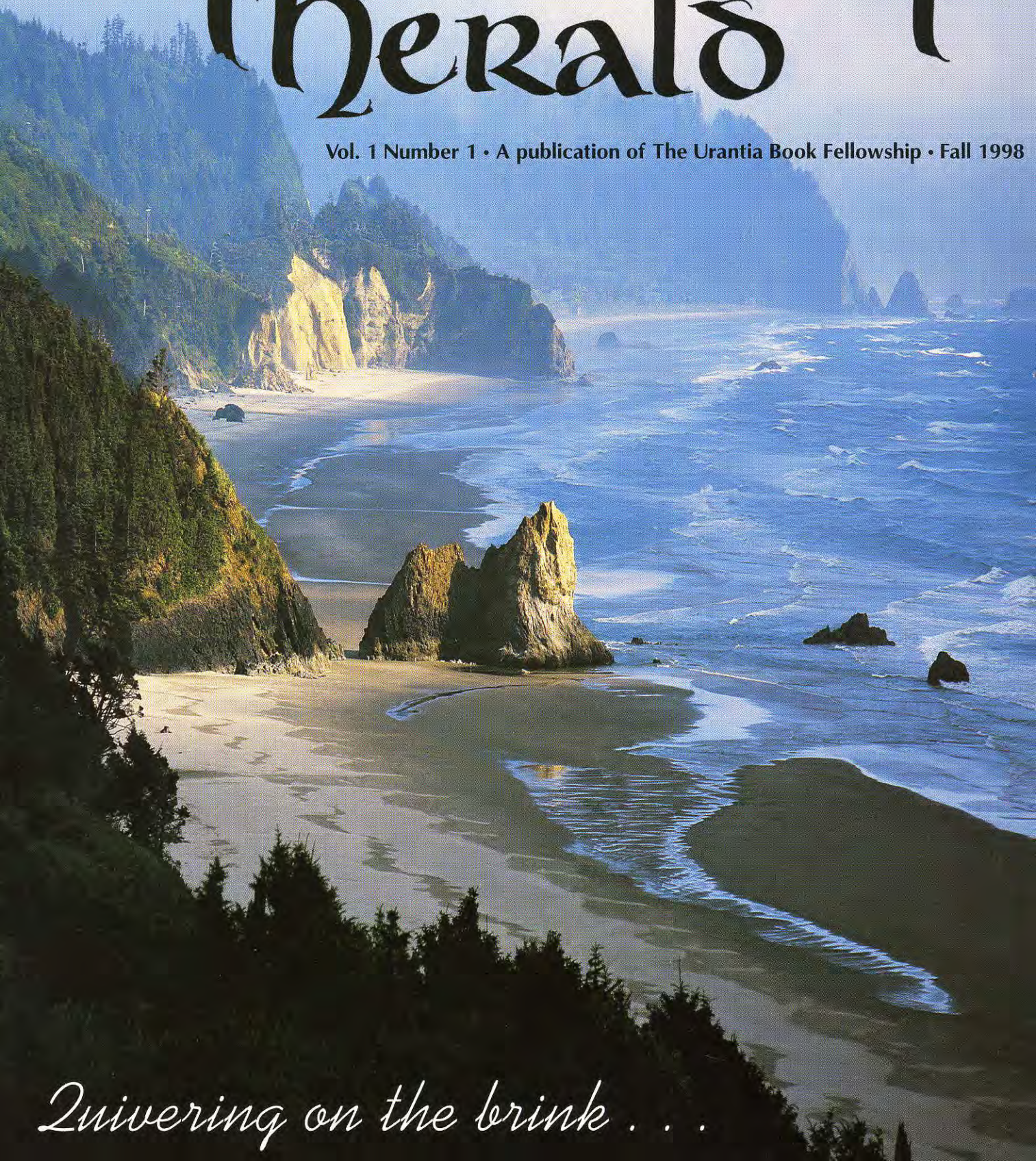


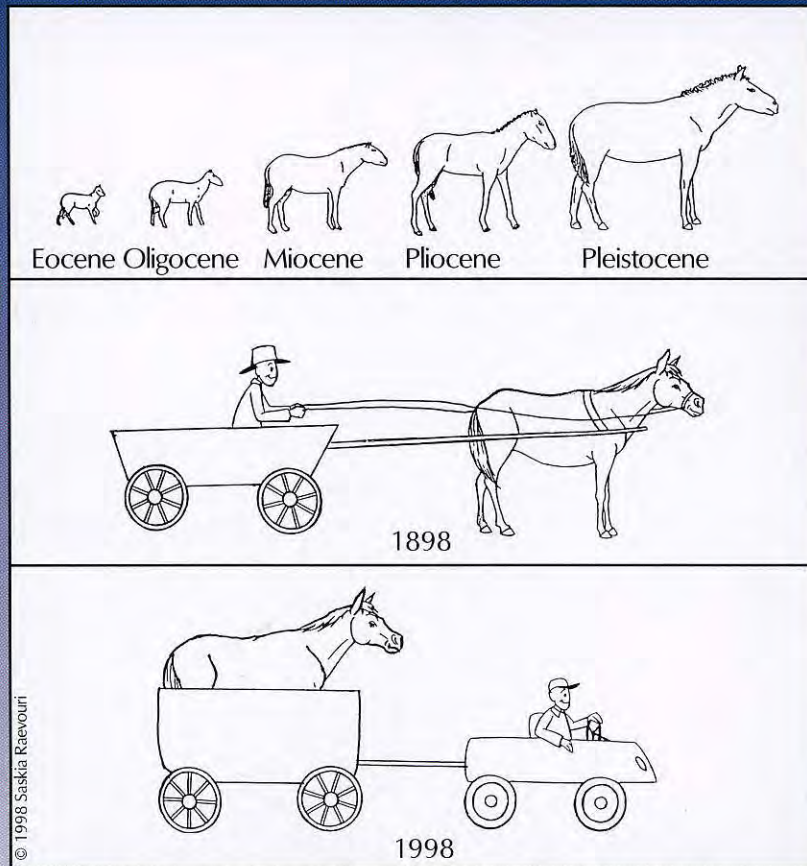
the Fellowship Herald

Vol. 1 Number 1 • A publication of The Urantia Book Fellowship • Fall 1998



Quivering on the brink . . .

