



Union Baptist Church of Cincinnati  
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## Cincinnati Connections: Union Baptist Church of Cincinnati<sup>1</sup>

The [National Underground Railroad Freedom Center](#) serves as the caretaker for many artifacts that help tell the story of historical slavery and abolitionist efforts in America. A truly remarkable set of artifacts that the Freedom Center has the pleasure of caring for is a collection of hand-written church [records](#) from Union Baptist Church of Cincinnati, Ohio. The records date back to 1831, thirty-four years before the end of the Civil War.

[Union Baptist Church](#) was established on July 21, 1831, after fourteen members of the community came together to celebrate their religion in freedom. It was the first African American church in Cincinnati, Ohio. Union Baptist Church is historically recognized for outwardly opposing the institution of slavery and for their missionary work. Church members were devoted abolitionists, and as membership grew, the church hosted numerous abolitionist speakers including [Henry Ward Beecher](#), [Frederick Douglass](#) and [William Lloyd Garrison](#). During a time when many escaped slavery by crossing the Ohio River into Cincinnati, Union Baptist Church functioned as a sanctuary for those traveling on the Underground Railroad. Nearly 185 years after settling in Cincinnati, the church continues to serve as a beacon of community enlightenment and a model for social integrity.

Pages from the Union Baptist Church records are on display in the Freedom Center's [From Slavery to Freedom](#) exhibition. The documents on display are rotated monthly in an effort to preserve the aged archival material. During the month of December, museum visitors can see the hand-written meeting minutes from February 27, 1852 and a membership book dating to the 1900s.

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<sup>1</sup> Sisler, Cori. "Cincinnati Connections: Union Baptist Church of Cincinnati." *National Underground Railroad Freedom Center*. N.p., n.d. Web. 23 Mar. 2015.

*"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Matthew 28:18 – 20*

