

WINTER 2026

SALISBURY

the magazine

SOMETHING from NOTHING

Don Tesh is a master at craftsmanship, efficiency

Door to door
Distinctive entryways

Maupin Avenue
Presbyterian Church
celebrates 100 years



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Salisbury the Magazine

P.O. Box 4639

Salisbury, NC 28145-4639

Published 9 times / year



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On the cover: Don Tesh, 93, sits in his workshop. He has used his skills as a machinist to create unique brass items.
(Sean Meyers photo)

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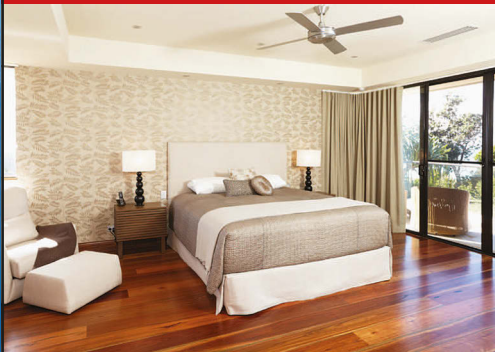
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Opening the door to a new year

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Buon Anno!
Akemashit Omedetō!

In other words, Happy New Year!



I sit before my computer on a cold, gray, drizzly day — hardly the time to feel aspirational. Yet, that's the time, isn't it? At New Year's that's the custom — so we make resolutions long on intention and short on completion.

Rather than picturing the coming year as an entirely fresh canvas, what if we consider it as a new room in our already occupied houses? My house has messy rooms and neat ones, rooms I've finished and rooms yet to be completed. (Have I told you my living room is awaiting its sofa?) So, your new room still has the characteristics of the house. Maybe you're punctual or maybe you tend to run late. Perhaps you cook with wild abandon or perhaps you're the microwave chicken pie type. These characteristics are going to follow you wherever you go — whatever room you add on to your house. This metaphor has helped me to make more realistic resolutions; I prefer, in fact, to call them promises. Sometimes the promises work out so well that I renew them at the following New Year — like the promise not to give advice to my adult children and grandchildren unless asked. That one has reaped untold benefits to our relationships.

We enjoyed taking photos of iconic doors in our area to illustrate the concept of entering a new year. I hope you enjoy considering them; maybe even pick a favorite to be your door to a happy New Year.

This issue brings you stories of people who remember the past.

Local retiree Don Tesh used his ingenuity to save manufacturing companies thousands of dollars and mystify engineers in the process. He built small brass models in his spare time,

“tinkering,” as he said. Their likeness to reality is striking.

Perhaps more striking is Mr. Tesh's physical and mental fitness at the age of 93. He's a great example for us all.

Maupin Avenue Presbyterian Church is celebrating 100 years this year! As other churches suffer downsizing, this church remains a vital partner of its neighborhood and the city. The congregation has always been small but mighty. The driving force to create the church, then to build the handsome building was Mrs.

J.P. Cathey (“Mom” Cathey Hanford), Elizabeth Dole's grandmother. They first built a wood-frame building and then the stately brick church that stands at the corner of South Fulton and Maupin Avenue. They built it for \$25,000 in 1939. Mrs. Cathey held the honorary shovel to break ground. That's equivalent in today's dollars to \$582,690.65. What's more, they built it debt free. The church over its 100 years has never been in debt. Pastor Randy Foster and his wife Cathy shared their thoughts of serving the church for over 20 years.

The Rowan Original this month is Bud Mickle. At age 85, he still plays a little golf, walks daily, works out at the JF Hurley YMCA and volunteers for several organizations. Bud's a lifetime Salisburian.

This month's Bookish is Heartwood by Amity Gaige, brought to us by Margaret Basinger. We've all probably fantasized about walking the Appalachian Trail. This book is about a woman who goes missing while doing so.

Wishing you health, happiness and creativity for all 2026.

Maggie

— Maggie Blackwell
Editor, Salisbury the Magazine

‘Heartwood’

Who hasn't wanted to hike the Appalachian Trail? It is a 2,190-mile footpath through the Appalachian Mountains. I know people who have walked it and others who have at least ventured through part of it. The idea of being in nature and all its elements for days on end with nothing but the pack on my back has always intrigued me.

Amity Gaige's *Heartwood* is set at the very end of the trail, in the densely wooded top of Maine. The end of the trail is the summit of Mount Katahdin, a steep 5,300 feet. It's tough for hikers who have walked 2,000 miles to end their journey with such a treacherous challenge — a mountain. The rugged terrain presents a terrifying background in this page-turner of a thriller.

Amity Gaige weaves a compelling narrative as she shifts from different points of view and characters' lives. The plot revolves around three beautifully described female characters but other minor characters contribute richly to the narrative.

Valerie Gillis, whose trail name is Sparrow, is one of the book's main characters. An experienced hiker, Valerie is only 200 miles away from finishing the trail when, without explanation, she leaves her main backpack along the way and goes into the uncharted, densely packed forest. Her supportive husband waits at their meeting spot and when she doesn't arrive after several hours, he notifies the Forest Service.

As Valerie's meager supply of food dwindles down to nothing, she finds comfort in writing letters to her mother. The author uses this convention to let Valerie convey her feelings as she faces her challenges in the wild.

But why did Valerie go off the trail in the first place? Why would she leave the trail so abruptly without indicators to find her way back? A large part of the novel describes why and how she left the trail and the herculean measures that are taken to find her. Is she found? Does she survive as the days go by on the trail?

The main game warden assigned to the ground search for Valerie is seasoned veteran Lt. Beverly Miller, Gaige's second well-developed female character. Women in this profession are rare but Beverly has a sterling reputation for being able to find lost campers within a day or so. When she and her immediate staff are not able to find Valerie within 36 hours, Beverly brings in hundreds of volunteers to scour the woods for clues. But as the days go by with no leads, she questions her skills.

Last there is Lena, a spunky, adventuresome 76-year-old semi-invalid birdwatcher in a Connecticut nursing home. She knows the characteristics of sparrows, the bird that is Valerie's trail name. They are small but very strong and tenacious. Sensing that the missing woman also has these traits, Lena is convinced that she is still alive, even as the days advance. Valerie reminds Lena of her own daughter, from whom she is estranged. Lena initially worries that the missing hiker could be her daughter, who also hikes. Using her internet sleuthing skills, she tracks her daughter but can't stop thinking about Sparrow.

Lena becomes obsessed with finding her through using her computer. A tenacious woman herself, she becomes an essential character in the plot.

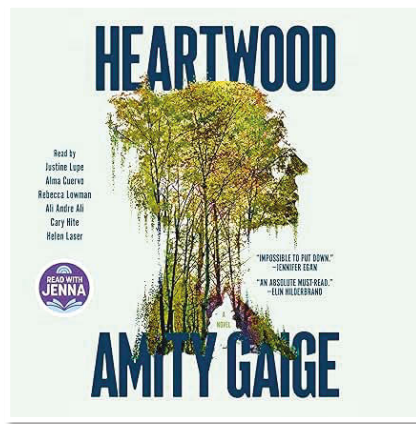
A large part of the novel describes Valerie's efforts to keep hope alive as the days pass and she isn't found. One criticism of *Heartwood* is that it bogs down and is confusing about how Valerie moves from one area to another in her duress. Without giving anything away, it's hard to believe that one of the significant characters can have made his way to the trail.

This is a story about love and loss, the endurance to survive both physically and emotionally, and the ways in which people come to terms with their own weaknesses and relationships and uncertainty. *Heartwood* is much more than a story about a woman lost and searched for in the wild forests of Maine. It is a book about the relationships of each female character with her respective mother or daughter.

Heartwood is a well-plotted and thought-provoking story about man against nature. Or in this case, woman against nature. **S**



by
**MARGARET
BASINGER**



“Heartwood” by Amity Gaige
Published April 1, 2025, 320 pages



THROUGH THE LENS by Andy Mooney

The beaver moon on Nov. 5, so named because beavers are busy in November preparing for winter. It was the brightest full supermoon of the year, as the moon was at its point closest to Earth, so it appeared larger and brighter in the sky.

To submit a photo for Through the Lens, send a high-resolution photo to andy.mooney@salisburythemagazine.com. Vertical orientation is required.