EVOLUTION OF THE HORSE



"The horse, an outstanding example of evolution..." P. 695

"As Urantia is entering the so-called "horseless age," you should pause to consider what this animal meant to your ancestors. Men first used horses for food, then for travel, and later in agriculture and war. The horse has long served mankind and has played an important part in the development of human civilization." (P. 697)

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On the Brink of The Most Amazing and Enthralling Epoch

by Carolyn Kendall

The following article is based largely on the recollections of Carolyn Kendall, a member of the Forum from 1951 -1956. Others familiar with the events described below, may recollect things differently. Readers are invited to comment or to add their own recollections of these events by writing to The Fellowship Herald.

AS THE TURN OF THE MILLENNIUM APPROACHES, THE prospect of a new era of spiritual seeking looms ever greater. The Twentieth Century marked a dark and frequently bloody chapter in the march of human progress toward the promised age of light and life. Other centuries have experienced war, violence and cultural turmoil, but "our" wars and upheavals invaded our lives via communications and entertainment media. We would surmise that civilized men and women are thoroughly sick of it, and long for a better state of existence on their native planet.

The Urantia Book declares that we are about to realize that dream. "*Urantia is now quivering on the very brink of one of its most amazing and enthralling epochs of social readjustment, moral quickening, and spiritual enlightenment.*" (P. 2082)

It has been about 72 years since the Urantia Papers were initiated, 63 years since they were completed and 43 years since the book was published.

In April 1955, William S. Sadler, Jr. presented to the Forum a paper he had prepared to guide the work of the recently established Urantia Brotherhood. He drew upon material he, and they, believed were revelator admonitions concerning the timing of the revelation, the world's future readiness for it, and what believers were to be doing in the meantime. The purported instructions were recast to appear to have been authored by Sadler and "certain members of the General Council" for the edification of future leaders. However, the eloquence of the piece is surpassed only by the soaring passages of the book itself, and betrays an other-than-human origin.

Bill Sadler's paper highlighted the revelators' propensity for arriving well ahead of the world's readiness for mass acceptance, writing, "The book belongs to the era immediately to follow the conclusion of the present ideological struggle. That will be the day when men will be willing to seek truth and righteousness." ... "a time when it will be more readily possible to formulate

the cosmos of a new and improved era of human relationships. And it is for this better order of affairs on earth that the book has been made ready." Every revelation of the past came at the optimal time, *vis a vis*, the estimation of the planet's future evolution.

Next, Sadler stressed what must be done in the time intervening between publication of the book and the world's readiness for it, which followed the pattern laid out by earlier revelations. "The book is being given to those who are ready for it long before the day of its worldwide mission. Thousands of study groups must be brought into existence... An early publication of the book has been provided so that it can be in hand for the training of leaders and teachers." His paper then stressed the importance of engaging "the attention of persons of means who may be thus led to provide funds for translations into other languages. The book must be translated into many tongues. Thus will the book be in readiness to comfort and enlighten the peoples of many languages when the battle for man's liberty is finally won and the world is once more made safe for the religion of Jesus and the freedom of mankind."

The Forum was inspired by these words, but also overwhelmed. In partial response to these injunctions, the Brotherhood School was launched in Chicago. It was a highly successful enterprise for several years until the supply of potential students was exhausted locally. At first, translations and study groups were not high priorities; they were more concerned with spreading the word that a new revelation had arrived - though not too publicly.

What has happened these past 43 years? This first issue of *The Fellowship Herald* is the story of how *The Urantia Book* and its teachings have been disseminated by thousands of dedicated men and women, each of whom had awakened to its sublime message of soul-saving truth. You will find tales of selflessness, courage, missionary zeal and economic sacrifice by those who advanced some phase of the revelation. There were worthy projects that didn't pan out, but which had to be tried for the experience. There were small and great programs, trials and errors. Only now could we write a handbook, *How to Run a Revelation*. And now, 43 years later, we're almost ready for the "ready time". ♦

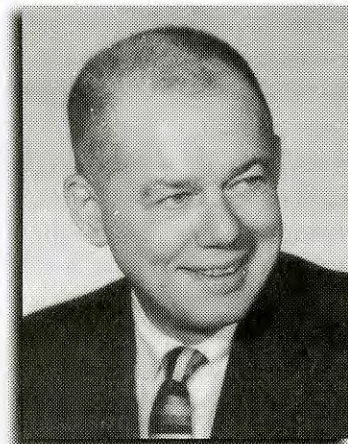
The Wait Was Over

ON THE EVE OF PUBLICATION IN 1955, BILL SADLER, FIRST President of Urantia Brotherhood (now called The Urantia Book Fellowship), was asked how many Urantia Societies he envisioned ten years hence. He said, "Oh, not less than a hundred thousand." Was he serious? Probably not. But he observed the pent up energy of Forum members who had waited between five and twenty-seven years to escape the confines of secrecy surrounding the new revelation.

Wasn't this what the world needed? The long nightmare of World War II had ended in 1945. The Korean conflict was over. The revelators foresaw the eventual downfall of Communism, one of the "greatest dangers to the teachings of Jesus" since his bestowal, and gave their approval for an "early publication of the book"... "long before the day of its worldwide mission." But most Forum members didn't hear that last part; they set out on October 12th with their 1,700 prepaid copies of *The Urantia Book* to enlighten the world. They

were expecting a sensational reaction to the news that a new revelation had appeared. They were like Simon Peter who, immediately after the ordination, rashly announced, "We are ready—let us now go forth to take the kingdom." (P. 1579)

Bill suggested that rather than making the same mis-



Photograph furnished by David Kantor

Bill Sadler, 1962

takes the apostles and early Christians made, we should strive to "make some new and original mistakes." Sadler had the grace not to repeat Jesus' caution to Peter: "May your wisdom equal your zeal and your courage atone for your ignorance." (*Ibid.*) ♦

Publicity vs. Person to Person Introduction

AS PUBLICATION APPROACHED IN 1955, THE DOMESTIC Extension Committee devised a plan to advertise the book. They would offer serial rights to Life magazine and place token ads in book sections of major U.S. newspapers. They planned to send gift books to famous per-

sonalities in hopes of obtaining testimonials. The reaction of elected leaders of the Brotherhood was overwhelmingly negative. Instead, the Executive Committee urged quiet dissemination "where it would do the most good, so that gradually, without the use of 20th Century publicity campaigns, the world would become aware of its existence." The long-standing preferred way to share the book has been by means of person to person introduction, and despite periodic efforts to inaugurate publicity campaigns, none of the Urantia organizations has reversed the original plan. The General Council passed a resolution in 1983 reaffirming the use of personal methods of ministry, while avoiding mass media means of dissemination.

