

## Ordinations and Inductions

There are surely a number of churches that had hoped to induct new elders in the coming weeks. There may also be places where ministers are due to be inducted or CRCWs commissioned.



Here is some advice about procedure, which applies in the current straitened circumstances. The advice below presumes that the person concerned has already been elected by the appropriate council of the Church (and that any necessary checks have been duly done), so that only the inaugural service has to be fulfilled.

When an ordination is involved only the first option below is possible. It is the act of ordination that puts the person into the role. So it cannot be dispensed with; but it can be done very simply.

**You conduct the formal parts of the event – primarily Nature, Faith and Order and the appropriate schedule to the Basis of Union (B in the case of elders) – in the presence of a small number of officers of the responsible council of the Church (e.g. minister and church secretary when new elders are involved). This could, if need be, be done by video link: not everyone would need to be in the same space. It does indeed count as an act of the Church, and as a proper inauguration of the new role.**

A larger service of affirmation could follow, if you want this, when times are better; but it would not be formally necessary.

With an induction of someone already ordained, there is a second option. The person is already in role, and election by a council of the Church has moved their service in that role to a new setting. An induction service affirms the move; it does not affect it. You have a choice: you could do the above; or you could do the following.

**You delay the inaugural service for some months, until we are meeting as churches again, and then conduct it as you normally would. In the meantime, it is still valid for the person to do the job, and if it is a paid job, they can be paid for it.**

The paragraphs above also apply to the commissioning of a new CRCW (1 above would be necessary) and the induction of a CRCW who moves to a new ministry (either 1 or 2 is possible).

Local circumstances and public health advice may determine how (or even whether) you proceed. But if we do gather, even briefly and in small numbers, let us be careful with and for one another.

*John Proctor, March 2020*