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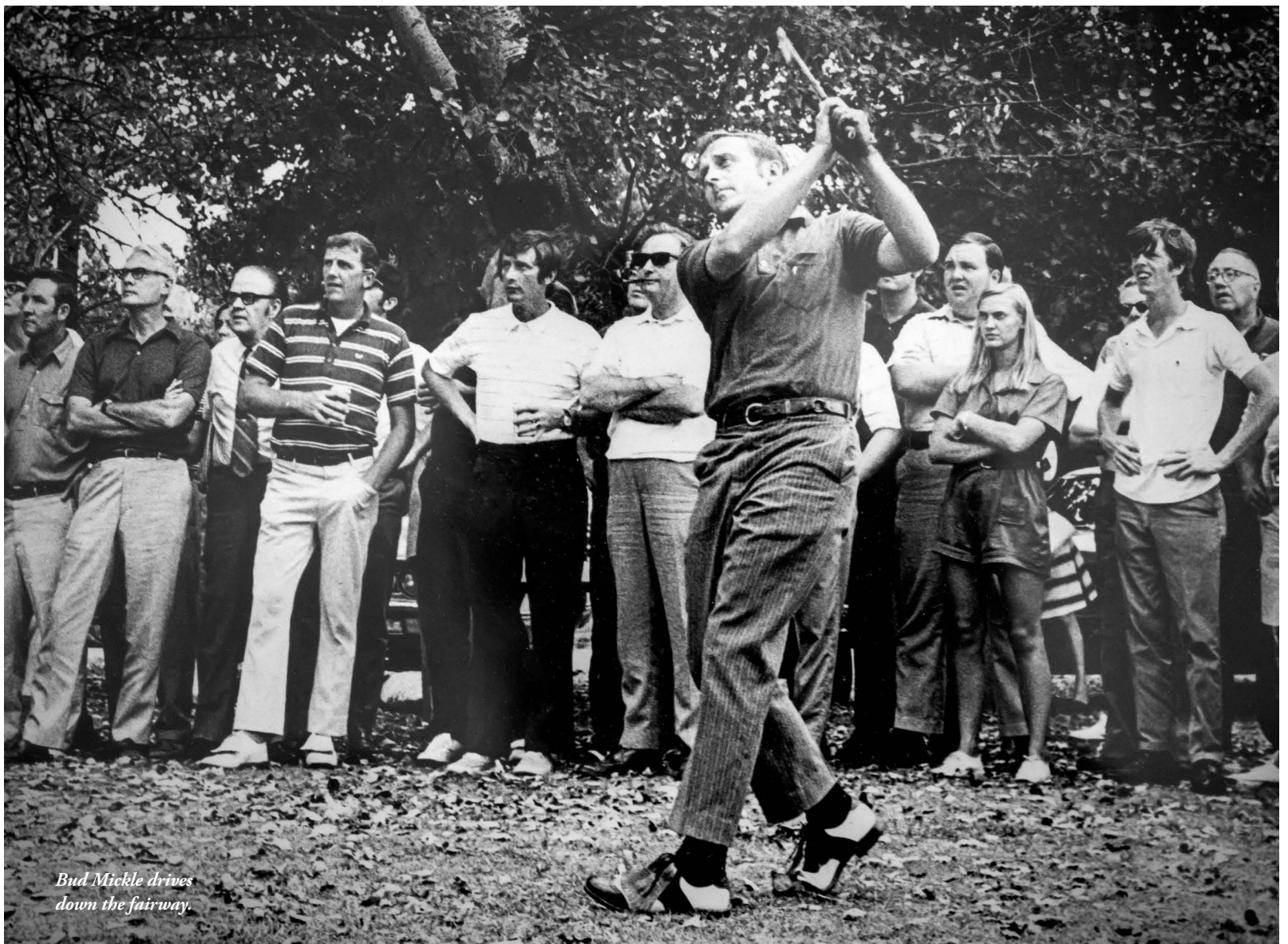


ROWAN ORIGINAL

SUPER SPORT

Bud Mickle has promoted recreational activities in Rowan

STORY : MAGGIE BLACKWELL | PHOTOGRAPHY : SEAN MEYERS



Bud Mickle drives down the fairway.

Bud Mickle, a student at N.C. State University, met Betty, a student at Meredith College, and says today that it was love at first sight.

“I knew I was in love. She was someone so special. I was stunned. Nobody else had me on the moon like her. I was so lucky.”

Bud has always loved sports from his days of sandlot games with Eaman Park and Fulton Heights neighbors to Boyden High School where he lettered in four sports, to American Legion baseball, and to varsity golf at N.C. State. In addition to enjoying sports for fun and fitness, Bud strongly believes that organized sports teach important life skills like teamwork, fairness, perseverance and respect for rules.

When he returned to Salisbury to work with his father at Mickle Tire Company, it seemed natural for him to chair the Salisbury Recreation Advisory Committee. When sons Brad and Bill showed interest in sports, Bud began

to help coach their Gray Y, Church League and Little League teams. As his sons moved on to play school sports, Bud continued to work with Rowan Little League, running the concession stand and serving as Chairman of Trustees for several years. He was involved in the development the Little League fields at the new Salisbury Community Park and Athletic Complex.

Bud has worked with other community organizations, as well. He has served as president of Salisbury Kiwanis Club, chairman of SOAR of the Lutheran Services for the Aging, President of the Country Club of Salisbury, President of the Salisbury YMCA, and member of the capital campaign for the J.F. Hurley Y.

He was on the Home Federal Savings and Loan Board as it transitioned to Omnibank. He was on the Rowan Regional Medical Center Foundation when the hospital merged with Novant. He served on the Historic Salisbury Foundation Board for many years and while president he helped revive the revolving fund

to save historic properties.

Golf has remained an important part of his adult life. He continued to play competitive golf, winning the Country Club of Salisbury Men’s Golf Championship and the Labor Day Four Ball Tournament four times each, and the Senior Division of the Labor Day Four Ball Tournament in 1998 and 2002. He played amateur golf in Carolinas Golf Association tournaments and served for 13 years on the N.C. Golf Panel which rates new and renovated golf courses. He helped coach a Knox Middle School Golf Team, and he volunteered for 8 years for First Tee, an organization devoted to introducing young people to golf. He has enjoyed playing golf with his sons and grandchildren.

At age 85, he still plays a few holes of golf weekly, walks daily, works out at the J.F. Hurley Y, and volunteers for Meals on Wheels, Lee Street Theater, and Historic Salisbury Foundation. **S**



*Don Tesh holds a knife
he made.*

SOMETHING from NOTHING

Don Tesh is a master at craftsmanship, efficiency

STORY : MAGGIE BLACKWELL | PHOTOGRAPHY : SEAN MEYERS



Various brass tools that Tesh created.

“**T**hey sent me everywhere from Canada to Mexico,” Don Tesh says, “just to show ‘em how to do what I figured out.”

Tesh, 93, has spent his life making something out of nothing. He built his home with his own hands. He works on his own car. His home is filled with inventions of his own making.

He was a young man in 1957, working all day at Salisbury Metal Products on U.S. 29 as a machinist. After work every day, he built his home. He and his wife were living the first floor of her parents’ home and he was highly motivated to have a home of his own.

His first job at SMP was to grind a small tip off a machine part after it came off the line. He had to put it in a vice and file it down. After only a few days on the job, Tesh went to the machine shop and had them build a small template with a hole in it. This allowed him to file the tips in about half the time.

“That’s where I got started,” he chuckles.

SMP had, for years, discarded waste metal after fabricating machines. Tesh talked them into reusing it, saving them quite a bit of money over the years. When it was time to produce new versions of machines, Tesh told them, no, let’s remanufacture the old ones and modify them to work differently.



A brass clock Don created in the wall in the living room.





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“I was always looking for ways to make the projects to go faster or simpler or cheaper,” he says.

His bosses must have talked about him at conferences because it wasn't long before companies around the continent started calling for him to come show them how to save.

“There was a guy in a closet with a device with a spindle. He'd put a three-inch ball bearing on the spindle and if he felt an irregularity, he threw it away in a 55-gallon barrel.

“I made a machine that cleaned the bearing and it met the guidelines. We salvaged so many ball bearings! The engineers would come and ask, ‘What did you do?’”

Tesh grew up in Lexington with seven siblings. His father worked in a restaurant. Tesh graduated from Lexington High School and started to work. Yet college-educated engineers



Let's Celebrate!

We hope your 2026 is filled with every happiness.

Thank you to everyone who has made our year so special!

We appreciate each and every one of you.



