

Address from Former Moderator

Very Rev Jimmy Simpson

Being one of the Church of Scotland's senior Moderators, can I just say senior in age and rather in ability or significance, but being a senior Moderator I have had the privilege for several years now to welcome the new Moderators to the Assembly on the Saturday and to lead them down the aisle to the Moderatorial chair.

On these occasions the Assembly has been packed. The Lord High Commissioner has been there. The... Nicola Sturgeon the senior minister has been there. Most of the former Moderators have been there also. So too have hundreds of ministers and elders from all over Scotland. It's an impressive occasion. The pageantry is magnificent. The singing is just absolutely glorious.

But, alas, not so this year Martin. The Coronavirus has unfortunately put an end to all this. Only a small number of people will be present for your induction as the new Moderator. There will be no pageantry, no singing, but I can assure you that the warmth of the welcome that the church extends to you is every bit as real as it has been in the past.

It is going to be very different for you and for your wife this coming year. Most of your contact with ministers, with elders for the next few weeks, that's going to be more virtual than real. But of this I'm certain: that the influence you exerted in Arbroath for 31 years is going to be felt in the church. People are going to remember you, they will remember your warm nature, your words. And all I can do, Martin, is to wish you all the very best for your journeyings.

God bless you and Elaine.