FREE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD TOUR AND LUNCH!!!

Tuesday, April 10, 2012, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Meeting at 10:15am at the first floor lobby of the Welcome Center.

Space is limited. RSVP required at http://www.wsuoiss.wayne.edu/undergroundrr/.

The Underground Railroad Tour
As one of the national forerunners in the Anti-slavery movement, the First Congregational Church of Detroit has a rich history in the Underground Railroad nationally. Locally, church records indicate it served as one of the Railroad Stations while located at Fort and Wayne Streets. The lower level of the Church features an Underground Railroad Tour in which visitors have an opportunity to re-enact the roles of escaping slaves.

The Underground Railroad Tour is a "storytelling" simulation of the original Underground Railroad which operated roughly between 1840 and 1863. Lasting approximately 30 minutes, the tour begins with participants having a "slave shackle" placed on their wrists, symbolizing their entry into slavery. Passing through the "Door of No Return" on Goree Island in Africa, they eventually enter a life of slavery in the Deep South on the Oak Alley Plantation in Louisiana.

As escaping slaves, they become "passengers" (called packages or freight) on the Underground Railroad. Led by an Underground Railroad conductor, they embark on a journey in which they hide out in a cave, cross over the Ohio "Deep River", take refuge in the safe house "station" belonging to Quaker Abolitionist Levi Coffin in Indiana, then move onto "Midnight", the code name for Detroit.

There they receive assistance in the basement of the First Congregational Church of Detroit at Fort and Wayne (now Washington Boulevard) streets, they pass the hotel barn of Abolitionist Seymour Finney, owner of Finney's Hotel, then onto a dock on the Detroit River, where they are met by the Riverboat Captain who removes their "shackles" and directs them across the River to their journey's end: Canada & freedom.