Pastor Martin serves as president of The Pilgrim Baptist Ministers Conference, former 1st vice president of The Baptist Pastors Council of Cleveland,

By JAMES W. WADE III

Staff Reporter

Rev. General E. Martin never expected to be pastor of the Phillipi Baptist Church for 50 years but he truly believes the experience has been the highlight of his spiritual journey. On December 31, 2011, Martin preached his last sermon as pastor of the Phillipi Baptist Church.

The Philippi Missionary Baptist Church was organized by the Rev. General E. Martin who, in fact, has been pastor of this congregation since 1961. Martin, a former member of the Elizabeth Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio (the late Reverend Fred Hall, pastor) announced his calling to the ministry in 1952 (trial sermon).

He was licensed in 1953 and ordained in January 6, 1961.

In 1961, he stepped out on faith, following another vision given to him from God. Along with his wife, Mrs. Mozelle Martin (deceased 1997) his brother, Pastor Frazier Martin, sister, Mrs. Dorothy Mathis, sons, Jefferson and Wayne and nephews, William and Larry Martin, the Philippi Missionary Baptist Church
was born.

The first worship service was Sunday, February 5, 1961 and on that day God added fourteen (14) members to the church including his mother, Mrs. Elizabeth Martin, Brother Joseph and Sister Mary Ferguson, Brother Samuel Mathis, and Mother Bessie Oliver, along with others.

God has truly blessed Pastor Martin and this congregation. Based on part of the vision given to him that included the view of three (3) buildings, Philippi now in their third location on Corlett Avenue, has grown tremendously.

Led by Martin, the church marched in to their current location December of 1967. The once worn down and eyesore building was remodeled into a small yet beautiful house of worship dedicated to God.

As the congregation grew, Pastor Martin continued to trust God and in May of 1991 the church moved in to a new sanctuary attached to their old building. The church has and continues to serve as a haven to John Adams High School, the Corlett Street Club and entire community.

Philippi continues to grow spiritually and numerically. Every member, past and present, is an important link to this Bible-believing body of Christ.

As 1 Corinthians 12:12 states, “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ.”

Under Pastor Martin’s leadership, Philippi’s services include ministering to the young and young heart in addition to mission, prayer services, Bible study, children’s ministry, youth church, men’s ministry, dance ministry, choirs, feeding the homeless/misfortunate, tutoring and numerous other groups.

Over the years, Pastor Martin has licensed and ordained a host of deacons and ministers, including his son, Pastor Brien E. Martin of Woodstock, Georgia, his brother, Pastor Fraizer Martin of Cleveland, Ohio, and numerous others.

Rev. G. Martin, is fondly called “*the people’s pastor*.” You don’t have to be a member of Philippi to expect a visit or call from him. He is regularly seen throughout the community visiting the sick, shut-in, preaching, teaching, praying and witnessing to others about the goodness of God and His Son Christ Jesus.

He is very active in civic and community groups.

Pastor Martin serves as president of The Pilgrim Baptist Ministers Conference, former 1st vice president of The Baptist Pastors Council of Cleveland, a member of the Baptist Ministers Conference of Cleveland & Vicinity and the Progressive Baptist District Association, as well as senior advisor to numerous pastors and ministers throughout Cleveland and the nation.

Moody Bible College honored him Pastor of the Year in 1999. Many seek his wisdom given by God for their life journey.

Pastor Martin is currently married to Mrs. Marletta Adams Martin (August, 2003). He is the father of seven (4 boys, 3 girls), step-father of one, grandfather of fifteen, step-grandfather of three, great-grandfather of eight, step-great-grandfather of three, and spiritual father to

hundreds including other family members, friends, and all seeking hope in Christ Jesus.

Looking to the future, Martin said he doesn’t have any specific plans yet, but he will be available to assist in any area of the church. As for the future of the Phillipi, they will determine in the coming months who will be called as pastor to carry Phillipi on.