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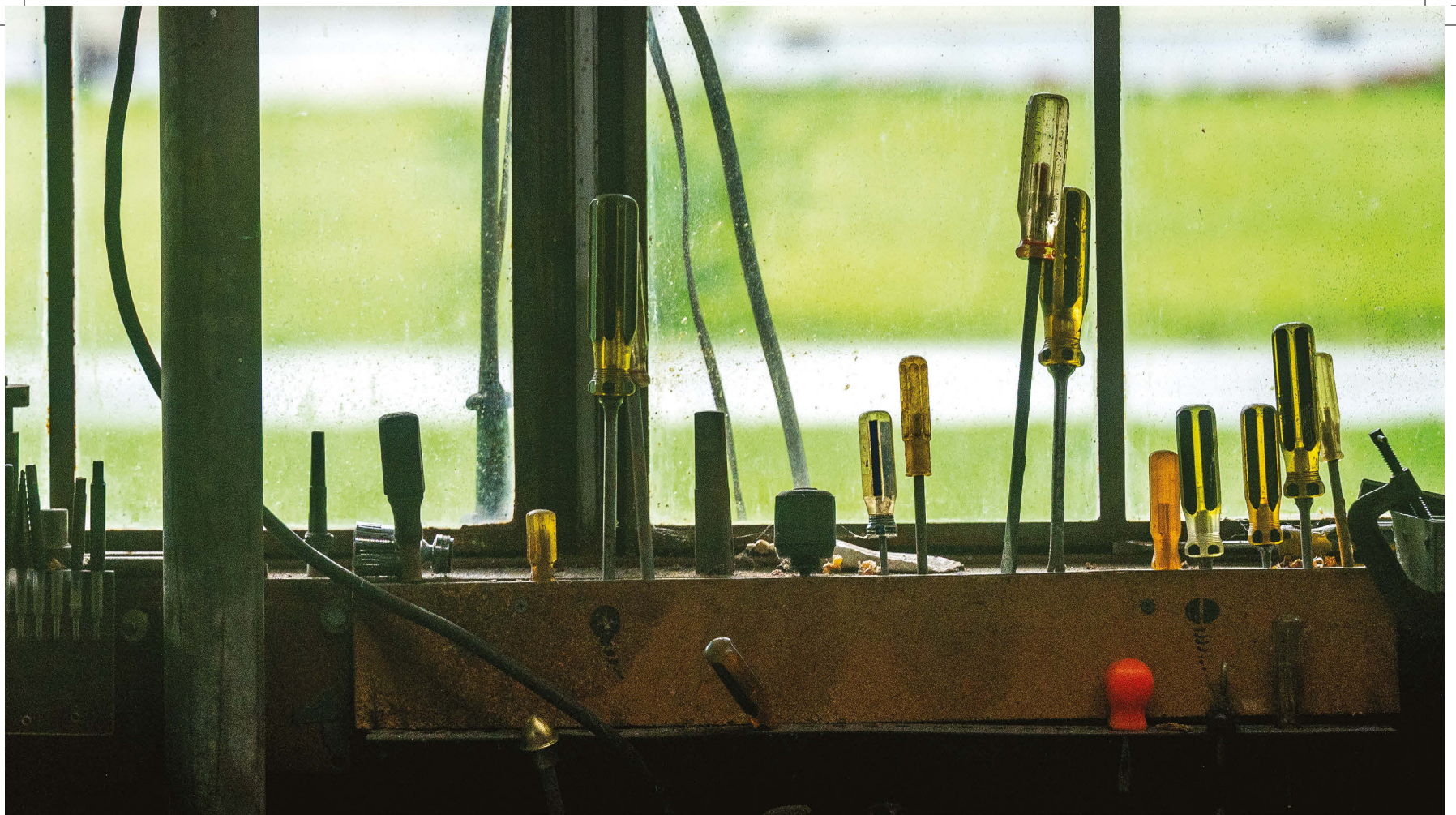
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Don holds a fake brass bullet he made.

**From our Home to Yours,
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& Look forward to helping you
make a move in 2026!**



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New Year



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asked him to travel and share his common-sense ideas.

He and his wife raised four children in the home he built. The living room has a clock built into the wall so that all that's visible are dots for the numerals and the hands. The steppingstones outside were hand made. One room in the house displays the many brass items he built by hand: two non-working guns, a tiny cannon with a pile of cannonballs at the ready, a shotgun, gavel, screwdriver, kaleidoscope, a bullet, hammer, valve and a solid brass ring.

He says he built whatever came to his mind. He started small with easy things and worked his way up from there. The likenesses are amazing. The guns are, of course, non-functional but gee! they look like the real thing. The head of the hammer unscrews to reveal a secret compartment in the handle.

"I've got brass out the hmmm." He throws back his head for a good laugh.

Tesh is active, vital and lively. He has close relationships with his adult children and neighbors. He takes time to exercise every day, stretching and moving his arms and legs, calling it his "calisthenics." He is slender and moves about with ease.

When asked if he thinks his ingenuity came from being a child of the Depression and learning to make do, he simply shrugs his shoulders. "It's still with me today. I think on things... and not all of them work well." He smiles and walks away. **S**





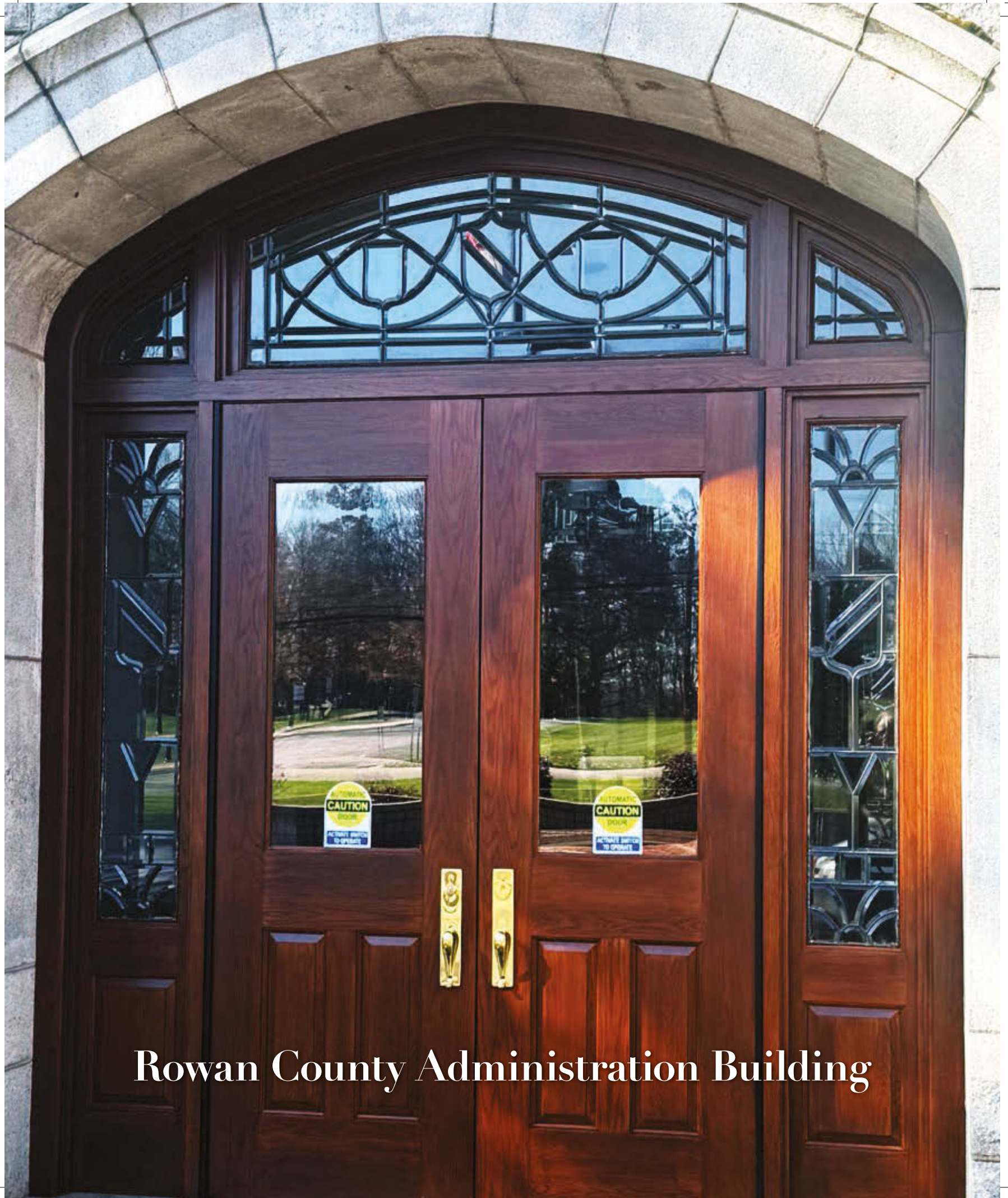
Clockwise from top: Tesh points to a non-functioning pistol he made from brass; Tesh is a huge Dale Earnhardt fan; a cannon Tesh made rests on a table.

