
Annual Report



2024

FEBRUARY 12

First Baptist Church of Cranford/Elizabeth
402 Union Ave,
Elizabeth, NJ 07208





Annual Report 2024

Faith Baptist Church of Cranford/Elizabeth (FBCCE) Annual Report 2024

Table of Contents

1. A Message from the Senior Pastor
2. Top 5 Highlights of 2024 (and 2023)
 - Pastoral Installation
 - Food Pantry Expansion
 - Friends and Family Fall Festival & Holiday Food Distribution
 - Parsonage Renovations
 - New Members & New Ministry Partners
3. Community Impact
4. Financial Overview
5. Looking Ahead: 2025 Vision
6. Thank you from the Joint Board
7. Acknowledgments

A Message from the Senior Pastor

Dear Members and Friends of First Baptist Church of Cranford/Elizabeth,



As I reflect on 2024, I am filled with gratitude for the incredible journey that we have embarked on together. It began on January 1, 2023, when we said, “Yes Lord” and spent a year learning the importance of dedicated discipleship to Jesus Christ and welcoming all to come home.

We went on in 2024 to “Level Up: for His Glory” whereby we continued to prioritize discipleship and offered various opportunities for learning through establishing protocols and procedures, teaching on the importance of intercessory prayer, developing an in-depth Bible study series, hosting ministry trainings and hearing from various guest clinicians. And although these opportunities have not yet led to numerical growth, I believe that if we continue to focus on glorifying God and doing our part to live within the realm of His kingdom and kin-dom here on earth then I am convinced that all aspects of growth are inevitable.

Thus, let us continue to fulfill our ecclesiastical responsibility through modeling and teaching the importance of ordinances and order, practicing biblical leadership and mature discipleship, extending Christian courtesy, and striving in excellence to fulfill our mission of spreading God’s love and service within the four walls of our church and out into our community and world.

I am honored and humbled to serve as your pastor during this pivotal time. Thank you for your unwavering support, prayers, and commitment to our church family. Together, we have made a profound impact in the lives of many, and I look forward to how we will THRIVE together with God in this coming year.

In Christ’s Love,

Rev. Dr. Malachy M. Williams

The Rev. Dr. Malachy M. Williams, PhD, ThD
Senior Pastor
First Baptist Church of Cranford/Elizabeth

Top 5 Highlights of 2023-2024

PASTORAL INSTALLATION

On March 9, 2024, First Baptist Church of Cranford/Elizabeth (FBCCE) installed The Rev. Dr. Malachy M. Williams, as our Senior Pastor. Dr. Williams has served at FBCCE since 2007, first as the Associate Minister of Worship & The Arts and later as an Assistant Pastor under The Rev. Dr. Diana L. Brown's pastorate. Upon Pastor Brown's retirement on December 31, 2022, Dr. Williams became our Transitional Pastor on January 1, 2023, until she was called as Senior Pastor, by unanimous vote, and began on January 1, 2024. We look forward to our mission and ministry.

FOOD PANTRY EXPANSION

In 2024, our Food Pantry distributed over 10,000 pounds of food, serving over 300 families throughout the year. This initiative exemplifies our commitment to feeding the hungry and supporting our community.

FRIENDS AND FAMILY FALL FESTIVAL& HOLIDAY FOOD DISTRIBUTION

In 2023 we began a Friend's and Family Fall Festival in conjunction with our holiday food distribution, and are excited to announce that in 2023 and 2024, combined, our efforts have served over 200 people from our community. The weekend's event features games, live music, food, fellowship, friends, and families. We are grateful for all our partners and for Boy Scout Troop 23 for their valiant efforts in collecting food donations, which brings joy to so many.

PARSONAGE RENOVATIONS

In October 2023 we were blessed to regain full access to our parsonage. Thank you for your support as we work towards creating a welcoming and comfortable environment that reflects our commitment to ministry. We look forward to sharing the completed renovations when the time comes. In the meantime, we are grateful for the hard work from our Trustees as well as the donations from members and friends who continue to make this project a reality.

NEW MEMBERS & NEW MINISTRY PARTNERS

In 2023 our Deacons led two 7-10 week New Members classes which resulted in two young men being baptized. In 2024 we opened our doors to a third congregation that needed space to worship which has resulted in a new ministry partner as well the renovation of our classrooms, upgrades to our media and a new chapel that was envisioned by our Senior Pastor.

