His prayers for The Allen Chapel Missionary Baptist Church Family are to strive together to bless God, and in doing so, experience Spiritual significance effectively, as God continues to bless each of them. He wishes to thank all guest clergy, family and friends for their attendance, prayers and support during this celebration.

By JAMES W. WADE III Staff Reporter Reverend Dr. Leon Thompson, former native Clevelander has returned to the City from Friendship Baptist Church, Warren, Ohio.

Reverend Doctor Thompson was installed as the new Pastor of Allen Chapel Missionary Baptist Church, Sunday, January 15, 2012. Guest Speakers for this occasion were The Reverend Richard T. Parker, Pastor of Gethsemane Baptist Church and Reverend Doctor John Twymon, Pastor of The Blessed Hope Baptist Church.

The installation ceremony for a pastor is important to the pastor and to the church. It is a way of passing the mantel from the old pastor to the new pastor. It is a way for the church to get behind the pastor and say, "we are going to follow your leadership." It is a time for the pastor to say, "I am going to love you and lead you."

This service is very important but, too often, it is handled as just another church chore to be done. The installation ceremony for a pastor is a time of celebration, a time for rejoicing, a time for reflecting and a time for starting fresh and new for both the pastor and the congergation.

A pastoral installation is one of the rich cultural paradigms found among most African American congregational churches. The ritual as practiced is a three-fold event: biblical, communal, and mystical. The Bible is central to the ethos of the ceremony. Many of the elements of the installation ceremony, i.e., consecration, prayer, scriptures, etc., are steeped in biblical lore.

Reverend Dr. Thompson is the son of Juanita & Cornelius Thompson. He is the husband of First Lady Terah Thompson, retired secretary of the Cleveland Public School District. He is also the father of two adult daughters, Tonaka Gill, (husband, DeShawn) and TaNeil Thompson. He and First Lady Terah are grandparents of two.

His home church is The Blessed Hope Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio led by The Reverend Doctor John Twymon, Pastor.

The Reverend Doctor Leon Thompson is a former graduate of East Technical High School. He has further enhanced and blessed his Religious Education with a Bachelor and Master of Arts degree from Ashland Theological Seminary. In the year 2002, he received a Doctorate of Philosophy degree from the Louisiana Baptist University's Theological Seminary.

His prayers for The Allen Chapel Missionary Baptist Church Family are to strive together to bless God, and in doing so, experience Spiritual significance effectively, as God continues to bless each of them. He wishes to thank all guest clergy, family and friends for their attendance, prayers and support during this celebration.