DOOR to DOOR

A closer look at some of Salisbury's interesting entryways

PHOTOGRAPHY BY AUGUST URBINA

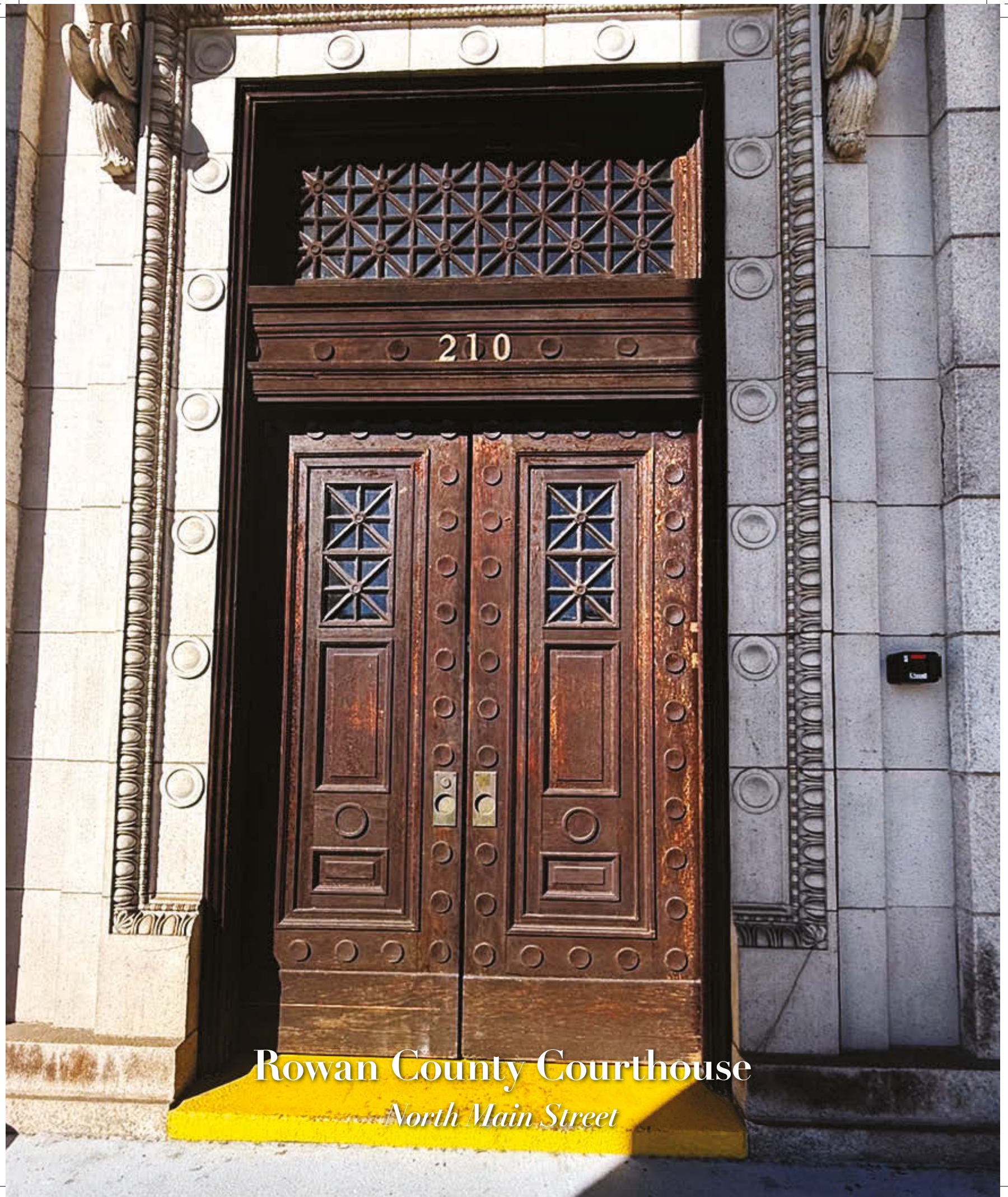
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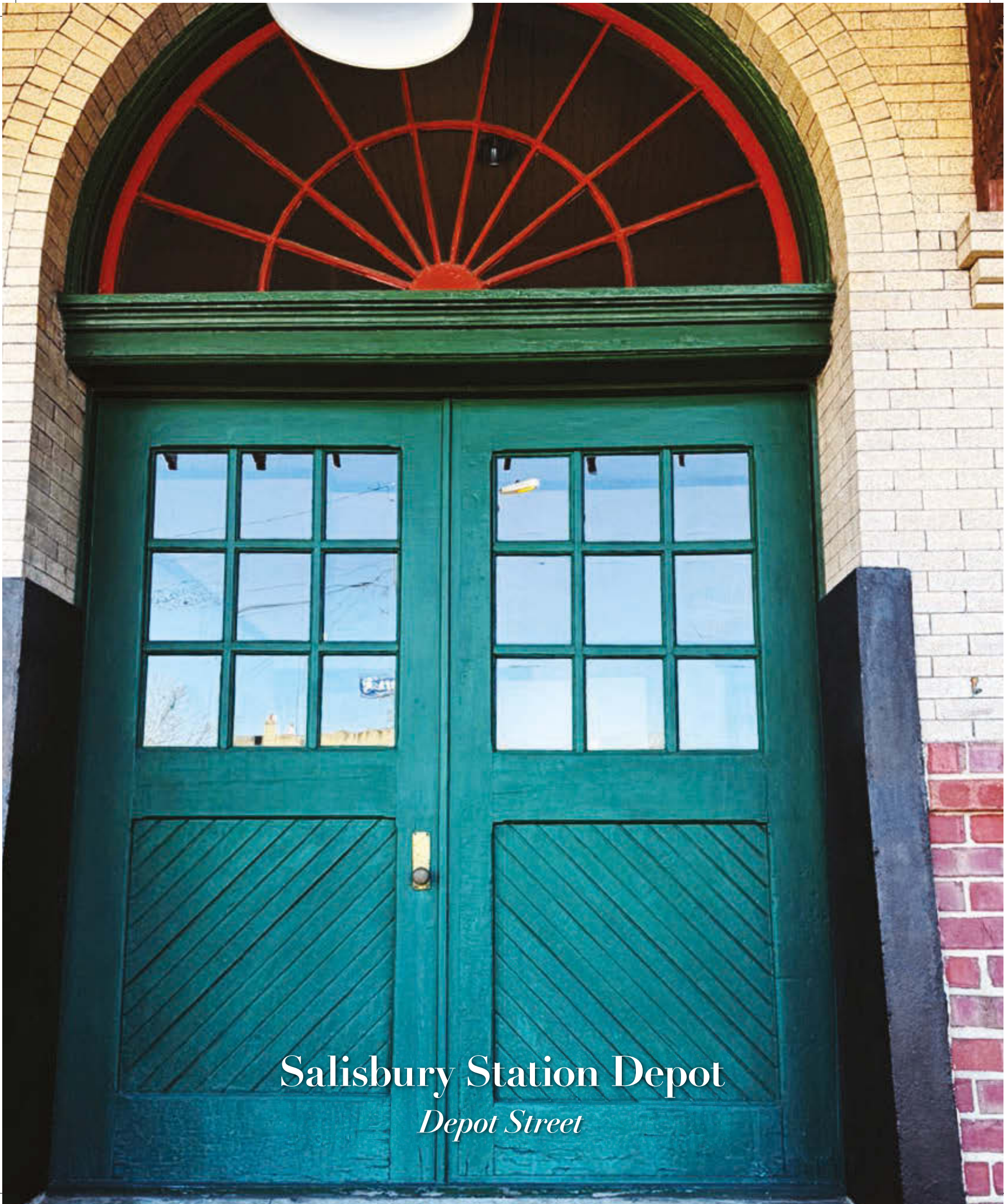
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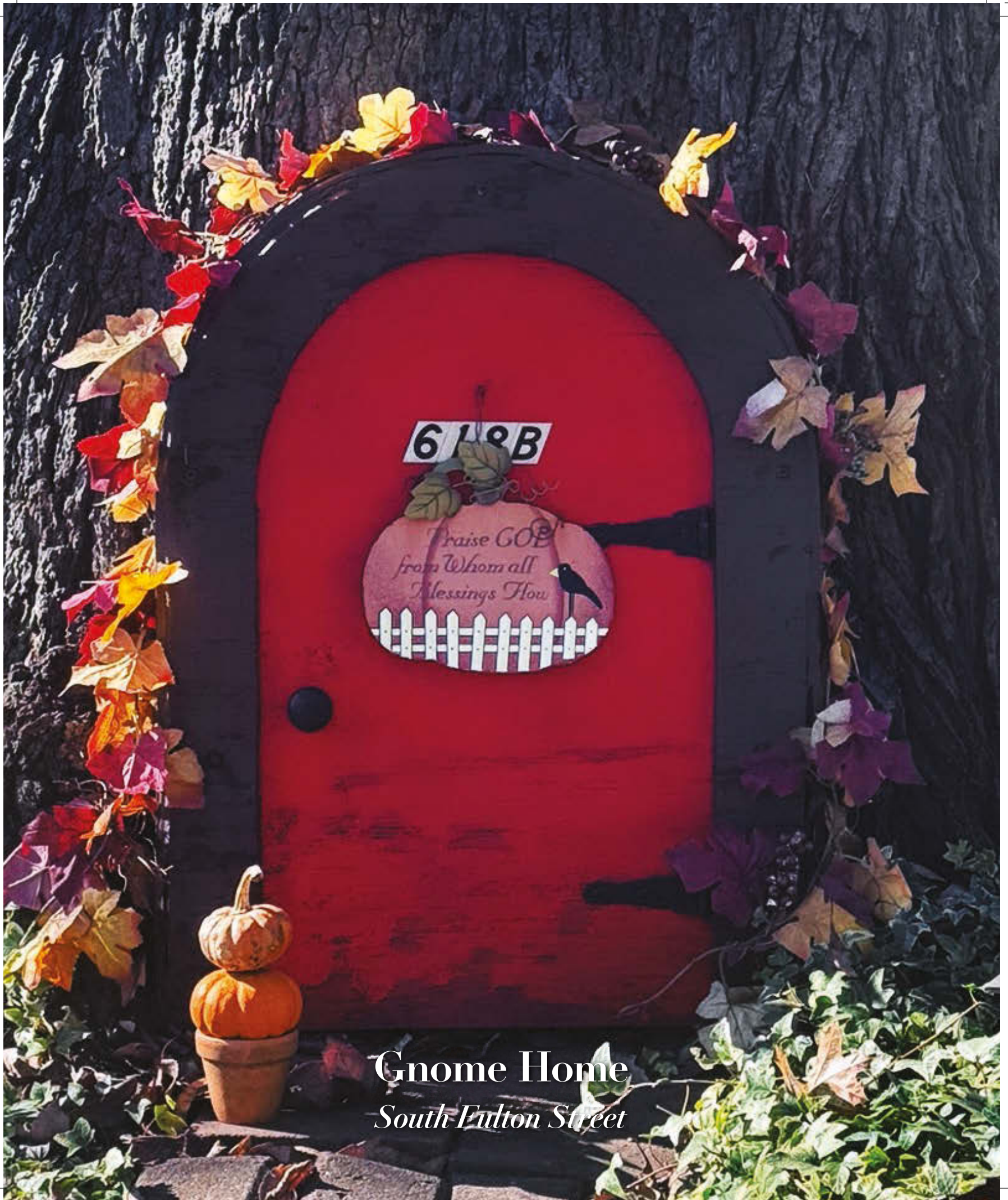
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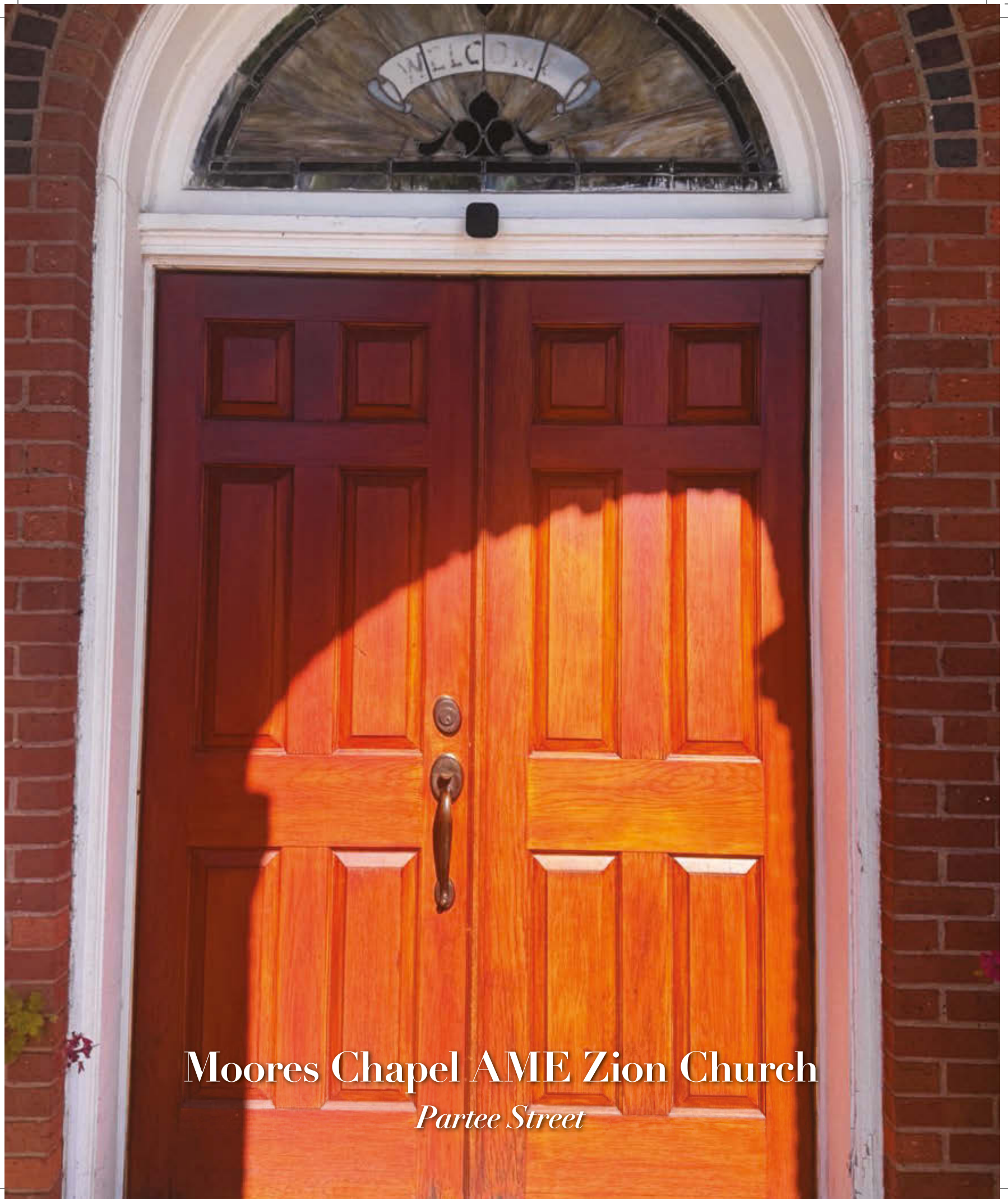