Writing in 1983, Meredith Sprunger, former Brotherhood President summed up the publicity issue: "The main reason for not using publicity is not because the Executive Committee or General Council passed a resolution, but because mass media will not work.... If we placed more emphasis on the various specifics of actualizing the Big Three (establishing study groups, training teachers and leaders and funding translations), we would have fewer problems with people wanting to use mass media publicity."

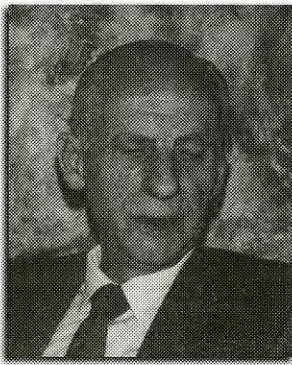
Sometimes one doesn't have to try very hard to interest another person in the book. A Tennessee man told of his unquenchable thirst for truth. After acquiring a bachelor's degree, a masters, a doctorate, and still searching, he prayed for revelation. Within a week an acquaintance introduced him to *The Urantia Book*.

But others have encountered rejection from those who mean the most to them, as Dennis Neuman of Redwood City, CA, so poignantly recounted in a recent letter to the Fellowship: "My father had a strong religious faith that was unshakable, but it also did not allow for any questioning. When I tried to discuss *The Urantia Book* with my parents, my mother left the room. My father listened for a while and then said, 'You have your beliefs, and we have ours.' End of conversation. He was a man who did not question, nor allow questions. He was not introspective about his beliefs."

One young woman of the '60s, critical of the policy of not advertising the book, demanded, "Why did I have to hear about the book from a hippie named 'Bugs'?" The rejoinder to which was, "Well, you did hear about the book, didn't you?" ♦

The Spiritual Approach

HENRY BEGEMANN, DUTCH TRANSLATOR AND EUROPEAN Field Representative in the 1970s and '80s, always emphasized the "spiritual teachings" over the factual in-



Henry Begemann
Chicago, 1980

formation in the book when leading study groups.

Speaking at conferences, Vern Grimsley often said that if you button the top button of your shirt properly you will then be able to button all the others correctly; if you get across the truth of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of all men

and women, everything else falls into place.

At the end of his three-year term as president, William Sadler, Jr., wrote in 1958: "God is the only true

end. Our primary spiritual loyalty and dedication is to the Universal Father, and to him alone. When we encounter some spiritually hungry brother, our first objective is to bring him closer to his spiritual Father. This we may attempt with, or without, the book." ... "The book itself is not an end—it is a most important means to an end. It is designed to bring God closer to man and to bring man closer to God. We may minister to our spiritually hungry brothers with or without the aid of *The Urantia Book*. But, if the book ever becomes mandatory in our ministry, then have we truly become sectarian." ... "Neither is the Brotherhood, nor membership in it, a true end." ... "The Brotherhood is designed to promote the book and the book is designed to bring God and man closer to each other." ♦

THE DESIRE TO SHARE IS THE FIRST CONSEQUENCE OF THE PROCESS OF SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION. THE LOVE OF God is stirring within us. The thrill of God cannot be contained. Our cup is overflowing. And deep within us there is a powerful need to share the wonder and richness of this discovery with everyone who will listen. The world will never be the same again. All things are becoming new. And we know that the transforming power of these teachings is the hope of the world.

This is where the sharing starts. I think there are at least two levels of sharing. We can share at the level of *fact* and we can share at the level of *truth*. At the intellectual level, the level of *fact*, we share by what we say. At the factual or intellectual level we exchange facts and information. We might say something like, "Did you know that the Bible refers to God as *Father* 233 times?" Or, any number of magnificent passages from *The Urantia Book*.

But let us not ever confuse sharing at the intellectual level with the deeper and more profound level, which is the level of inspiration, the sharing of truth. This is the level at which we share not by what we say, but rather by what we do. Or what we are willing to do. This is the level of living example. This is the spiritual level of sharing.

At the spiritual level, the first thing we can share is the actual believing of a major revelation of truth.

The second thing we can share at the level of truth is our willingness to base our entire life plan on these teachings, and should it ever become necessary, to defend them to the death.

The third thing we can share is our faith. A faith that has driven all fear out of our being. A faith that shows by our actions, not merely by our words, that we really trust God.

The fourth thing we can share is our determination to practice the presence of God in our life during every waking hour, not as an external authority looking down in judgment, but rather as a partner in destiny who at every single moment is capable of connecting us with infinity, if we will but let Him.

Only when the actual love of God is flowing through us, reaching out, touching the lives of others, are we sharing the living reality of the great truths we have come to comprehend.

Our mission of uplifting all of the institutions of human society and all of the religions of the world must be conceived as an active and positive mission. We are the yeast of the Fifth Epochal Revelation.

And let us never forget that leavening means uplifting, not arguing. Jesus never argued. And like Jesus let us always focus on the best and ignore the rest. And by this means we will never compromise our beliefs.



Paul Snider, Chicago, 1976

Photograph by Ronald Dobranski

The Urantian Religionist

(The author, Paul Snider, was President of Urantia Brotherhood from 1973 to 1976. The following is a portion of a presentation given at a conference of Urantia Book readers in Atlanta, GA, May 20, 1983.)

WHEN OFFERING *THE URANTIA BOOK* TO NEW PEOPLE DO YOU GET ANXIOUS WITH THE THOUGHT OF: MISREPRESENTING the book through word choice, faulty memory or personal biases? Condensing the book in the course of a conversation or even a twenty minute presentation? A mass approach? Pressuring nonreaders to become readers? That your prospects are afraid of a long term commitment?

Our response to those fears are straight forward. We don't misrepresent the book because we let the people get it straight from the book itself. Our introduction consists of a series of meetings. Our people are contacted personally and the meetings are never more than eight people. Our goal is simply to help them become familiar with the book. We are not counting on creating lifelong readers. Finally, our guests need not be concerned that they are signing their lives away because we make it very clear that the series lasts for three sessions, then it's over. We resist all temptation to ask them to continue. To keep coming, they will have to ask.

We start by writing a personal letter to our prospects. Our best success has come when we arrange a meeting time and hand-deliver the letter.

In the letter we are up front with what the book claims to be: "Its authors present *The Urantia Book* as their fifth major revelation to our planet."

We list the reasons why we think this person's personal characteristics or habits lead us to think they would be interested in reading the book. Characteristics include curiosity, courage, confidence in one's thinking, tolerance, and their set of values. We also prime them for some hard to swallow ideas.

