 Timothies and Priscillas into the ministry. During John's tenure, church planting, revivals, Faith Promise and the support of overseas missions became great loves of First Christian Church.

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John's life motto is, "To live is Christ, to die is gain." When people think of a pastor who is there when they need him, they think of John Wilson. When people think of an evangelist, someone whose heart breaks for lost people, they think of John Wilson. John sums up his life by saying, "My whole life has been directed by the providence of God. If God has guided my life, if God has taken such good care of me, He can and will do the same for you."

To honor John and to perpetuate his love for evangelism and world missions, Cincinnati Christian University is establishing a fund to support the "John A. Wilson Center for Urban and Global Outreach" and has set an initial goal of raising \$500,000 in John's honor.

This bold initiative will:

- Provide scholarships for Cincinnati Christian University students preparing for careers in missions and evangelism. We want to reduce the likelihood that student loan debt will prevent future missionaries from pursuing God's call to the mission field. A minimum of 50% of the annual proceeds of this endowed fund will go directly toward student scholarships.
- Provide support for CCU's John A. Wilson Center for Urban and Global Outreach (CUGO). CUGO exists to invigorate and equip the entire CCU student body for missions and

evangelism. The John A. Wilson funds will allow us to offer training workshops for our students and equip local churches to increase their skills in evangelism and their understanding of the global mission of the church. We want to expose our students to the best missions/evangelism thinkers and practitioners in the world today!

- Provide funding for CCU faculty to participate in mission trips. A modest fund already exists in John Wilson's name to support our professors when they travel abroad. If we reach our fundraising goal for this project, we will be able to double the amount of funds available each year to help our faculty teach God's Word in other nations.

Once the initial goal of \$500,000 has been reached, additional funds will be raised in John Wilson's honor so that even more missionaries can be trained in the years to come. Like other university endowments, the principal will be invested and the interest will be distributed annually.

For more information about CCU and the John A. Wilson Center for Urban and Global Outreach contact:

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## Cincinnati Christian University

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Home): \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

I commit to supporting the John A. Wilson Center for Urban and Global Outreach with a:

Monthly Commitment of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ One-Time Gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Enclosed is My Gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I have other thoughts to share. Please contact me at \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail your gift to:  
**Cincinnati Christian University**  
 2700 Glenway Avenue  
 Cincinnati, Ohio 45204

**\*\*Please make checks payable to CCU, with "John A. Wilson Center for Urban and Global Outreach" on the Memo line.**