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Mabry's "Spiritual Guidance Across Religions: A Sourcebook for Spiritual Directors and Other Professionals Providing Counsel to People of Differing Faith Traditions" (Book Review)

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Is this book of value to readers who are not preachers? The answer to that question is “Yes,” because the author introduces a fine selection of literature, worthwhile for the person who may have limited time to read, and the “Selected Reading List” is useful. The book is recommended for academic libraries whose collections include books on preaching, or other books by Cornelius Plantinga. Of course, librarians can assist preachers in starting or developing their reading programs.

Spiritual Guidance Across Religions: A Sourcebook for Spiritual Directors and Other Professionals Providing Counsel to People of Differing Faith Traditions,

edited by John R. Mabry. Woodstock, VT: SkyLight Paths Publishing, 2014.
384 pp. \$50.00. ISBN 9781594735462

Reviewed by Elizabeth Pearson, Library Director, Montreat College, Montreat, NC

Spiritual directors are increasingly seeing people from diverse faith traditions in this day of interfaith ministry. In working with clients from different traditions, spiritual directors need to be prepared to offer effective guidance even though they may not have been formally trained outside of their own faith. More people and people of more varied backgrounds are now seeking spiritual direction. John Mabry is a United Church of Christ minister, adjunct faculty in the pastoral ministry program at Santa Clara University, and director of the interfaith spiritual direction certificate program at the Chaplaincy Institute in Berkeley, California. In this book, he has compiled information on world faith traditions from twenty-seven contributors as a professional resource to help those whose work involves providing spiritual direction to people from a wide variety of faiths.

The scope of the book reflects our religiously plural world, with each chapter devoted to a different faith tradition as well as independent approaches to spirituality. Included are chapters on Evangelical Christians, Roman Catholics, Mormonism, Judaism, Muslims, Buddhism, Daoism, Confucianism, Jainism, Sikhism, Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, Unitarian Universalism, Baha'i, Native American religions, Shinto, Neo-Paganism, New Thought, humanism and eclectic spiritualities. Each contributor is a spiritual guidance professional whose credentials are noted at the beginning of the section contributed. The brief, introductory chapters provide an overview of each faith and its basic beliefs, methods of spiritual guidance within that faith, and tips on offering spiritual guidance to clients from those traditions. Discussion includes practical advice for the spiritual guide on common spiritual issues experienced by clients. Many of the chapters conclude with brief notes and lists of additional resources. The book is written with North American readers in mind, and points out important cultural differences between Eastern and Western practices.

This book can serve as a starting point for spiritual directors who are committed to learning about and ministering to people whose values and cultural traditions are different from their own. While the emphasis of the book is not on Christian faith and practice, it does offer useful and timely information on other faiths for Christians. The book is directed to spiritual guides who identify with a particular faith tradition but plan to serve people of a variety of traditions and to spiritual guides who draw on a variety of religions and philosophies to form their own spirituality.

This book will be of interest to spiritual directors and helping professionals who will have opportunities to encounter and assist clients from diverse backgrounds and faiths. For readers looking for a focus on Christian spiritual direction, *Spiritual Direction and the Care of Souls* by Gary W. Moon and David G. Benner, would be a useful resource.

Teaching the Way of Jesus: Educating Christians for Faithful Living,

by Jack L. Seymour. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2014. 201 pp. \$29.99.

ISBN 9781462765056.

*Reviewed by Carmon Annetta Thomas, Assistant Public Services Librarian,
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Drawing on his personal story, historic events, and education research, Seymour, a professor of religious education at Garrett-Evangelical Theological seminary describes various teaching models (p. 162), thus serving the purpose of an introductory textbook. Seymour's primary thesis is: "the message of the good news makes a difference" (p. 23); it forms a useful apologetic for Christian education. Successfully building on scholarly educational research as evidenced by his extensive bibliography, Seymour constructs applicable "processes" (p. 66) for the Christian educational setting. The list of proficiencies Seymour presents (pp. 40-41) hold value for any who desire to "seek first the kingdom of God" (Matthew 6:33). Examples of Seymour's very pointed questions include:

- "How do we help people connect with God's presence and call?" (p. 171)
- "How do we affirm a living God?" (p. 174)
- "How are schools teaching the ways religious people think about their faith and public meanings and engage public life?" (p. 178)

Seymour's questions alone make his work worth reading.