Few of the ideas, we tell them, are all that radical, i.e., we are not the only beings in the universe, there are other inhabited planets, angels are no myth, death does not magically confer instant perfection, and there is a long road of progressive perfection attainment before us. We explain the necessity of having three sessions by citing one or more examples depending on the interests of the prospects: "You wouldn't think of introducing someone to the complexities of bridge or of cabinet making in a single session." They are assured that there will be no homework.

We leave a book with them and promise to call in a few days. This relieves the pressure for an instant answer and makes their final response more thoughtful and committed. It has been our experience that we have been put in limbo when we asked them to call us.

The topics for the sessions are: God, Jesus, Religion, Planetary Helpers, Science, Lost History and the Mortal Career. These vary according to the group's interest. We've selected about ten pages of reading for each subject selected. During the sessions we employ the staid "read from the book approach." We like to let the book speak for itself rather than be interpreted through our biases. We answer their questions as we read. Often, their questions lead to other selections in the book.

Our motivation is to make as many people familiar with *The Urantia Book* as possible. There are fearful and intolerant people who intentionally attempt to discredit the book. Our goal is to create a community of people who can respond to the rumormongers with, "Oh yeah, I know the book, and it's not the evil thing you're making it out to be." We don't desire converts, albeit that may be a natural outcome. We won't proselytize (to induce to convert), but we will evangelize (to share with zealous joy).

(For a free copy of Bob and Vicki Arkens' program plan, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to the Fellowship)

Introduction to a Group

A systematic, practical and nonthreatening guide for introducing the book to a small group of acquaintances was developed by Bob and Vicki Arkens, Wausau, WI.

Pamphlets, Brochures and Handouts

THE VERY FIRST PAMPHLET HAVING MATERIAL DERIVED FROM the Urantia Papers was "The Evolution of the Soul" by Dr. William S. Sadler, a reprint of a lecture he gave in 1941 in Lansing, Michigan. According to oral tradition, he was accorded permission by the revelators to use quotations without attribution. It was published by

the William F. Ayers Foundation, and was available to Forum members thirteen years before publication of the book. After 50 years out of print, the pamphlet was republished by Jesusonian Foundation, Boulder, CO, in 1990.

The Brotherhood early recognized that it would

be impossible to get a foot in the door with new people without some type of brochure. There was apprehension, however, about the potential for producing a tract that may, in the words of the former Foundation Trustee Emma “Christy” Christensen, “cheapen the book.”



Photograph by Laura Kendall

E.L. “Christy” Christensen, Chicago, 1978

A conservative route was taken. The first brochure, published in 1956 was “Excerpts from *The Urantia Book*,” which contained nothing but many soaring quotations from the book. Next

came “A Description of *The Urantia Book*,” containing a brief review of each part of the book and a list of the papers. For years, the Foundation and the Brotherhood jointly resisted efforts by individuals or groups to produce brochures, insisting that the book should speak for itself.

With subsequent moderation of that policy, a brochure blizzard occurred. Hundreds of pamphlets and tracts, designed to intrigue and entreat prospective readers, appeared. Prominent among the producers of these materials have been the Jesusonian Foundation, Family of God Foundation, the Asoka Foundation and the Christian Fellowship.

After *La Cosmogonie D’Urantia*, the French translation of *The Urantia Book*, was published in 1962, Jacques Weiss, the translator, was, for several years, the leading force in France. He tried every possible means to interest the famous, the powerful and the lowly into looking at the revelation. In 1966 he attended a UNESCO symposium of leading world scientists and professors in Paris. Huxley, Oppenheimer, and others spoke, many concluding that there was necessity for a cosmology, but nobody had one to offer. On the last day of the conference, Weiss, a scientist, who had attended many of the sessions, quietly placed 100 copies of his leaflet describing the book near the cloak room. They were eagerly snapped up in two or three minutes.

Currently, brochures directed at new or potential readers fall into two categories: about the book and about the organizations. The Foundation distributes book-related folders: *Selected Excerpts*, *A Description*, and *A Guide to Pronunciation of Names and Words*. The Fellowship sends out a page describing the book, one about the origin, a booklet, *A Summary of Textual Changes*

Made in The Urantia Book, a pronunciation guide, and *The Fellowship*, a tri-fold leaflet that briefly describes the organization. Other tracts are available through Good Cheer Press, Jesusonian Foundation’s distribution source. ♦

Newsletters

THE NUMBER OF MOVEMENT NEWSLETTERS HAS DECREASED in recent years. At one point nearly everyone with a word processor was publishing a newsletter. All were directed toward fellow readers—preaching to the choir, so to speak. One was different—*The Spiritual Fellowship Journal*, published since 1982 by The Christian Fellowship of Students of *The Urantia Book*, edited by Meredith Sprunger. As originally conceived, it was directed toward the Christian clergy to further awareness of the book and its teachings. Last year, however, it shifted direction and now publishes quality articles aimed at *Urantia Book* readers. ♦

Library Books

THE YEAR AFTER THE BOOK WAS PUBLISHED, THE DOMESTIC Extension Committee mailed 50 books to public libraries in major cities of the United States. The Foreign Extension (now International Fellowship) Committee sent 100 books to libraries in English-speaking parts of the British Commonwealth. Library gift book placement has been an ongoing program of the Brotherhood/Fellowship, local societies, the International Urantia Association (IUA, Urantia Foundation-affiliated outreach organization) and study groups.

The success of library placement as a means of dissemination is hard to gauge, but some anecdotes suggest that the approach has borne some fruit. One reader claims that the book *found him* while he was hunting for something to read in his local library. A *Urantia Book* fell off a shelf onto his head!

