

A statement by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

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Together with the Archbishop of York, in consultation with the Bishop of London, and after conversation with the House of Bishops, I have put forward new arrangements for the consecration of bishops.

These new arrangements are made in the light of the pandemic and in awareness of the sad reality that not all in the Church of England agree on issues of ordination, and yet all are committed to upholding the Five Guiding Principles.

We have agreed that the Metropolitan will normally ask another bishop to be the chief consecrator. Three bishops are required to consecrate a person as bishop. From now on the Archbishops will ask three bishops to lay on hands with other bishops present and associating with the ordination but not in fact laying on their hands.

St Swithun's Day (15 July 2020) will see two consecration services happening under the new arrangements in Lambeth Palace Chapel. They will be held under careful guidelines because of the Coronavirus pandemic, with strict limits on the numbers attending.

I will be at both consecrations. As Metropolitan, I will receive the oaths from all three people to be ordained bishop showing jurisdiction over them. Having received the oaths I will then lead all present in a prayer of penitence given our divisions and the sadness that we go on being divided as a church.

I will preach at both services and the Bishop of London (Sarah Mullally), as Dean of the Province of Canterbury, will welcome the new bishops at both services.

I will also give each bishop their symbols of office - a ring, cross and staff and pronounce the blessing at the end of both services.

We are not stepping back under these new arrangements, rather we are stepping forward to work within the Five Guiding Principles and we invite all to walk with us to embrace those principles and pray for an end to the divisions which remain in our church, for which we grieve and are repentant.

Hugh Nelson and Ruth Bushyager will be consecrated by the Bishop of London assisted by the Bishop of Guildford and the Bishop of Dover.

Will Hazlewood will be consecrated by the Bishop of Richborough assisted by the Bishop of Ebbsfleet and The Bishop of Fulham.

It is unfortunate that during the pandemic it is not possible to hold the services in a Cathedral as normal so many friends and family will not be able to be present. The services are both going to be live streamed.

I am delighted to be with all three bishops as they begin their ministry. Please pray for them and for the dioceses in which they will serve.

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