Community Impact

FBCCE remains committed to serving our community through outreach. In addition to the Fall Festival's focus on food insecurities and our bi-weekly food pantry, our church has partnered with other churches that meet within our walls to impact our neighbors such as this year's Joint VBS and a night of worship and praise in various languages under the direction of Full Gospel Church.

Financial Overview

In 2024, our church's financial health continued to be a focus of concern. A 2025 budget plan was discussed in our church meeting on December 22, 2024. Also, a summary of the financial position was distributed at that meeting. (If you missed that meeting or would like an additional copy of that plan, please request your copy with our Trustee Ministry.)

As we reflect on this past year and move forward, we are deeply grateful for your generosity and steadfastness. We invite you to continue supporting the church through your tithes, offerings, and pledges made on Stewardship Sunday. Your contributions sustain our ministries, help those in need, and ensure that our house of worship remains a beautiful witness of God's glory in the City of Elizabeth.

Giving is an act of faith, and together, we can do even greater things for God's kingdom.

Thank you for your continued support. May God bless you abundantly.

Looking Ahead: 2025 Vision

As we move into 2025, our vision is to deepen our spiritual growth through commitment, community engagement, Christian courtesy, and education.

Our year's theme is, *"THRIVE: Living a Life that is Pleasing to God."*

Plans for the upcoming year include:

- A monthly focus on the practice of Spiritual Disciplines, maturing in discipleship and witness
 - Engaging in fellowship and outreach amongst ourselves and through ABCUSA/ABCNJ
 - Strengthening our Commitment to Child/Youth Development
 - Strengthening our Choir's Development
 - Bringing to light the rich historicity of our church for development, grants, and funding
 - Preparing Deacons for Ordination

We invite all members to join us in prayer as we seek to serve God in Christian excellence and welcome everyone to find a home at First Baptist Church of Cranford/Elizabeth.

Thank You from the Joint Board

Deacon Janet Wiafe, Diaconate Chairperson (2023-24)

I would like to express my sincere gratitude for allowing me to serve as a deacon of this ministry. Thank you for this opportunity. I will continue to serve as long as the Lord allows me to do.

Trustee Leola Baisden, Trustee Chairperson (2023-24)

Thank you for life, for First Baptist, and for my family. I am very grateful to serve my church family.

Deacon Chinwe Ononiwu, Christian Education Chairperson (2023-24)

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, I want to take this time to express my heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of you for your unwavering support of our Christian education ministry. Your prayers and generosity have enabled our ministry to provide a nurturing environment where our children can grow in faith and in the knowledge of God.

May we continue to glorify God together!

Trustee Stephanie Louis, Treasurer (2023-24)

As Trustee and Treasurer of First Baptist Church of Cranford/Elizabeth, I sincerely thank our congregation for your trust. It is not lost on me the major responsibility to help steward our church's resources to support God's work. Your faithful giving will help sustain our mission and strengthen our community. May we continue to grow in faith together.

Trustee Lin Tun, Financial Secretary (2023-24)

As the Financial Secretary for First Baptist Church Cranford/Elizabeth, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to the congregation for your continued support and trust. It has been a privilege to serve the church in this role since 2023, and I am deeply thankful for the opportunity to contribute to the financial stewardship of this wonderful community. May we continue to grow in faith and fellowship together.

Walking Deacon, Joyce Anne Judd (2024)

Being thankful is an act of gratitude. Recognizing the gifts of the heart, love for one another through Jesus and how we are blessed to have each other.

Acknowledgments

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to our church staff, volunteers, and members for their hard work, dedication, and passion for service. Your contributions, both large and small, make a profound difference in the lives of those around us.

Thank you for being a part of the First Baptist Church of Cranford/Elizabeth (FBCCE) family. We are so grateful for another year of service, faith, and growth as we THRIVE to the glory of God!

Contact Information:

First Baptist Church of Cranford/Elizabeth (FBCCE)

402 Union Ave

Elizabeth, NJ 07208

(908)352-0519 | FBCCE.ORG

firstbaptistchurchce@verizon.net