During the 1970s, rumors had been heard that Urantia Books were being stolen from many libraries. Consequently, one library is reported to have chained its copy to a stand and others have been made available only upon request. While larceny as a means of acquiring knowledge of the Fifth Epochal Revelation is not something we would endorse, we can only hope that the thieves have mended their ways as a result of reading the books they stole. ♦

“If you would be an ordained teacher, you must let others bury the dead while you go forth to publish the good news.” (P. 1801)

"The Dalamatia library, destroyed soon after the Calagastia disaffection, comprised more than two million separate records and was known as the 'house of Fad.'" (P. 746)

"After the first survey of [Alexandria's] chief attractions...Jesus and Ganid went to the library, the greatest in the world. Here were assembled nearly a million manuscripts from all the civilized world: Greece, Rome, Palestine, Parthia, India, China, and even Japan. In this library Ganid saw the largest collection of Indian literature in all the world;..." (P. 1432) "[In Rome Jesus] spent much time in Palatine hill, where were located the emperor's residence, the temple of Apollo, and the Greek and Latin libraries." (P. 1455)

"These primary supernaphim who are inherently in possession of universe knowledge are also responsible for its organization and classification. In constituting themselves the living reference library of the universe of universes, they have classified knowledge into seven grand orders, each having about one million subdivisions." (P. 302)

ONE USUALLY DOESN'T ASSOCIATE AN INDEX WITH THE IDEA OF PROMOTING THE BOOK IT REFERENCES. *THE Concordex* was a different matter. Ordinarily, an index consists of a few pages at the back of a non-fiction book. Since an exhaustive index for *The Urantia Book* would have doubled the size of an already formidable tome, Urantia Foundation announced in 1956 that an index would be prepared and published separately. Several individuals worked on it, but with each new index, previous work had to be redone to maintain consistency.

Clyde Bedell watched all of these false starts with growing impatience. He set about to provide readers with a study aid to help them find favorite references. *Clyde Bedell's Personal List of References* was published in 1966. But very soon he envisioned an index that would

do more—it could be an enticement to browsers in bookstores and libraries to seek out *The Urantia Book* and to locate intriguing passages.



Photograph by Laura Kendall

Clyde Bedell, 1982

The Concordex

Clyde Bedell "saw an index combined with personal commentary as the perfect companion to *The Urantia Book*, with the first 43 pages serving as an introduction to the book."

His enlarged book was renamed *The Concordex to The Urantia Book* and included an impressive group of testimonials—all longtime readers. He saw an index combined with personal commentary as the perfect companion to *The Urantia Book*, with the first 43 pages serving as an introduction to the book.

Clyde implored the Foundation and Brotherhood to inform all purchasers of the existence of *The Concordex*, and that all bookstores be notified.

Many years of heated correspondence with headquarters ensued and continued until his death in 1985. *The Concordex* is still available as a low-priced handy helper for those who cannot afford the Foundation's pricier hard cover Index nor utilize a computer version.

Prisons

EVIDENCE OF HOW DEEPLY *THE URANTIA BOOK* CAN affect the lives of prisoners came in 1976 from a man who had just been released after serving two years in prison in Havana, Cuba. He was a Dutch national who

had been employed by an airline, when he and his wife, a Cuban native, were arrested and jailed as political prisoners. A fellow prisoner, an American who knew of the book, arranged to acquire a copy, although Bibles

were prohibited. Eventually 50 people became interested in the book, and the single copy was being read in groups of five or six men 24 hours a day. Bilingual prisoners translated for those who only understood Spanish.

A number of readers first heard of the book while serving time, either from other prisoners or finding the book in the prison library. As a personal possession, the book has even been used as a medium of exchange. One ex-prisoner reported that *The Urantia Book* had been bartered for two cartons of cigarettes.

Regret for the circumstances that brought them to prison emerges over and over in letters. One woman wrote from her cell, "Not having known of the book before I messed up my life, I am the poorer for it." One man wrote in 1974: "The experiences of life do serve as lessons, and most assuredly we are under the loving and divine watchcare of the Father in heaven. Had it not been for this prison term I may not have ever come

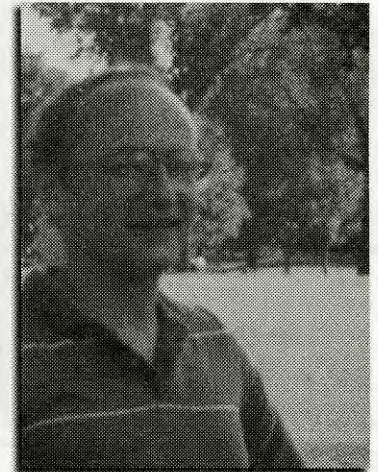
into contact with *The Urantia Book*. The teachings have given me a true purpose in living, and I have overcome any desire I ever had for drugs."

Northwest Urantia Association has sponsored an ongoing Prison Project since March 1997. Director, Liz Engstom reported in Urantia Foundation's *URANTIAN NEWS* that a book has been placed in every federal prison in the U.S. Their goal is to place a book in every state prison in the country, and in prisons in "countries into whose languages the book has been translated." ♦

"John had a lonely and somewhat bitter experience in prison...He was often tempted to doubt Jesus and his divine mission. ... For more than a year and a half this rugged man of God's outdoors languished in that despicable prison. And this experience was a great test of John's faith in, and loyalty to Jesus. Indeed, this experience was a great test of John's faith even in God." (P. 1506-7)

THE TRAVELS OF VINCENT MYERS IN 1985 AND 1986 CONFOUND EVEN THE MOST ADVENTUROUS *URANTIA Book* promoter. He embarked upon a drive (literally) to bring free library books to out-of-the-way locations in Canada and to the northeastern seaboard states, the upper Midwest and plains states of the United States. Starting out in November 1985 from his home in Worcester, MA with a promise from Urantia Foundation of free books if he could get commitments from librarians to accept them, he sallied forth. At that time there were about 10,300 known books in Canada (6,000 English and 4,300 French); with a population of 24 million, "that's one book for every 2,400 people—a real 'quivering on the brink' amount."

In Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and New Foundland, with a combined population of 2,100,000, there were no books. Vin arranged to have 93 books sent—the population was "religious and literate—they were ripe for the harvest!" In Northern Quebec Province where the book had been on a Ban List, he arranged for 140 library books to serve a population of 6 million. In far north Quebec, at the center of the Cree Indian Reservation, they wanted four books to be flown in on Cree Air to their colonies in Hudson Bay. They are "well educated and their nights are long—they do lots of reading."



Vincent Myers, Chicago, 1988

20,000 Miles, 1,600 Urantia Books for Canadian and Northern US Libraries, or "How I spent my

Why push books in Canada? "They are ready for it and they have fewer distractions than we do in the U.S. Canada is a lot like us but without the extremes." He "blitzed" western Ontario with 40 books. Saskatchewan got 15 books and all towns he visited in Manitoba wanted

books. In many libraries the contact person had heard of the book or had even read parts of it. Only one library refused his offer. His mission to libraries was accomplished in three successive trips, and ended by late May 1986. He arrived home with an empty gas tank and one nickel, but enriched by enough memories to last a lifetime.

Vin Myers, now living in Novato, CA, reminds us that there are still thousands of libraries that don't have the book. "There are 350,000 libraries in Russia where books could be placed."

