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Bethel AME Church in Champaign has new pastor

By The News-Gazette

CHAMPAIGN — The Rev. Gregory Wilson, who has been leading a church in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, is the new pastor at Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, 401 E. Park Ave., C.

He was assigned to the church by the Right Rev. Philip Cousin of Chicago, bishop of the 4th District of the AME Church.

Cousin sent the Rev. Charles Jackson, who had been at Bethel AME for six years, to St. John AME Church in Springfield.

Wilson served two Ontario churches — Grant AME in Toronto and Cousin AME, named for the bishop, in nearby Mississauga — before returning to the United States.

He previously was the pastor at churches in Kenosha, Wis., and four churches in Indiana. Wilson has been cited for increasing membership and church community influence, especially in Ontario and Kenosha; co-chairing a successful school referendum committee in Kenosha that resulted in construction of a new school in a minority area; starting new ministries within churches; and encouraging 12 students to join the ministry.

WILSON

He has served in the Army.

Wilson founded SabaytEnterprises, an organization that educates about African culture and African American heritage; and he organized EAGLES Vision Ministries, a prophetic ministry with an ecumenical base.

A native of Brooklyn, N.Y., Wilson has studied religion, social services, education and communication at colleges in Pennsylvania, New York, Maryland, Indiana, Florida and Georgia. He has a bachelor's degree from Lincoln University in Pennsylvania and a degree in church administration and management from the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta.

He is continuing his education at Trinity College of the Bible and Theological Seminary, Newburgh, Ind.

Wilson's wife, the Rev. Brenda Edmonds-Wilson, also is an ordained minister, and she has been director of social services for the Kenosha Salvation Army.

The Wilsons have two grown children, a daughter and son, who are active in the church.