

## Samuel Morris Biography

- Bricklayer by trade
- Read writings by Martin Luther, John Bunyan, George Whitefield to neighbors who gathered at his house
- In lieu of attending St. Paul's Church, Morris' followers chose to listen to Morris speak
- The "readings" were often described as emotional; those in attendance would often cry and weep out loud
- Morris' followers soon outgrew his house, and another building was erected on his land for the purpose of meeting for prayer and readings
- Morris traveled throughout Virginia to read Whitefield's sermons to others
- He was ordered to appear before a Virginia court to explain why he chose not to follow the Anglican Church; Morris defended the group saying they were within the rights of the English Act of Toleration and quickly identified the dissenters as Lutherans
- Hearing Presbyterian William Robinson speak in 1743, the group realized that they were not Lutherans as previously declared, but Presbyterians
- Required to pay fines for not attending the established church and for holding unlawful meetings
- Morris and his followers invited Samuel Davies to minister to them