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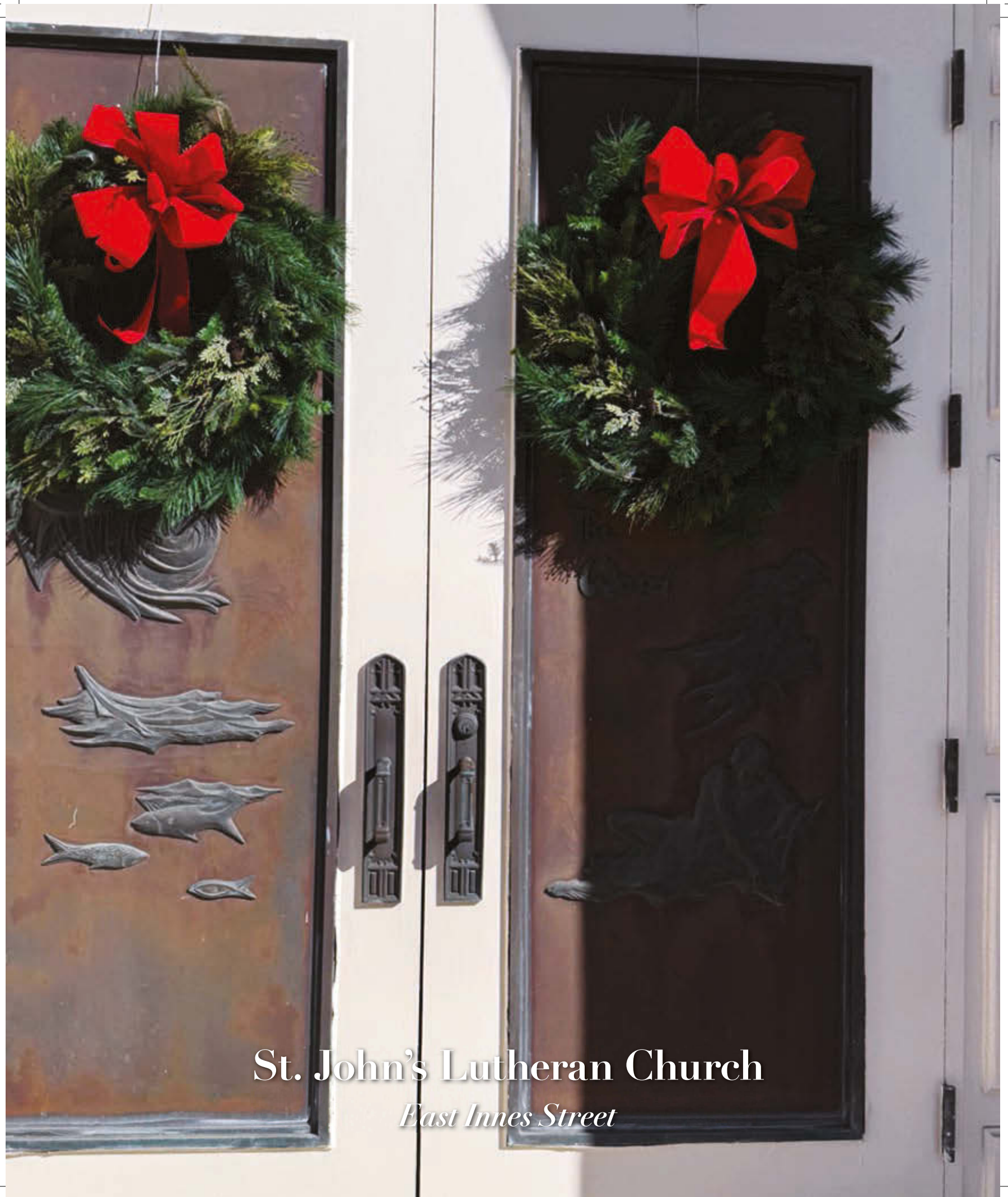
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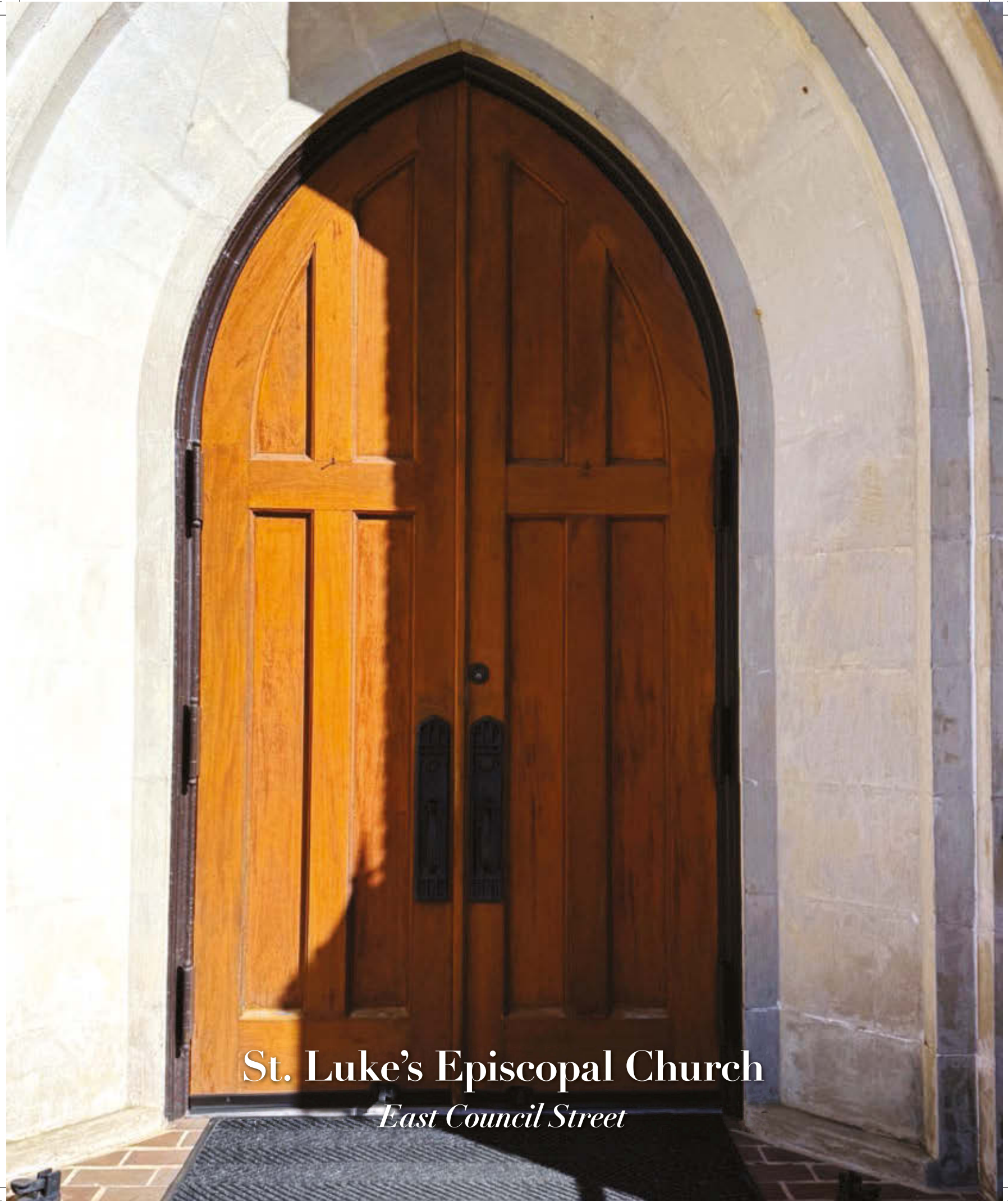
Gnome Home
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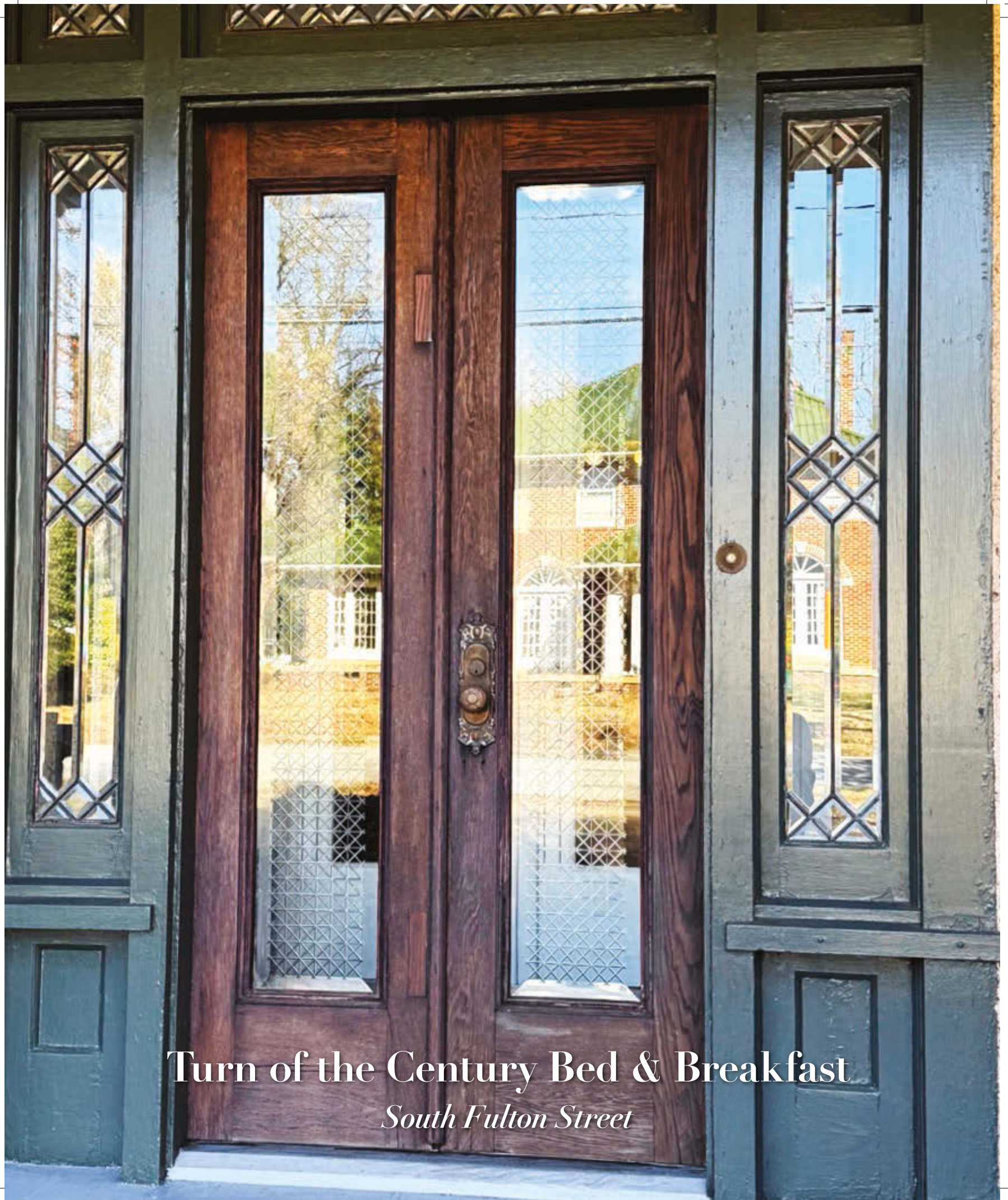
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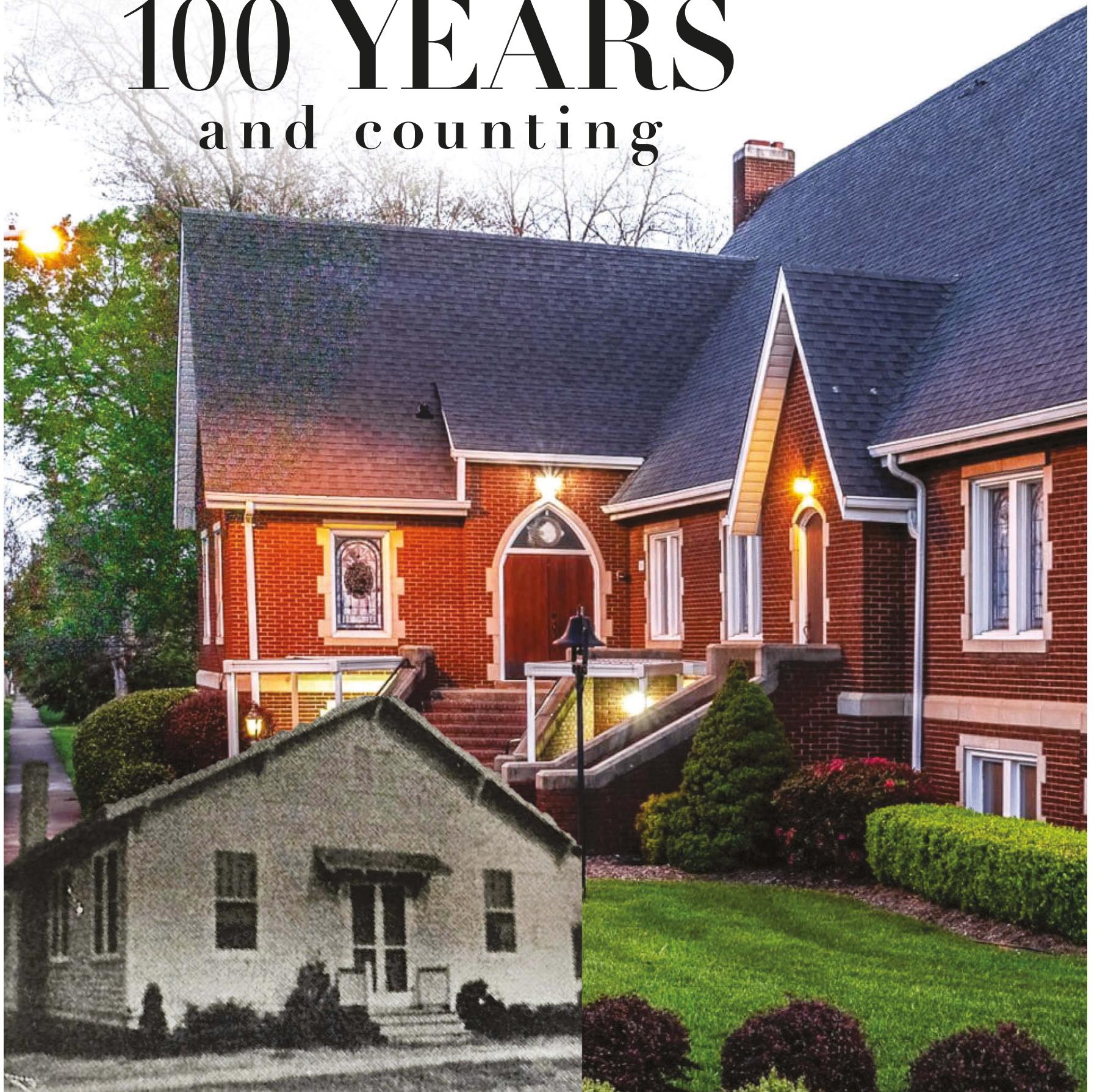


