



First Baptist Church of
Cranford/Elizabeth
**CORNERSTONE
CELEBRATION**

Sunday, September 14, 2025
11am

402 Union Avenue,
Elizabeth, NJ

Guest Preacher
Rev. Nicholas A. Johnson
First Baptist Peddie Memorial Church

As historically reported on in
The New York Times in 1870

FBCCE.ORG

Rev. Dr. Malachy M. Williams, Senior Pastor

1:33



The New York Times

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 1870

of prose.

Laying the Corner-Stone of the First Baptist Church, Elizabeth, N. J.

The Baptists of Elizabeth have laid the foundation of a very handsome church, on Union-avenue and Prince-street. The church edifice is to be one of the handsomest in the city. It is of brown stone and brick, and the estimated cost is from \$50,000 to \$60,000. The former place of worship was on West Jersey-street, and was too small to accommodate the congregation. The corner-stone was laid yesterday. The exercises were interesting, and a number of distinguished Baptist clergymen from a distance were present, and took part in the ceremony. The exercises took place at 11 o'clock. Rev. THOMAS GESSLER, the pastor, officiating. Rev. Dr. H. C. FISH, of Newark, delivered an able address, after which, with prayer and appropriate ceremonies, the stone was placed in position. Dr. JOHN DOWLING, also of Newark, then delivered an address, and was followed by Rev. H. M. GALLAGHER, of Brooklyn, who completed the exercises of the afternoon. In the evening, Rev. GEO. CLERK, of Balaton Spa, N. Y., former pastor of the church, preached a memorial sermon in the meeting-house which the Society now occupies on West Jersey-street. The exercises were of the most pleasant kind. About 1,500 persons were present at the new building, and the church, in the evening, was crowded. Enough money has been subscribed to complete the lecture-room, and to leave the entire church with but little debt.



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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First Baptist Church of Cranford/Elizabeth to Celebrate 155 Years on the Corner of Prince and Union

Elizabeth, NJ — On Sunday, September 14, 2025, at 11:00am, First Baptist Church of Cranford/Elizabeth (formerly First Baptist Church Elizabeth) will host a special Cornerstone Celebration at its historic location: 402 Union Avenue, Elizabeth, NJ. This special event marks 155 years of faithful presence and service on the corner of Prince Street and Union Avenue, a place where generations have gathered in worship, fellowship, and community since its foundation was laid in 1870.

The celebration will feature a special worship service with Guest Preacher Rev. Nicholas A. Johnson, of First Baptist Peddie Memorial Church in Newark, NJ, whose message will honor the legacy of the church and inspire hope for the future.

Founded in the spirit of welcome and rooted in the Gospel, First Baptist Church of Cranford/Elizabeth is a beacon of faith and hospitality in the city of Elizabeth. Established in 1843, our church has long been a home where faith and friendship meet. From Sunday worship to neighborhood outreach and community meals, the church continues to serve with joy and purpose.

“We’re grateful that the Lord has placed us here on this corner in this corner of His Kingdom,” said The Rev. Dr. Malachy M. Williams, Senior Pastor of First Baptist Church of Cranford/Elizabeth. “This Cornerstone Celebration is our way of commemorating the faithful stewardship of those we literally laid our building’s cornerstone 155 year ago, highlighting the beautiful documentation of that event by The New York Times in 1870, as well as honoring God’s faithfulness in allowing us to still be here to share His Good News from this hallowed space. We are excited to have everyone join us.” That said, the Cornerstone Celebration will also underscore how the corner of Prince and Union has been more than a location—it’s been a place of gathering, healing, transformation and togetherness.

All are welcome to attend. The service will be followed by light refreshments and opportunities to connect with members of the congregation and learn more about the church’s ongoing ministries.

Event Details:

- Cornerstone Celebration
- Sunday, September 14, 2025
- 11:00am
- First Baptist Church of Cranford/Elizabeth at 402 Union Avenue, Elizabeth, NJ

For more information, please visit FBCCE.org