



Pipes and drums after the 2023 service.

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Bagpipes and Fried Chicken

And it's all coming to First Presbyterian May 19

One could ask, "What does fried chicken have to do with bagpipes and Presbyterianism?" Well, actually, it's quite simple... the American tradition of fried chicken initially came to us from Scotland, as does the familiar Highland bagpipe and, of course, Presbyterianism. The Scots were adept at frying chicken in fat, providing a simple, yet succulent meal. This basic but rather bland dish came to America with Scottish immigrants in the 18th century. First there was General Oglethorpe and 200 Highland Scots who, in 1733, landed in Savannah to help create a barrier between English Georgia and Spanish Florida. Then, after the defeat of the Scots by the English at



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Pipes and drums at the 2023 Scottish Heritage Sunday Service at First Presbyterian Church of Greensboro..

the Battle of Culloden in 1745, a wave of Scots came to the American colonies. And they brought fried chicken with them. These Scots migrated to the mountainous frontiers of the Carolinas

and made their way into northern Georgia. But what made fried chicken a truly unique American dish were the West African culinary traditions that ultimately gave us the spicy, crispy,

and profoundly flavorful Southern fried chicken that we all know and love today. The Scots also brought Presbyterianism with them to America. It all started during the

Reformation with the Father of Presbyterianism, a Scotsman named John Knox. Forced into exile when England's Queen Mary reimposed Catholicism on the country, he spent several years in Geneva, Switzerland, where he studied with the likes of John Calvin. Returning to Scotland in 1559, John Knox established the Presbyterian Church in Edinburgh and was instrumental in creating one of the underpinnings of Presbyterianism...the Scots Confession. In 1560 the Scottish Parliament made Presbyterianism the official religion of Scotland. In this country, historical records indicate that the first gathering of Presbyterians in Greene County was in 1786. By 1820 the First Presbyterian Church of Greensboro was established.

Finally, why May 19th? On May 21, 1789, the First General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States was

held. Presbyterian Heritage Sunday is celebrated annually by the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. on the Sunday closest to May 21 to commemorate the First General Assembly held in Philadelphia. Some Presbyterian congregations choose to celebrate their Scottish heritage on that Sunday and this year marks the fourth celebration of Scottish Heritage Sunday here in Greensboro.

Attendees will witness the pageantry of bagpipes and drums during the processional, along with flags, honored guests, and a special banner with a sampling of Scottish tartans. That banner is a visible symbol of family during the Kirkin' of the Tartans portion of the service. The Kirkin' of the Tartans is a prayer or blessing given by the pastor for all families, whether or not their heritage has any Scottish connection. After the service all in attendance are invited to stay and enjoy more glorious bagpipe music, as well as some of that flavorful fried chicken. And this year we'll have a truly special addition to the festivities...a folk singer who will delight us with some traditional Scottish folk tunes. This promises to be a truly memorable event. So, come and join us at 11 a.m. on Sunday, May 19.

The First Presbyterian Church of Greensboro is located at 117 South Main Street in downtown Greensboro, next to the Post Office.

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