



Vancouver School of Theology

Signposts for our Life Together

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“We will mark our way to God with signposts – and not be lost.” (Anon., 5th C.)

VST is an educational community in the historic tradition of the Anglican and United Churches of Canada, in affiliation with the Presbyterian Church in Canada. As a Christian institution, we honour the traditions from which we come.

As an institution committed to an affirmation of the value of diversity and inclusivity, we also recognize that the faith journeys which animate us are particular and diverse. We honour this diversity in our intellectual, communal, and worship lives.

Sitting beside the historic work of VST is the new work of Iona Pacific: inter-religious centre for social action, research and contemplative practice. With this work, we welcome partners from a wide variety of religious traditions, as we face into the challenges of life in today’s world.

The signposts which follow hold our intention to live together as well as we can, knowing that we struggle as fragile creatures held in our brokenness by grace which is beyond all understanding. As a community nurtured, illumined, and set free by God’s Spirit, we respond in gratitude and commit ourselves to our Signposts as a means of expressing the abundance of God’s love.

Guidelines for Communal Engagement

- *We will live with integrity;*
- *We will model and embrace direct and intentional communication; we will speak to the issue without personalizing; we will not demonize the other; “love is the recognition that something beside yourself really exists”;*
- *We will embody political realism along with forgiveness; we will check things out; we will be charitable; we will assume the best of each others’ motives and actions;*
- *We will hold each other accountable and give respectful feedback;*
- *We will recognize the contribution of each and be intentional in our expression of gratitude and appreciation;*
- *We will put conflict on the table and address it as an opportunity for creative transformation;*
- *We will own our own feelings about something;*

- *We will set boundaries and respect those of others; we will avoid the quicksand of over-involvement;*
- *We will bring a sense of humour and a spirit of playfulness to our life together;*
- *We will engage the world and feed faith communities – let our passion from here work in and for the transformation of local& global communities;*
- *We will be clear about the call to die – honest about what has to die; we affirm that dying and living are painful but necessary parts of each other;*
- *We will practise communal and personal discernment in our speaking, listening & keeping silent;*
- *When it is time for closure we will call it and move on to the next important work;*



VST's Faith Commitments as a Teaching Learning Community

- * **VST holds Christ as central; our passionate commitment to the living Christ sustains us in all that we do.**
- * **We will entrust ourselves to God who calls us to common mission for the world, though the way is often unclear.**
- * **Worship will lie at the heart of our community; we honour and respect diversity in our prayer and ritual.**
- * **VST affirms that God reveals Godself in the diversity of religious traditions recognized in and by the global human community. We honour the wisdom and practices of those of other traditions, as welcome companions to our movement more deeply into God's intention for this world.**