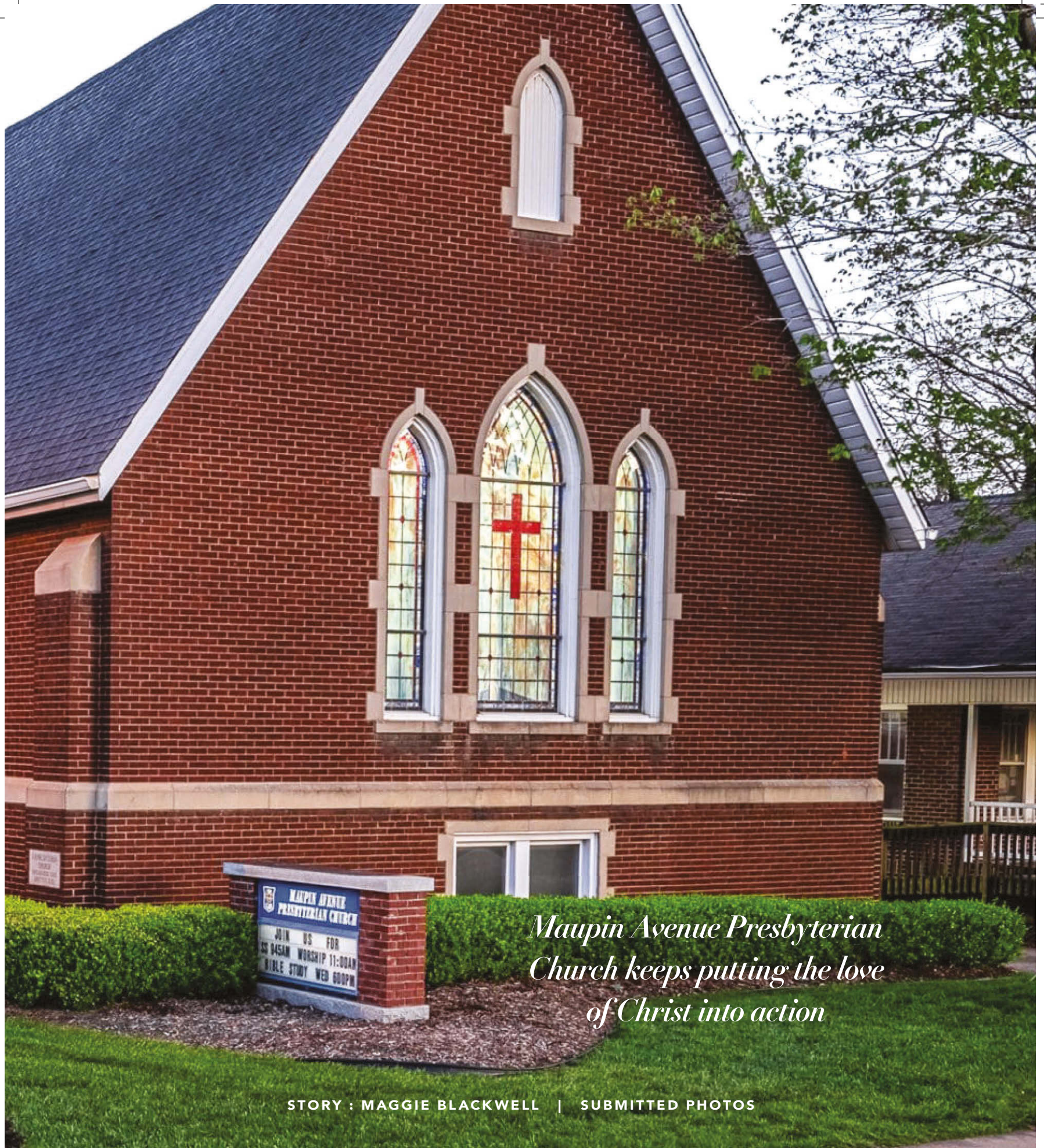
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of Christ into action*

