



ANNUAL REPORT 2021

The FaithX Project

Email: info@faithx.net

Website: www.faithx.net



The FaithX Project, Inc.¹

Annual Report 2021

Continuing to Engage Opportunity in the Midst of Uncertainty

Overview

Little did we know when we launched The FaithX Project in late 2016 how prophetic would become our vision statement - “Helping Congregations Survive and Thrive in Challenging Times” - in such a short time. In 2021, the Coronavirus came back with third and fourth surges with at least two new variants, police killings of unarmed black people continue, albeit with justice be meted out in at least two cases. There was a violent and coordinated insurrection attempting to overturn the results of an election. Perhaps the most concerning to us, because all of what we do is based on data-grounded discernment and planning, were the continuing efforts of the former leader and his followers to call fact fiction and fiction fact.

“Helping congregations survive and thrive in challenging times”
- FaithX Vision Statement

Despite all these things, we remained true to our strategic model and continued vision-oriented, data-grounded, experimental, and nimble approach to our business. And because of this we continued to increase our visibility, improve our financial position, and grow our client base.

Our client base grew markedly during 2021 and our finances improved steadily despite a partial (and we believe wrongly decided) denial of forgiveness for our 2020 PPP loan (still under appeal with the SBA), though our 2021 PPP loan was fully forgiven. We started 2021 with over 80 clients and almost \$120,000 in revenue for the first time. By the end of 2021 our client base more than doubled again and ended 2021 with gross revenues of over \$135,000.

We foresee positive indicators for growth in 2022 and beyond.

¹ The FaithX Project is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization with a religious and educational purpose, providing resources, research, and consulting. The Rev. Ken Howard directs FaithX under an Extension of Ministry from the Episcopal Bishop of Washington.

Client Base Highlights

FaithX started 2021 with over 100 congregational clients and 16 judicatory clients in 3 denominations (or associations). Including our webinar attendees, we finished 2021 with over 500 congregational clients and 48 judicatories in 18 denominations, and are in preliminary discussions with other congregations, judicatories, denominations, and denomination-adjacent foundations. Also notable in 2021, we began to see self-referrals for the first time, starting at a pace of about one per month in September and increasing to two per week in late December.

Financial Highlights

Financially, FaithX did about as well as expected in 2021, considering the continued uncertainty in our external environment. Gross revenues were 80% of budget at \$135,166. Meanwhile, we were able to hold Gross Expenses to 82% of budget at \$123,728, leaving a -\$31,694 variance in Net Revenue. We are currently appealing an adverse (and we believe wrongful) PPP lender forgiveness ruling from 2020, which if rectified would have increased our Net Revenue to \$23,737, which would be 123% of budget.²

DESCRIPTION	BUDGET	ACTUAL	VARIANCE	% BUDGET
Gross Revenue	\$ 169,900	\$135,166	-\$34,733	80%
Expenses	\$ 150,900	\$123,729	-\$31,694	82%
Net Revenue	\$150,640	\$ 34,287	-\$26,910	59%
Net Plus PPP	\$ 0	\$23,737	\$4,777	123%

Notable Achievements

Congregational Vitality Assessment (CVA). continued and expanded our partnership with the Episcopal Church Foundation on the online CVA, which included the following achievements [\(click here for more information\)](#):

- **CVA Judicatory Platform:** Based on multiple requests for CVA users, developed a platform that allows dioceses, synods, districts, and other judicatories to administer the CVA directly to their congregations, add judicatory-specific questions, receive reports on their vitality and sustainability, and measure changes in their vitality and sustainability over time.
- **CVA en Español:** Also based on user demand, developed a Spanish language version of the CVA, and are prepared to add other languages as needed.

² Complete financials available on request

- **CVA Reports:** Developed enhanced reporting features for the CVA and the CVA Judicatory Platform, which we are continuing to add and refine.

Congregational Leadership Initiative (CLI). Further expanded our collaboration with ECF, which included providing NIMR and Mini-Consults as pre-work to congregations enrolled in their annual CLI programs.

Judicatory Vitality Assessment (late 2022-early 2023). In 2021, began the research necessary to develop a vitality and sustainability diagnostic tool for judicatories.

Neighborhood Missional Intelligence Report (NMIR). Released NMIR 2.0, with enhancements in design, ease-of-use, and available data (over 80 data-points) and updated Missional Context Reports. ([click here for more information](#))

Neighborhood Missional Assessment (NMA). Launched a new program to help congregations identify emerging missional opportunities and challenges in the neighborhoods they serve, making use of the NMIR and CVA. ([click here for more information](#))

Parochial School Vitality and Sustainability Assessment. Recently completed a groundbreaking multi-year project to develop and implement vitality and sustainability metrics for congregations and parochial schools (and the relationship between them) in the Catholic Archdiocese of Washington. These algorithms can be adapted for other judicatories with parochial schools.

