

## **Final Arrangements**

Under current restrictions I have struggled to think of the best way to finish. Back in April I decided to delay my retiral to Sunday 15 November, going beyond the October school holidays, the Communion date 1 November and Remembrance Sunday 8 November. Despite that extra five months, sadly we are no further forward with Covid 19 and consequently with the discussions and plans for the future of the Town Centre Churches. More positively, we have been able to use the church for the last five Sundays but with only a small number admitted to the actual church. It is clear that quite a lot of people would want to be at my 'last' Sunday service as was planned for in June, but today that means several gallons wanting to get into a pint pot! The decision, announced on Sunday past, 18 October, is that I will take three 'Last Sunday' services on 15/22/29 November. The basic theme will be much the same each week. Anyone wanting to be in the church will be required to book a place for one of those dates. You will not be allowed to attend more than one. This applies only to the sanctuary itself. The usual overspill to Coffee Bar and Large Hall to access the video link will be available on a first come, first served basis each week. This allows over 100 people to be part of the 'last' service in the sanctuary, albeit over three weeks and of course the Services will be broadcast in the usual way and will continue to be available on Youtube and the church website. Perhaps if/when we get on top of Covid, it might be possible to have a proper gathering in the church, with choir, band, a congregation in full voice and lots and lots of big warm hugs on the way out.

**All services are fully booked**

## **What happens next?**

Justin Taylor, minister of Abbotshall Church will be your Interim Moderator and there will be a growing together of the two congregations. There is a realism in both Congregations about this and a willingness to make necessary changes, eg time and place of worship, and much else besides. There is much to be gained in working positively together. Justin and I have a warm personal friendship and a lot in common. I could O c t o b e r 2020 not wish for a better person to guide and lead through the challenging times ahead. Justin and I have a mutual complaint one about the other, namely "Your timing is lousy!" - that is his arrival, my departure. We would love to have had several more years sharing ministry together. I have benefitted greatly from having him as friend and colleague and from the things we have already done together both in work and in personal time. He will be the 'go to person' for all church matters and pastoral concerns and I urge you to give him your support and commitment, to open your hearts to him as so many of you have done to me. Ken