Sending Unsolicited Books

The DOMESTIC EXTENSION COMMITTEE IN 1956 SENT 30 unsolicited books to influential writers, political and religious leaders. A few were returned immediately, and one or two sent notes of acknowledgment, but overall there was no response. That was when reality kicked in and they realized it was best if a personal relationship existed before endeavoring to interest a celebrity or prominent leader.

Photocopies of Paper 72, "Government on a Neighboring Planet" were sent by a reader to Congressional leaders and other world political luminaries in 1975. A Foundation Trustee who was acquainted with the White House Chief of Staff, one of the recipients,

called to determine its disposition. He was told that the White House receives so much unsolicited material they can't review, they destroy it within a few days.

One long time reader has sent a gift book and letter to every President of The United States since Eisenhower. A staff member usually acknowledges receipt of the book, although it is unknown whether any Leader of the Free World has ever read it. ♦

"Ganid, the man was not hungry for truth...the eyes of his mind were not open to receive light for the soul. ... If we could have him live with us, we might by our lives show him the Father in heaven, and thus would he become so attracted that [he would] inquire about our Father." (P. 1466)

THE BOOK HAS BOTH FAVORABLE AND UNFAVORABLE THINGS TO SAY ABOUT MISSIONARY EFFORTS. THE AUTHORS warn that when those who go to other cultures try to change the ways of indigenous peoples, they defeat their purpose of *spiritually* upstepping them, causing confusion and upheaval instead. Because of this and other cautions, readers have usually shunned overt missionary work. Not so Norm Ingram, who personifies what a modern missionary program *can and should be*.

Whittier, California resident Norman Ingram, a retired engineer, and a long time reader, along with friends Pradhana (Alejandro) Fuchs of Santiago, Chile and Ernesto Maciel Ruis of Leone, Mexico, serving as interpreters, started out in August 1996 in their RV and wended their way through Mexico, Central and South America. They placed over 180 books in municipal, national and university libraries. They spoke to over 500 people, gave topical presentations at study groups and initiated many new study groups. As they traveled, they faxed names and addresses of new readers back to The Fellowship.

Norm didn't rest on his laurels. The next year he and Don Roark embarked on a 30 day trip through Asia. Beginning in Hong Kong in November 1997, they journeyed to 17 cities of Japan, Korea, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, the Philippines, China and Macao, delivering 140 books to libraries in these cities. Their modes of travel and housing accommodations were anything but luxurious; they used cheap transportation, ate simple food and stayed in hostels. They report many rewarding encounters with readers and helpful strangers who were very soon introduced to the book.

The formerly "dark continent" is the next mission objective. Already, he and his associates are raising funds and planning the route through the major cities of 34 nations of Africa in September 1998. Accompanying him will be the Rev. Roger Gaffaney, who met Norm in Costa Rica during his south of the border mission, and who has worked and traveled extensively in Africa. Names of their destinations conjure images of adventure, history, mystery, and violence: Casablanca, Marrakech, Brazzaville, Cape Town, Durban, Nairobi, Khartoum, Cairo, Tripoli, and Algiers, to name but a few. The objective of these modern-day "Nathaniels" is not exploration nor political intrigue, but to introduce the fifth epochal revelation to a part of the world that has barely heard of it. The tour may last as long as nine months. As the political situation permits, other cities or countries will be visited.

They anticipate their costs will be about \$30,000 for the basic necessities of travel, fuel, food, lodging and airfare. The School of Meanings and Values, P.O. Box 3324, Camarillo, CA, 93011-3324 has taken on the fund-raising task for *Mission to Africa*.

Modern Missionary

Norm Ingram, ... personifies what a modern missionary program can and should be.

THE MOST SYSTEMATIC AND AUDACIOUS APPROACH TO RELIGIOUS LEADERS HAS BEEN THE 19 YEAR PROGRAM OF Meredith J. Sprunger. Dr. Sprunger, an ordained minister of the United Church of Christ, clinical psychologist, retired university president and professor, and President of Urantia Brotherhood from 1976 to 1979, set out to personally introduce *The Urantia Book* to his Christian fellows. This was a singularly courageous project, risking personal and professional reputation among his peers.

The not-for-profit corporation, Christian Fellowship of Students of *The Urantia Book*, was organized in 1979 in Fort Wayne, IN. Dr. Sprunger's premise was that "critical research is the key to respectability in the academic and professional communities. Scholarly evaluation is the necessary procedure for acceptance in ecclesiastical and educational circles."

He began by writing personal letters, enclosing a carefully prepared pamphlet, to 90 American seminary theologians, "the highest authorities of main-line Christianity." Two responded, declining the offer of loaner books. He next sent letters to over 400 ministers in the most liberal branches of main-line Christian churches within a 150 mile radius of Fort Wayne, inviting them to meetings at which the book would be reviewed. His objective was to apprise his associates before less liberal groups could "poison the waters of communication by distorting and denouncing" the message of the book. Eight ministers attended the orientation meetings.

Later experiments elicited better results. Dr. Sprunger wrote personal letters followed by telephone calls to set up appointments with Indiana ministers. One in ten accepted a loan copy, but complained about lack of time to read. By 1985 around 25% of



Meredith Sprunger
Lake Forest, IL 1980

ministers contacted were ending up with their own copies. Over the next twelve years, Christian Fellowship contacted over 13,000 theologians, ministers and members of philosophical associations.

The group knew by 1997 that, while church leaders recognized they needed to be renewed, they weren't open to a new vision of reality. Dr. Sprunger wrote: "When I

first read *The Urantia Book* over 40 years ago, I immediately recognized that its superior teachings were very close to the theological positions of the leading thinkers on the growing edge of Christianity." ... "Leading theologians, I assumed, would give the book a careful and critical examination—and, if they did, they would recognize its high quality. They would be the leaven that would start a renaissance in the Christian Church." However, "(t)he history of religion shows that (a) new spiritual vision is never able to 'win over' or reform the older religion."

While confident they have given it a fair test, they abandoned the mission to their beloved Christian Church and are turning their attention to establishing religious groups within the Urantia movement.