Church Development Project (multi-year). Our work with the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland on a multi-year new church development in Urbana, Maryland has transformed to include the ELCA Delaware-Maryland Synod in a project to start a new Episcopal-Lutheran congregation. This effort is now in the discernment phase, with FaithX assisting the two judicatories in data-grounded discernment in preparation for new grant funding from The Episcopal Church. As part of this work, the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland requested our assistance in supporting the originally-planned mother church through a congregation-wide crisis.

Awards and Honors. Esri, the multinational data aggregating company informed us that FaithX will receive their 2022 High Impact Award and will be included in their annual MapBook in response to our work in mapping and mitigating systemic racism.

Partners and Affiliates

In addition to our ongoing affiliation with Datastory, FaithX has further expanded its collaborative relationships into new organizations and denominations. Our partnerships and affiliations now include:

- [Bexley-Seabury Seminary](#), with whom we have been collaborating in educational/training offerings and participating in the third round of a Lilly Grant they are seeking.
- [Datastory](#). This GIS firm provides us with the [MapDash for Faith Communities](#) demographic/analytic platform which enables much of our work. Our executive director also serves as a Subject Matter Expert (SME) on faith community resource development.
- [Episcopal Church Foundation \(ECF\)](#) and FaithX co-sponsored the [Congregational Vitality Assessment](#) and our webinars, are exploring expanded collaborative projects, including data-grounded discernment programs for leadership transition and capital campaign planning, and participating in the third round of their Lilly Grant.
- [The Episcopal Church](#). We are a preferred contractor for consulting and coaching in church planting and congregational redevelopment (Genesis 1 and Genesis 2, respectively).
- [Gathering of Leaders \(GOL\)](#) is a network focused on helping clergy develop practical and implementable leadership strategies while experiencing rest and renewal.
- [Socio-Historical Examination of Religion and Ministry \(SHERM Journal\)](#) is a free, nonprofit, peer-reviewed academic journal that publishes the latest social-scientific, historiographic, and ecclesiastic research on religious institutions and ministerial practices across cultural boundaries. SHERM is sponsored by FaithX but is editorially independent.
- [Trinity Wall Street](#) invited us to submit a grant proposal for a Small Congregation Vitality Improvement Project (VIP).
- [TryTank](#) is a nonprofit, seminary-sponsored incubator of experimental faith-based programs, sponsored by [Virginia Theological Seminary](#) and [General Theological Seminary](#). FaithX is currently managing an “Micro-Survey” project experiment for TryTank and the director of TryTank serves on the FaithX board.

Potential new denominational relationships we are currently exploring include: The [Presbyterian Foundation](#) and the [Presbyterian Church \(USA\)](#), the [Seventh Day Adventist Church](#), the [Cooperative Baptist Fellowship](#), and several others.

Looking Ahead

We anticipate that as the percentage of the population vaccinated increases, new Covid cases, hospitalizations, and deaths continue to drop, and congregations regain increased access to in-person worship, financial certainty will increase. We believe that the demand for data-grounded strategic missional planning services will increase as congregations and judicatories

seek to better understand how dramatically their neighborhood contexts have changed. We believe that our experience and exposure over the last year has positioned us well for the upcoming year.

Our Plans Include:

Strategic Marketing. We are currently exploring this with a marketing company ([Closer Consulting](#)) and two web designers on plans to expand and focus our marketing efforts.

Mapping Systemic Racism. We are increasing our focus and efforts on this important area and have developed consultative offerings for both judicatories and congregations.

Expanding and Diversifying Consulting Staff. If Trinity Wall Street approves our Small Congregation Vitality Improvement Project we will likely need to expand our consulting staff and will take that opportunity to continue to increase diversity to be more reflective of the communities we serve and to avail ourselves of their insights to reveal our cultural biases and blind spots.

In Summary

We look back with positive feelings about our accomplishments in 2021, both despite and because of the challenges of the Coronavirus pandemic and the missional opportunities it presented. By applying our own principles to ourselves we were able to discern the missional opportunities presented by the Coronavirus pandemic and respond with clear vision, data-grounded discernment, a readiness to experiment, and willingness to fail quickly and harvest the learnings.

The Rev. Ken Howard
Executive Director
February 1, 2022