STORY : MAGGIE BLACKWELL | SUBMITTED PHOTOS



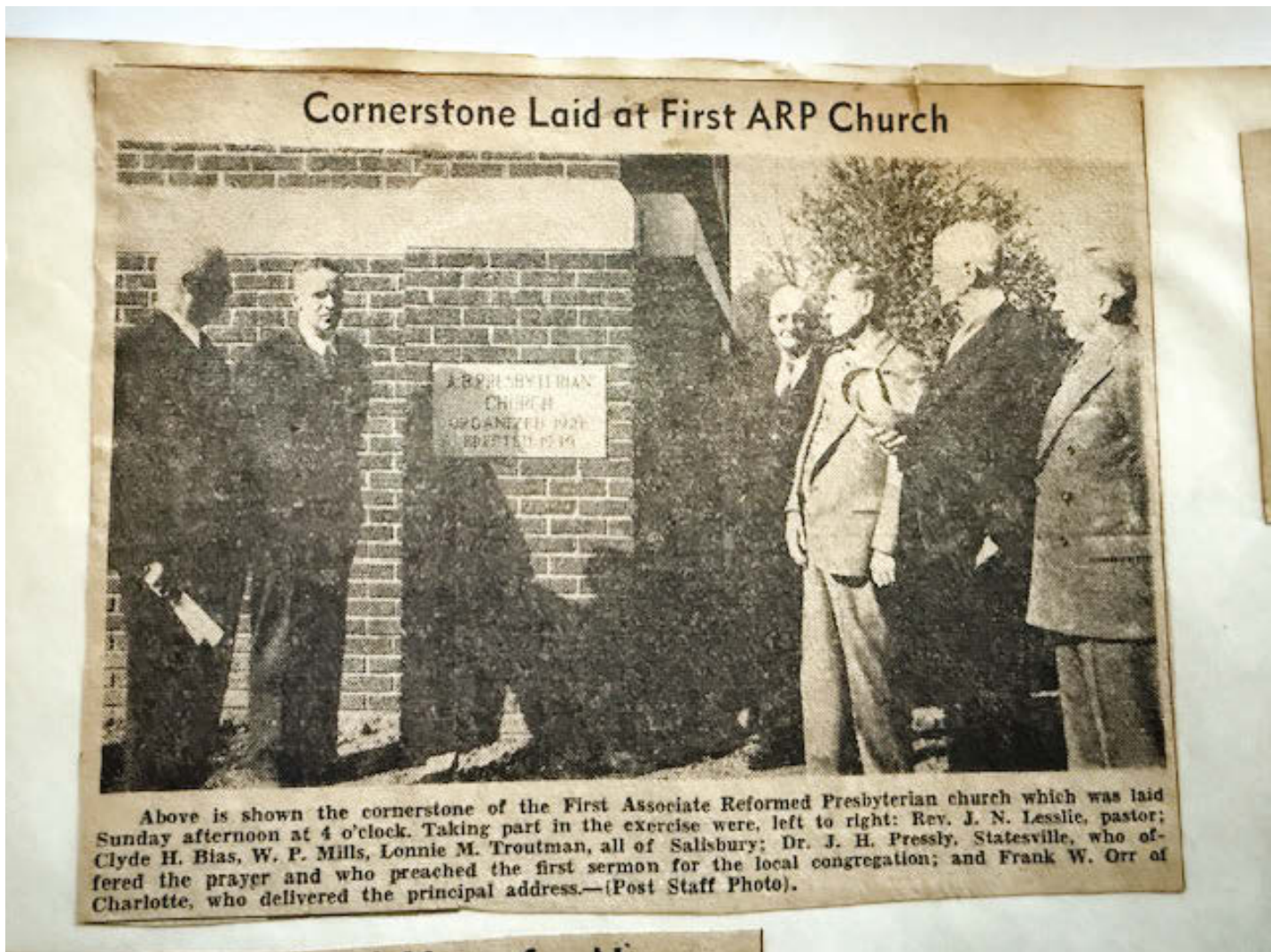
Pastor Randy and Cathy Foster were given “bobble heads” in their likenesses by the children’s ministry on Pastor Appreciation Sunday.



