

NEWS RELEASE - For Immediate Release

Event: Friday, May 6

Author Offers Insight on Colonial Celebrities

In First Friday Talk at Christ Church

Who were the two most famous people in the American colonies in the 1740s?

According to a recent book, they were a printer and a preacher—Ben Franklin and George Whitefield. The book’s author will talk about these two influential figures—and the friendship between them—at the historic Christ Church on Friday, May 6, at 7 p.m.

Randy Petersen has written dozens of books on historical, religious, and psychological themes. *The Printer and the Preacher* (Nelson Books) is his latest, exploring the profound impact of Franklin and Whitefield on the social and spiritual identity of the emerging nation. “Always the inventor, Franklin was creating new social structures in Philadelphia—a library, a fire company, a business council, and so on,” says Petersen. “The dynamic orator Whitefield was calling people to a personal religious experience that transcended the organized church. As Americans learned new ways of interacting with each other, and with God, seeds of national independence were taking root.”

Christ Church is a perfect venue for this conversation, because both Franklin and Whitefield had connections with it. There is even a plaque marking the pew where Ben’s family sat while attending services. As Old City opens its gallery doors for First Friday festivities, this 320-year-old church is hosting discussions about history.

Neil Ronk, senior guide and historian for the church, serves as moderator for this event, which will feature presentations from Petersen, responses by Ronk, and an informal question-and-answer time with the audience.

Christ Church is located at 20 N. American Street in Philadelphia.

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