

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 5, 2019
INDIGENOUS STUDIES INNOVATOR/EDUCATOR
TO KEYNOTE CHANCELLOR'S DINNER

Due to an emerging priority representing the Haisla Nation Chief Councilor Crystal Smith, the original speaker for VST's annual Chancellor's Dinner will not be available this year.

VST is honoured to confirm that The Rev. Dr. Raymond Aldred will be this year's keynote speaker at the 2019 Chancellor's Dinner.

Dr. Aldred is the director of the Indigenous Studies Program at the Vancouver School of Theology whose mission is to partner with the Indigenous Church around theological education.

Raymond is also the leader of The Teaching House That Moves Around (THTMA), an internationally recognized initiative that addresses the need for truth, reconciliation and healing among indigenous peoples, and to foster greater understanding for all societies. The THTMA involves intensive on-site with indigenous communities across North America, from Hawaii to the Pacific Northwest in the USA, and across Canada's provinces and territories. Launching of the THTMA initiative came as a result of a \$400,000 grant secured by Dr. Aldred and VST from the Henry Luce Foundation, a leading funding source for innovative approaches to theological education.

An integral component of the Indigenous Studies Program at VST is the commitment to help develop indigenous clergy and leaders, for indigenous communities, and done primarily by indigenous theological experts. Each year under Dr. Aldred's leadership, VST hosts the Indigenous Summer School, drawing faculty and participants for intensive dialogue and training on prevailing issues, and leading towards formal academic accreditation, as well as providing insightful professional and continuing education.

Dr. Aldred will speak on the findings arising from these initiatives, and the way forward with theological education as a bridge to community development and healthier nations.

Dr. Aldred is ordained with the Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada. His teaching and research specialization in narrative and systematic theology within the indigenous context. He is a frequent presenter and speaker, guest lecturer and writer.

He is status Cree. Born in Northern Alberta, he now resides with his wife in Richmond, British Columbia, Canada. Formerly Ray served as the Assistant Professor of Theology at Ambrose Seminary in Calgary, Alberta. He is former Director for the First Nations Alliance Churches of Canada, now a committee member, where he works to encourage Indigenous churches. He is the chairperson of Indigenous Pathways. Ray also has had the privilege of addressing several college conferences and meetings. Ray's passion is to help as many as possible hear the gospel in their heart language.

Ray and his wife, Elaine are also involved in ministry to help train people to facilitate support groups for people who have suffered abuse. Also, Elaine and Ray have coordinated Marriage Encounter. Ray and Elaine have four children, Jenny, who has graduated from the University

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of Regina and the Alliance University College, a school teach is married and lives in Richmond, British Columbia, Canada; Raymond, who is pursuing a PhD in Philosophy at McGill University; Catherine, has earned an MA in Religions Studies at McGill University, and is a translation coordinator with Canadian Bible Society; and Rueben who works in the Oil Field in Northern Alberta.

About VST

VST's primary mandate is to educate and form thoughtful, engaged and generous Christian leaders for the church in the 21st century. Among theological schools, VST is viewed as a change agent and an innovator for the church.

As an affiliated college of the University of British Columbia, VST is now ranked 39th globally and in the top 10 of most improved theological schools. The Vancouver School of Theology welcomes students from many Christian communions, other faith traditions and Indigenous communities, while celebrating its core relationships with the Anglican Church of Canada, Presbyterian Church in Canada and United Church of Canada. The Indigenous Studies Program at VST is central to the school's identity and commitments.

The 2019 VST Chancellor's Dinner will be held on Wednesday, September 25 at the UBC Golf and Country Club. This event provides support to VST students and is especially an important source of support for Indigenous Studies at VST. Please contact VST for tickets. Tickets are \$200 per person or \$2,000 for tables of ten. A portion of this fee is eligible for a charitable receipt. Contact 604.822.6315 or eong@vst.edu.

The Vancouver School of Theology acknowledge that the land on which they are located is the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam) People.

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