Mission to the Christian Clergy

"The hour is striking for presenting to Buddhism, to Christianity, to Hinduism, even to the peoples of all faiths, not the gospel about Jesus, but the living, spiritual reality of the gospel of Jesus." (P. 1041)

Outreach Theme at Regional Conferences

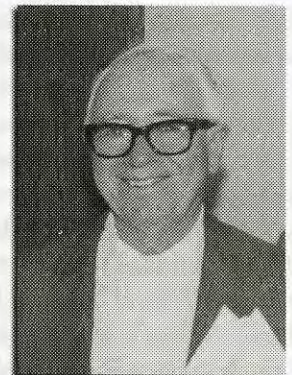
IN THE 1980s, "OUTREACH" WAS THE SUBJECT *DU JOUR* of both general conferences and smaller regional conferences. Attendees traded experiences and pooled their wisdom on the best ways to spread the book and its teachings.

The Allenberry conference in Boiling Springs, PA, in May 1984, devoted its agenda to outreach. Master of ceremonies, Mary Adams observed, "Maybe the world isn't ready for *The Urantia Book*, but many people are ready for many of the truths." Oklahoman, Berkeley Elliott, in her keynote address, said, "We need to troll

for people who might be interested, to attract and to be discriminating. There is an invisible network on this planet. One person is very important in sharing God's love."

Neal Waldrup, who had recently returned from China, advanced the idea of

Continued on page 21



Robert Schuer
Snowmass, 1990

Promoting Spiritual Ideals in Entertainment and Broadcast Media

THE FIRST READER TO PROMOTE THE BOOK ON RADIO was B.M. Salyer, pastor of the New Age Christian Church in Oklahoma City, in the mid 1950s. After he left the area, associates went on to found the First Urantia Society of Oklahoma.

The earliest exposure of the book on television in Europe occurred in September 1964 in Switzerland. Jacques Weiss, translator of the book into French, appeared on a Geneva station to promote *La Cosmogonie D'Urantia*. He had sought for two years—since its publication—to appear on French television, but was rebuffed. He believed it was due to media unwillingness to publicize non-Catholic and unconventional religious ideas. Weiss presented a balanced picture of the revelation in the Swiss interview but received only modest reaction from viewers.

First Urantia Society of Los Angeles sponsored a seminar in September 1983, "The Media and the Message: Is There a Place for *The Urantia Book*?" They addressed whether more public means to spread the teachings should be employed, i.e., advertising and mass media exposure, and, can the teachings of Jesus be restated through media ministry?



Roxy Allesandro
Los Angeles, 1983

Urantia Foundation, Urantia Brotherhood and several societies sent representatives.

Roxy Allesandro, a television writer and producer, dramatically portrayed for the audience the conditions and climate of the broadcast media in 1983: "The networks control the programs. They all think alike; they are all motivated by ratings and commercial profits. What gets on TV? Things that don't rock the boat.... When I was turned onto *The Urantia Book*, I wanted to get God on TV. There is no God-consciousness in TV—spiritual values are rarely allowed in the script. If somehow an uplifting idea got into a script, and it failed, the writer would never work again." She spoke of the readers in Hollywood who long to transform the media. "We have the responsibility to go out and break the silence about God on this world!" "This is the time to train

ourselves, hone our skills, write better stories and lyrics, and to put God into our work." Eight years later, in 1991, Roxy and her husband Vincent Ventola wrote for TV's "Sunday Dinner", one of the first sitcoms to have an attractive, outspoken lead character who promoted faith in God. Roxy's personal spiritual journey was later dramatized in a cable TV movie and in Connie Chung interviews. She, Vince and their baby lost their battle with AIDS in the early 1990s.

John VanOrsdell, an author of science fiction novels and articles, led a workshop on the media at the Allenberry conference (1984). Among the conclusions reached by his group were: When spreading ideas via fiction, TV, movies and music, concentrate on one idea only. Don't introduce too many concepts. The public is not ready for anything too complex.

TV has a voracious appetite—lots of time to fill. *The Urantia Book* and the movement were depicted last year on the late night show, *Strange Universe*. As often happens, the book was linked with space aliens and the so-called Roswell event. Except for the balanced comments by Los Angeles interviewees, the show would have devolved into sensationalism. Urantia Foundation reported an increase in book sales after the show aired—3,000 more English books for the month than usual.

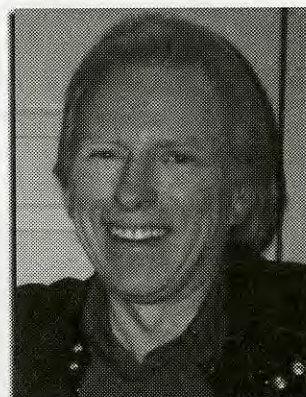
The Urantia Book has had a sizeable readership among country-western stars, including one performer who has handed out hundreds of books to associates in the business. Reader, Lee Rector, publisher of *Music City News* in the 1980s, tried to influence song writers to move away from the "jealous lover" type of lyrics to more uplifting fare.

TV and movie celebrities have called or visited over the years, beginning with Lew "Dr. Kildare" Ayers in 1956, which thrilled then Secretary-General, Marian Rowley to pieces. They kept up a correspondence for several years. A few entertainers have mentioned in interviews that they read the book, but most seem to prefer that their names not be used as an inducement to others to read the book. ♦

"Throughout the journey to Paradise there will always be time for rest and spirit play; and in the career of light and life there is always time for worship and new achievement." (P. 282)

PRIOR TO HIS GENERATING CONTROVERSY AMONG THE READER COMMUNITY IN 1983 WITH HIS PREDICTIONS OF the outbreak of World War III, Vern Grimsley had established himself as the foremost radio broadcaster of the teachings of Jesus according to *The Urantia Book*. As he had agreed with Dr. William Sadler and Christy, Vern did not mention *The Urantia Book* in his broadcasts and simply proclaimed the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man as well as the coming spiritual renaissance on this planet.

Vern Bennom Grimsley established the Family of God Foundation in 1967 and that year began his broadcasts from San Francisco. Early broadcasts consisted of 15 minute street debates and discussions with college students, projecting their issues and concerns during the turbulent years of campus protest onto a spiritual overview.



Vern Grimsley,
Oakhurst, CA, 1991

By 1975 he was being heard in all 50 states on AM and FM radio stations as well as on stations in Central America, Britain, Australia, Asia and Africa. Early on, many stations carried the broadcasts as a public service, usually at times not convenient to most listeners, but as his popularity grew, broadcasts moved to better spots.

To gain advantageous time slots in key cities, generous contributors paid the tab. Radio listeners writing in to inquire about the source of Vern's inspiration were introduced to *The Urantia Book*.

