

KIRKIN' OF THE TARTANS CEREMONY GOES ONLINE AT ENSLOW PARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Even during these socially distanced times, Enslow Park Presbyterian Church in Huntington will celebrate its Scottish heritage in a safely distanced and meaningful way. The Kirkin' of the Tartans is an American tradition that celebrates the Scottish heritage of the Presbyterian Church.

On Sunday, October 25, at 11 a.m., the 17th annual Kirkin' of the Tartans worship service will begin with a processional of musicians, beadle, minister, liturgist, acolytes, and the tartans. As the church recognizes the threat of Covid-19, particularly in light of Cabell County's recently increased risk, mask wearing and social distancing will be enforced among participants and worship will not be held in person. Instead, the service will be on the church's [Facebook page](#) and [YouTube channel](#), where it will be livestreamed at 11 a.m. Sunday and available to watch anytime thereafter.

As bagpiper J.D. Lowman said, "It would be a shame to not have the service since the times now somewhat mirror what was going on back when the Kirkin' services were created because of the government restricting people congregating and worshiping."

Special music under the direction of Dr. John Campbell will include Scottish traditional music on bagpipe and drum: "Highland Cathedral" and "Ye Jacobites by Name." Sopranos Ann Harris and Hillary Ellison will sing "A

Scottish Blessing” and “I to the Hills Will Lift My Eyes” respectively.

After Bonnie Prince Charlie’s Scottish forces were defeated by the English at the Battle of Culloden in 1746, Scotland once again came under British rule. To control the Scots, an Act was passed that forbade the carrying of arms and the wearing of kilts or tartans, which represented Scottish heritage.

As the legend goes, this Act prompted the stubborn Scots to carry a bit of their tartan secretly as they went to the Kirk (church). The minister then slipped a blessing (a Kirkin’) into the service for the tartans.

The first Kirkin' in the U.S. was conducted during the early years of World War II by the late Dr. Peter Marshall, an eloquent Scot, Chaplain of the U.S. Senate, and a pastor. Central to its theme is the presentation of various tartans — through flags and the wearing of tartans — for a blessing.

This is a celebration of our rich heritage from the Scottish kirks (churches), where the piper would “Pipe the Kirk” and the Tartans (clans) would gather to worship.

Enslow Park Presbyterian Church is located at 1338 Enslow Blvd., Huntington, WV 25701. For more information, contact the church at 304- 523-9920 or eppc7@outlook.com or Pastor John Yeager at 304-360-1198 or yeagi@comcast.net.