

An Invitation

Beloved Community Initiative's Underground Railroad Pilgrimage 2025

In the mid-1800s Iowa, a free state, experienced ramifications from systemic slavery practiced in the southern states, including Missouri. One ramification was some enslaved people attempting to make their way to freedom using routes through SE Iowa that lead to more northern cities and Canada. Networks of people dedicated to helping the freedom seekers formed, and some of these networks came to be called the “underground railroad”.

A pilgrimage is different than a tour.

“Pilgrimage is a spiritual exercise, an act of devotion to find a source of healing, or even to perform a penance. Always, it is a journey of risk and renewal. For a journey without challenge has no meaning; one without purpose has no soul.” -Phil Cousineau

This pilgrimage will explore circumstances and issues associated with the Underground Railroad and visit three sites on the “Network to Freedom”. Stories can help give a clearer picture of the practice of enslavement then; as well as now. While not an easy topic, one begins to appreciate the courage and commitment of the freedom seekers and abolitionists in Iowa's early history. We will share deep conversations and understandings as we open ourselves to Spirit, to the stories, and to the impact on our lives today.



Register: (There is room for 10 people on this pilgrimage)

Dates: Oct. 3-4, 2025

Registration deadline: Mon. Sept. 22, 2025

Online orientation: Tues. Sept. 23, 2025 7:00pm CT

To register and for more information, contact:

Ellen Bruckner ebruckner7@gmail.com 319-377-8795

General Schedule

Friday, Oct 3, 2025

8:30 am gather at New Song in Coralville

Travel to Salem and Keosauqua

Overnight in Keosauqua

Saturday, Oct 4, 2025

Travel to Bentonsport and Bonaparte

Home 3:00 pm

Costs : Pilgrimage fee: \$70— covers the gathering room, breakfast, honoraria and materials..

Participants pay for their own hotel room (about \$100+ at the Hotel Manning in Keosauqua www.hotelmanning.com); two lunches , one dinner and travel (tbd)

Sponsored by:

