

## The Rev. Philip K. Brockett

Rev. Phil is an experienced pastor who has effectively served four different congregations. A native of rural Ohio, he comes to us from his most recent position at Center Congregational Church, Meriden, CT, a UCC congregation where he has served as interim minister for 2 ½ years.

### **We are glad to present to you this brief biography:**

After graduating from North Park Theological Seminary in Chicago, Rev. Philip Brockett began his ministerial career in Lincoln, NE, as an associate pastor. From there he became a church planter for the Evangelical Covenant Church. Starting with a core group of 20 adults and children, he established a congregation which grew to 175 people in five and a half years.

From Colorado Rev. Brockett received a call to become Senior Pastor of Bethany Covenant Church in New Britain, CT. At the time, Bethany Covenant was a 100 year old declining congregation in a downtown setting. Over the years the congregation had struggled with revitalization and with the possibility of relocation but had failed to take any action. Rev. Brockett worked with the lay leaders of the congregation to develop an action plan for ministry that mapped out a vital vision for the future. Without land or building plans the congregation took the bold step of initiating its first capital campaign in over 25 years. That action proved to be crucial for the revitalization of the church, and that capital campaign became the first of six successive three-year campaigns which enabled the church to relocate, build a new building and expand its ministry.

In 2009 Phil resigned from his position because of the realization that his theology no longer fit within the beliefs of the Evangelical Covenant Church. "This was one of the hardest decisions of my life." Phil says. *"I felt that I was being called by God to stand up and speak up for a more inclusive faith no matter the cost to me personally."* In 2010 along with a young man from his church he launched a blog, "Coming Out Covenant" to advocate for a more open and affirming attitude toward the LGBT community. In 2013 Rev. Phil completed the two year process of transferring his ministerial credentials to the United Church of Christ. At his Ecclesiastical Council the comment was made that, "Rev. Brockett was part of the United Church of Christ and didn't know it." Rev. Phil added, *"For me the UCC has been exactly what it proclaims itself to be, 'a place of extravagant welcome', and a group of people who are 'United and Uniting.' At last I feel at home."*

Rev. Phil is known for his love for people, for his energetic and engaging preaching style, and his love for challenges. Over the course of his ministry he has been active both on a denominational and a local community level. He was selected to give the ordination sermon at the national Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Covenant Church. He has served on and chaired the Board of Church Growth for the Evangelical Covenant Church. Phil has also been an active member of Clergy Associations and served on the board of organizations serving the needs of the poor and homeless.

Rev. Phil is married to Olga Ljungholm. Originally from Moscow, Russia, Olga is a choral conductor, organist and pianist. Rev. Phil has three grown children: Gillian, who lives with her family in Austin, TX, Noel, who lives with his family in Washington, DC, and Hayden, who lives with his family here in New Orleans. Rev. Phil and Olga are also loving parents of 4 ½-year-old Natasha!