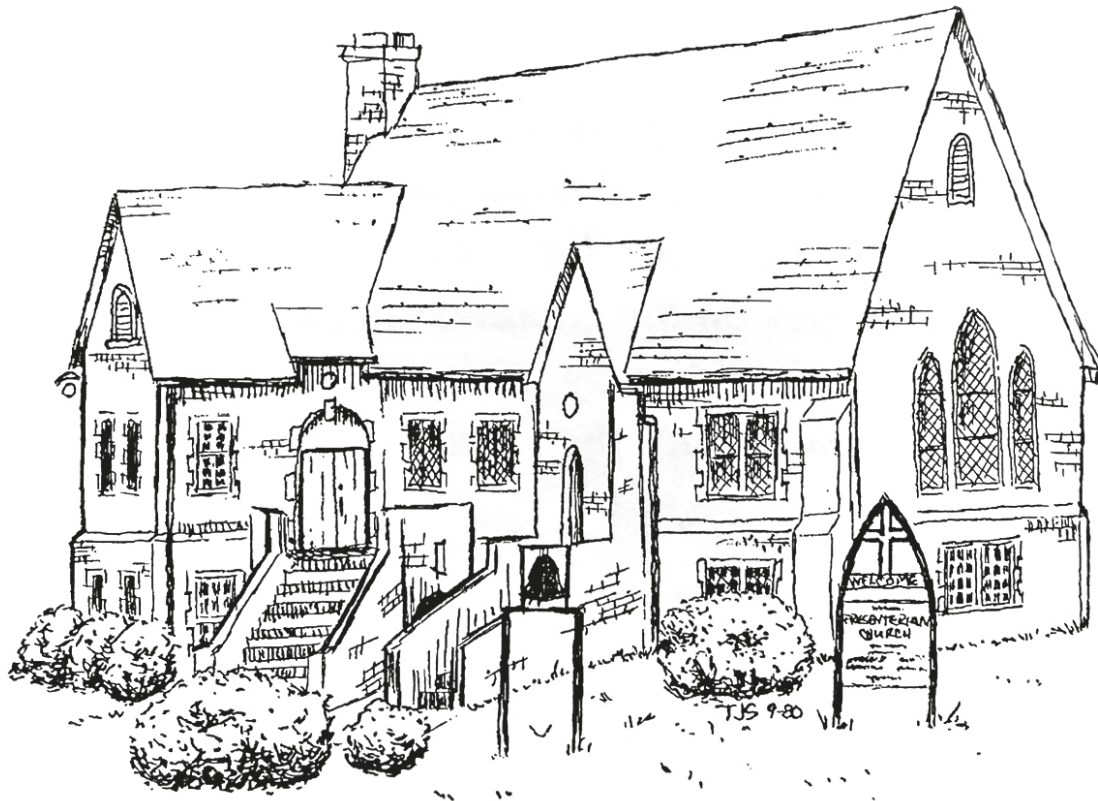
There’s a small church standing on the corner of the Fulton Heights Neighborhood. It may be diminutive but it’s classical in style. The yard is always pristine. The wooden doors are carefully stained and oiled to withstand the southern sun. It truly evokes memories of illustrations from Dick and Jane books.

The church began in 1923, when Mrs. JP Cathey and others began to meet each Sunday for services. First meeting in private homes, they eventually moved their services to what was then called the “Community Building,” then the Victory Theater, and finally to the YMCA hut on South Fulton where they heard sermons from local Associate Reformed Ministers from the Charlotte and Statesville areas.

Mrs. Cathey’s great longing for a new church in Salisbury cannot be overstated. Thought of as the mother of the church, she greatly aided in financing the construction of the first framed church building, then in 1939 the present church, and in 1940 the building of the church manse. On May 21, 1983, the Cathey Hanford family came to the church with then Secretary of Transportation, Elizabeth “Liddy” Dole presiding over the dedication of the opening of the new center serving older adults with over 200 people in attendance. The Cathey Hanford family deeded the property next door to the church, 1322 South Fulton, to be used as the Cathey Hanford House Adult Day Care Center. The church has for 42



A drawing of the church back in the '70s by a member's deceased son. It has prominently been displayed in the church bulletin for many years.



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CELEBRATES TENTH BIRTHDAY



Above is the Associate Reformed church here, located at the corner of South Fulton street and Maupin avenue, erected in 1928. Organized ten years ago with 18 members, the congregation today numbers 103. Rev. W. M. Blakely is pastor and John Hanford chairman of the board of deacons. —(Post Staff Photo).

Homecoming Day Observed Today At Associate Reformed Church

Homecoming day in celebration... First Pastor Rev. E. G. Carson was appointed... In December, 1935, the name of the church was officially established as "Salisbury's Little Church"



years allowed this property free of charge, to serve Salisbury as the Services for Older Adults of Rowan (SOAR), the Lutheran Adult Care Center, and currently Rowan Youth Services Bureau. This all began with the heart of a wise and faithful woman, Mrs. JP Cathey, known to many as "Mom" Cathey Hanford, the desire to not rest until a church was standing in the growing suburb of Fulton Heights Neighborhood, the last stop for the trolley.

The total cost to build the church was \$25,000 in 1939. That equals about \$583,000 in today's money. The little church built the brick building with no debt. Moreover, the church, over its 100 years, has never incurred a debt. There were 21 charter members. By 1930, they had 77 members.

Mrs. Cathey, shovel in hand, broke ground for the new church in 1939. The cornerstone was laid in 1940 with a 10-year-old boy placing a copper box inside. In the box were a current history of the church, records of the charter members, a list of pastors who had served and a photo of the small frame building that was their first place of worship.

Maupin Avenue's current pastor is Randy Foster, who has served there for 23 years. He says, "Through God's Providence and the perseverance and unwavering commitment of a core group of charter members, our church's beginnings grew from



One of the pastors in Statesville that helped begin the work and dedicate the new church building, not a pastor of Maupin.

one dear woman's prayer and faithful stewardship into 100 years of Gospel ministry."

It's telling to step back and see what women's roles were in 1926: They had just gotten the right to vote; they could not have bank accounts in their names. Women could buy real property only with a male co-signer.

Mrs. Cathey's determination stands out as singular in the environment of the times.

The inside of the church is as immaculate as the outside. Stained glass windows cast a soft bluish light over the sanctuary. Pews are upholstered in complimentary blue. Many of the names on stained glass windows are of residents of the Fulton Heights neighborhood. There are about 100 names on the membership rolls. About 65 to 70 people attend worship on a given Sunday. A big Sunday sees 85 attendees.

Foster says, "Maupin Avenue Presbyterian Church has always measured success not merely by our numbers but through our faithful service and desire to share Christ with the world and serve our fellow man. We have been an active neighborhood church and community partner: hosting a voting precinct; providing rent-free space for Rowan

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Youth Services Bureau and other local agencies; supporting Rowan Helping Ministries, One Church One Child, Capstone, Good News Club, and the Fulton Heights Neighborhood Association. From Sunday services and Bible studies to community outreach programs, youth ministries, and mission opportunities, we seek to put our faith, the love of Christ into action.”

Foster’s energy and drive are well-matched with those of his wife Cathy. A retired finance person, she is now at the building almost as much as he is.

When the Fulton Heights Neighborhood Association underwent a revival of sorts in 2004, Maupin Avenue Church was there to help. The neighborhood board meets in the church’s manse. When it’s time for the annual neighborhood picnic, board members help themselves to the church’s tables; they don’t have to ask anymore, and they know where they are kept. The church sustains a paid ad in the quarterly newsletter. At one time, the neighborhood paid hundreds of dollars a year to have the newsletter printed. Today, Maupin Ave Church prints them and delivers

them to the editor’s porch. Foster knows many personalities and responsibilities of the neighborhood residents. Several members of the church are generational members of both the church and the neighborhood.

“People won’t remember your best sermon,” Foster says. “They’ll remember your being in the hospital, holding their hand. And if you’re there with them, the church rallies around them. Our church is one big family. You have to treat people like family.”

What keeps the small church going? Foster thinks for a moment. “If it’s not in the DNA of the church to reach out and bring people in, your church dies. We do that intentionally, with the mission of the gospel. If you lose that, you lose your reason for existence.”

Foster, 70, plans to retire in the not-too-distant future. “As sure as we were called here to work,” he says, “we are sure the Lord will send the right person to come after us. The Scripture says, ‘What He has begun, He completes.’

“We have been here for a season and it’s been the joy of our life. It’s taken both of us and these are really special people.” **S**

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