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**Old North Church & Historic Site Re-Opens the 1715 Clough House
Nonprofit Launches Heritage Goods + Gifts Shop and Revives the Printing Office of Edes & Gill
Friday, April 15**

BOSTON – After closing during the COVID-19 pandemic, Old North Church & Historic Site is re-opening its doors to the 1715 Clough House, one of Boston’s oldest surviving brick residences. The former home to the nonprofit’s colonial chocolate program and rotating gallery space will now house Heritage Goods + Gifts, a new retail shop dedicated to New England artisans and small businesses, as well as a return of the Printing Office of Edes and Gill, a reproduction 18th century colonial print shop that will interpret the connections between newspapers, the printing business, the American Revolution, active citizenship, and the juxtaposition of liberty and enslavement in the colonial era led by longtime Print Master and Edes & Gill Founder Gary Gregory.

The Clough House is the building on the Unity Street side of Old North Church’s campus. It was built on pastureland around 1715 by Ebenezer Clough, who was the master brick mason of the church, to house his family before beginning work on the project. While it was originally constructed as an elegant home, this building has served many purposes over time: a single-family home, a tenement for many families, and a historic site. It has witnessed all the changes in the surrounding North End neighborhood over the past 300 years while it too continues to change to meet the needs of the community. The new retail space will feature New England-made products from BIPOC- and women-owned businesses and highlight the stories behind the makers and their products.

Recent research has been the catalyst for a new reckoning at Old North Church & Historic Site. To tell the story of the national landmark’s connections to human trafficking and enslavement, the Old North Foundation is offering new educational content and exhibits on the experiences of free and enslaved Black congregants. Printing demonstrations will further dialogue on how Old North Church reflects a complex shared American history and the nature of northern, urban enslavement in Boston.

“Like many historic sites in the Northeast, Old North Church sits at a paradoxical intersection of freedom and unfreedom,” says Nikki Stewart, Executive Director of the Old North Foundation. “To many, the steeple is an icon of American liberty and independence. Yet, the church was built in part with the proceeds of human trafficking and enslavement, which filled the coffers of early congregants. We have a responsibility to educate and empower conversations about the complexity of our nation’s past and the ways in which our history contributes to persistent inequity today.”

The Boston Gazette, a weekly newspaper established in 1755 by Benjamin Edes and John Gill, was a catalyst to the Sons of Liberty movement in Boston. The paper, often filled with propaganda by well-known revolutionaries like Samuel Adams, served as a mouthpiece for colonies igniting the American Revolution. Often overlooked in American history are the advertisements in newspapers for the sale of enslaved persons as well as the fact that Boston had the highest rate of literacy among enslaved people and several of the print shops, although primarily run by white men, were women owned. While printing technology has evolved, the printing press and news media have remained at the forefront of our beliefs, actions, and identity.

“There is a lot of misinformation out there about Patriots, the Revolution, the Constitution, and everything else,” says Gregory, 61, of Westborough, who left corporate America in 2003 to found “Lessons on Liberty,” a Freedom Trail walking tour company, before re-creating the Edes & Gill shop and learning the art of printing. “Media has a lot of capabilities, both good and bad. We want to educate people on how colonial printing sparked the Revolution and how media consumption continues to impact communities today.”



At the center of Gregory's interpretive experience in the Clough House is an 18th century reproduction wooden English common press. This was the newspaper press of the Revolution. Gregory reproduces historic documents of the Revolution utilizing 18th century printing methods and materials, hand setting the type one letter at a time.

Additionally, Edes & Gill has one of only two existing 18th century reproduction copperplate rolling presses in America. These presses were used by the likes of Paul Revere to print his infamous Boston Massacre print. Copperplate printing, also known as intaglio printing, uses a copper plate on which a design has been etched or engraved. Using colonial printing methods, Gregory recreates historic documents and prints, like the Declaration of Independence. Wearing a workman's cap, white linen shirt, neck stock, waste coat, breeches, stockings, leather shoes and an apron, visitors feel like they are transported back in time as discussion about the printing press inspires them to consider their own activism.

This summer, Old North Church & Historic Site will be open to visitors Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m and from 12:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday. Holiday hours may vary. Tickets will be offered at \$5 per person. Self-guided tours give an in-depth view of the building that once served wealthy merchants, government officials, and skilled tradesmen. Visitors can walk through box pews, admire the 17th century angels flanking the church's 1759 organ, and learn about the experiences of free and enslaved Black congregants. Tours of the crypt will be an additional \$5. All visitors must adhere to all CDC health and safety guidelines. For more information or to purchase tickets in advance, visit: www.oldnorth.com.

About The Old North Foundation of Boston / Old North Church & Historic Site

Established in 1991, The Old North Foundation of Boston is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that is responsible for historic site operations and interpretative, educational, and preservation programs at the iconic Old North Church & Historic Site. A secular organization that is independent of Christ Church in the City of Boston, the foundation welcomes approximately 500,000 visitors annually while overseeing the preservation of an enduring symbol of American independence. The Foundation serves a wide audience by creating meaningful experiences through educational outreach, site-specific programming, and historical analysis. The Old North Foundation works collaboratively with the City of Boston, the U.S National Park Service, the Freedom Trail Foundation, and other non-profits to foster educational and interpretive programs for students and visitors while engaging the public in Old North Church's history and its role in inspiring liberty and freedom. For more information, visit: www.oldnorth.com.

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