



Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest

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Guidance on Virtual Officer Ordination/Installation During Gathering Limitations

From the Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest Stated Clerk

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Since I assume that your church is doing worship virtually, it does make it difficult to respond to vows – for the officers and for the congregation. Short of having a congregational worship service via Zoom, where everyone could respond, I think it is necessary to be pragmatic in this situation and release the new officers for ministry before they are formally ordained and installed. You could wait to do the ordination/installation until we are released to gather again.

The new officers could also begin to meet with the continuing Session or Deacon members, even though they would not be technically allowed to vote. You could also consider having your Session vote to keep the outgoing elders in place to participate in formal decisions until the new officers can be installed. This might avoid any more significant protocol concerns. Letting the new elders and deacons be deployed wherever appropriate makes sense to me.

I realize these are difficult challenges to navigate and the above may stretch the intention of our polity. But in the EPC, I trust that, given the circumstances, we can be a bit pragmatic and still be faithful.