

For Immediate Release: June 8th, 2020

REV. DR. RAY ALDRED APPOINTED INTERIM DEAN

INDIGENOUS LEADER, TEACHER, RESEARCHER TO PROVIDE ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP

VANCOUVER, BC, June 8, 2020. VST is honoured to announce that The Rev. Dr. Ray Aldred has been appointed Interim Dean for the 2020-21 academic year. This appointment commences on July 1, 2020 and will continue June 30, 2021 when a permanent appointment will take effect.

Dr. Aldred succeeds, the Rev. Dr. Patricia Dutcher-Walls who retires after 17 years of faithful service as VST Dean and faculty member.

Dr. Aldred is also the director of the **Indigenous Studies Program (ISP)** at the Vancouver School of Theology whose mission is to partner with the Indigenous Church around theological education. Ray also leads **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. During this interim period, the THTMA will continue with the organizational support of ISP team members Hubert Barton (Nisga'a) and Catalina Parra. Under Dr. Aldred's leadership, VST annually 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. The Summer School will also be offered virtually this year through distance delivery.

Recently, Dr. Aldred collaborated with VST faculty member, Rabbi Dr. Laura Duhan-Kaplan to author *The Spirit of Reconciliation*, a multi-faith resource, and a joint project of The Canadian Race Relations Foundation and The Vancouver School of Theology.

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

Ray is Cree, Treaty 8 born in Northern Alberta and 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. 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 of



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Regina and the Alliance University College, a school teacher 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 Rueben who works in the Oil Field in Northern Alberta.

About VST

The Vancouver School of Theology's primary mandate is to educate and form thoughtful, engaged, and generous Christian leaders for the church in the 21st century. Among theological schools in North America, 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 in the top 50 globally, placing it among the top 10% of all theological schools. VST is also in the top 10 of the most improved theological schools. VST was also recently recognized by InTrust Magazine as one of six theological schools making bold transformative moves to engage the radically changing academic environment.

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, the Presbyterian Church in Canada, and the United Church of Canada.

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

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