

For Immediate Release: March 20, 2022

## **VST APPOINTS NEW ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ANGLICAN FORMATION AND STUDIES**

**VANCOUVER, BC. March 20, 2022.** The Vancouver School of Theology is pleased to announce the appointment of The Reverend Canon Dr. Rob James as Associate Professor of Anglican Formation and Studies, effective July 1st, 2022.

The Rev. Dr. James will succeed The Very Reverend Dr. Peter Elliott, Interim Director of Anglican Formation, and The Reverend Elizabeth Ruder-Celiz, Associate Anglican Formation Director. These appointments have been in service since January 1, 2022, following the retirement of The Reverend Grant Rodgers, effective December 31, 2021 after 7 years of faithful service. VST is grateful for the outstanding leadership Peter, Elizabeth and Grant provided to the school.

### **About The Reverend Canon Dr. Rob James**

Rob comes to VST from Wells Cathedral in Somerset, in the southwest of the UK, where he has been the Canon Chancellor since 2019. Before going to Wells, Rob was the Vicar of a three-parish benefice in the Diocese of Gloucester. He was ordained Deacon in 2005 and Priest in 2006. As well as his Church of England career he spent some time working for the UK government on security matters, whilst undertaking unpaid duties for the Church. Alongside his work for Church and State, he has usually been involved in teaching theology to undergraduates and to those training for ordination.



Rob holds six degrees from five universities, including a PhD from the University of London on the use of Scripture in Anglicanism. Unusually for a priest, he also holds an MLitt in Terrorism Studies from St. Andrews. He has broad academic interests, having published on biblical interpretation in Anglicanism, biblical interpretation in African Christianity, Islamist terrorism and, most recently, New Testament studies. His book *The Spiral Gospel: Intratextuality in the Gospel of Luke* is to be published soon by James Clarke Publishers. He is currently working on another article on the Gospel of Luke and on an article on religious authority in the work of William Prynne, a seventeenth century Puritan.

Rob says that he has always enjoyed his experiences of the Canadian Church when he has visited the country for holidays or for work, and that he is looking forward to getting to know it better. He is also looking forward to learning from Indigenous Anglicans and from other indigenous people more widely. Rob has been an admirer of VST for some years and hopes to contribute as best he can to the thoughtful, engaged and generous theological explorations of the school.

Rob is married to Jean, a High School Mathematics teacher by profession, with a keen interest in conservation volunteering and youth and children's work. They are both looking forward to living in Canada.

We are excited about this new appointment, and grateful to the broad VST community for their participation in the search. Dr. James is a welcome addition to the faculty of VST and his professional and pastoral experience will be a source of great strength for the formation of Anglican students for ministry. This is a splendid and strong appointment.

*Richard Topping, President & Vice-Chancellor*

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### About VST

VST's core 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 in the top 50 schools globally and in the top 10 of most improved theological schools. In 2020 VST was identified by In Trust Magazine as instituting bold transformative change for the renewal of theological education. Most recently, VST was the recipient of a prestigious Pathways for Tomorrow grant from the Lilly Endowment to help redefine theological field education. VST is accredited by the Government of British Columbia, and in North America by ATS (Association of 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 Vancouver School of Theology celebrates its 50th Anniversary (2021) as a leader in theological education.

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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