



praxis

News from Hartford Seminary • April 2011 • Vol. XXIII • No. 1

Marston Speight, 86, Passes Away



The Rev. Dr. R. **Marston Speight**, M.A. '63 and Ph.D. '70, one of the nation's best-known experts in Christian-Muslim relations, died January 19 at his home in Cromwell, CT. He was 86.

Dr. Speight was chosen as Hartford Seminary's Distinguished Alumnus for 2002 due to his lifetime of

work in Muslim-Christian relations. He was a native of Texas, graduated from Baylor University and completed his formal studies at Hartford Seminary with an M.A. in 1963 and a Ph.D. in the history of religions in 1970.

Dr. Speight was a director for the Office on Christian-Muslim Relations of the National Council of Churches from 1979 to 1992, serving as co-director until 1988 and thereafter working as the director. In this role, he facilitated many encounters of Christians with persons and groups in the Muslim community in the United States, including facilitation of conversations in this country under the

auspices of the World Council of Churches.

Dr. Speight taught several times at Hartford Seminary in recent years. For many years he was a member of the editorial board for the *Muslim World*, a Hartford Seminary publication that is a world-renowned scholarly journal, which reaches subscribers in more than 60 countries.

He wrote and translated many books, including "God Is One: The Way of Islam – Second Edition" (2002) which has been republished by Friendship Press with a new afterword prepared by the faculty of Hartford Seminary and its Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim relations. This section

adds information on Muslims in North America and on present-day issues and developments in Islam worldwide.

Steven Blackburn, Hartford Seminary Librarian, said of Dr. Speight, "Part of Marston will always be with us at the Library, since his generosity surrounds us in the many, many volumes he donated. But more important is the friendship and loving concern that Marston showed his many students, colleagues, and friends at the Macdonald Center and beyond. He will be sorely missed."

There was a service of death and resurrection on Saturday, Jan. 29 at the First United Methodist Church in Middletown, CT. ❀