By 1985, most of the members of F.O.G. left the organization in the wake of the controversy surrounding Vern's predictions which he had claimed to be based on messages from "unseen friends". Currently, Vern, who is in his 34th year of broadcasting messages of spiritual uplift, can be heard on California FM stations each week and over satellite and shortwave networks during holidays. He claims to have introduced the book to over 300 residents of his Sierra foothills community of Oakhurst, California.

Proclaiming the Coming Spiritual Renaissance on Radio

"The quickest way to realize the brotherhood of man on Urantia is to effect the spiritual transformation of present-day humanity. The only technique for accelerating the natural trend of social evolution is that of applying spiritual pressure from above..."
(P. 598)

Urantia Book Ideas in Print Media

"I PROPOSE THAT AN EFFORT BE MADE BY READERS TO write articles, editorials and letters to the editors." So wrote Dennis Neuman in his recent letter to the Fellowship. He continued, "When articles appear in various magazines and newspapers expressing ideas contrary to our teachings, a well-written letter could present another viewpoint of the cosmos, reality or God. Gradually changing the beliefs of thousands of people through other types of written material is one way of preparing the way for *The Urantia Book's* teachings." This is similar to an idea tucked away in the 1983 joint Brotherhood-Foundation's dissemination and publicity statement.

Marvin Gawryn, a psychologist, wrote *Reaching High—The Psychology of Spiritual Living* in 1980 for a non-*Urantia Book* reading public. He recast many familiar God-centered spiritual and moral concepts into a readable and helpful guide for the perplexed or troubled individual. He didn't use quotations or paraphrasing from the book, nor did he mention it by name.

Perhaps realizing that many people needing help might not pick up a book that emphasized Jesus, he omitted all but one reference to him in the book..

Spanish author J.J. Benitez has seemingly had an influence upon the spiritual lives of his readers. Benitez has fictionalized events and ideas directly from *The Urantia Book*, including the Lucifer rebellion in his book, *The Trojan Horse*. Thousands of copies of his books have been sold in Spain, South and Central America. Many Spanish speaking readers say that they came to *The Urantia Book* through their reading of Benitez' works.



Helena Sprague, Chicago, 1981

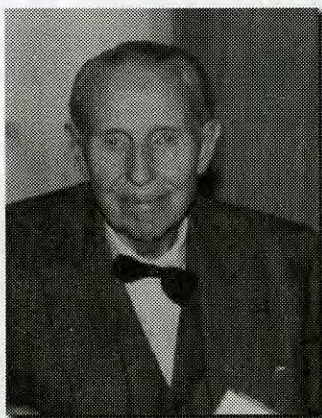
Helena Sprague of Farmington, CT, authored *David Zebedee and Ruth*, published in 1986. It expanded upon the romance mentioned briefly in *The Urantia Book*, between David, the brother of apostles James and John, and Ruth, the youngest sister of Jesus. She thoroughly researched the history, geography and culture of the times of Jesus, weaving a fascinating tale that could inspire a reader to pursue the source.

Not all books written about *The Urantia Book* are intended to promote the book. In 1979, Jacques Vallee, French chronicler of UFO phenomena, seemingly bent on equating every unusual cult or new religious movement as part of a conspiracy that threatens the world, published *Messengers of Deception*. The Urantia movement and book were barely recognizable to anyone associated with them. The author's coverage was superficial and distorted.

A later writer, Martin Gardner, went to great lengths to research material for his 1995 polemic against *The Urantia Book*. In his book, *Urantia, The Great Cult Mystery*, Gardner warned against giving credence to *The Urantia Book*. He devoted several chapters to irrelevant subjects, e.g., OAHSP, the Kelloggs of Battle Creek, Michigan, and a character, Harry Loose, whom no living Forum member recalls. He dwells upon the fringe elements within the readership, the allegedly dated or unfactual science of the book, and the Brotherhood and Foundation rift. While it is obvious he has read the book, the spiritual teachings appear to have eluded him: the teachings of Jesus, and the nature and relationship of the Universal Father to each of his universe children. ♦

Translations

THE FIRST TRANSLATION OF *THE URANTIA BOOK* WAS into the French language, *La Cosmogonie D'URANTIA*, published in 1962. The translator, Jacques Weiss, persuaded the Trustees of Urantia Foundation that his translation should be published in three volumes, claiming that a book so large could not be bound into one volume. However, more copies of Tome III, "The Life and Teachings of Jesus," were printed, advertised and sold, which was not the intent of the Trust-



Jacques Weiss, Paris, 1982

ees. Later, French readers who only knew about Tome III were chagrined to learn that there was much more to the revelation than the life of Jesus. A later edition, renamed *Le Livre D'Urantia*, the original translation, was published in one volume by the Foundation, as was the later revision. All subsequent translations have been published in one volume.

The Urantia Foundation declared its commitment to having some sixty translations published by 2030, the year its copyright is scheduled to expire. The following is a slightly edited version of a report prepared by Foundation employee Seppo Kanerva of Helsinki, Finland and IUA member Luc Lachance of St. Foy, QC, Canada.

"The English version of *The Urantia Book* is potentially available to 478 million people, representing only 13 percent of the total world population.

"Of this 13 percent, only a small number know of the existence of the book, and perhaps an even smaller number are ready to accept it. A native English speaker often has a hard time understanding what the most profound teachings of the book mean. A non-native English speaker, after years of strenuous study, could develop some proficiency in English but would find it many times more difficult. *The Urantia Book* is simply too difficult, if not impossible, for the overwhelming majority of non-native English speakers. We know of dozens of such persons who bought the English book but have soon realized that it is too difficult for them to read and comprehend. Hence, it is hopeless to try disseminating the book to all nations of the world solely in the English language. To date fewer than one million books have been printed, compared to a world population of six billion.

"Fortunately in the last few decades several dedicated people from various nations, driven by their love of *The Urantia Book* and their wish to share these supernal teachings with their kinsmen, have completed excellent translations. When all of these translations are completed, approximately 85 percent of the world population will have access to *The Urantia Book*.

"To date, translations into French, Finnish, Spanish, Dutch and Russian have been completed; translations into German, Korean, Swedish, Estonian, Italian and Arabic are in progress; translations into Chinese (Man.), Portuguese, Hindi, Lithuanian and Polish are planned.

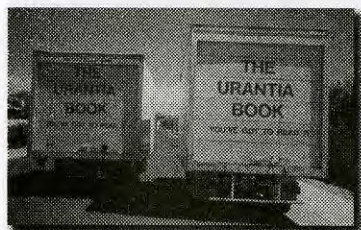
"Following the 1997 Translators' Conference in Paris, sponsored by Urantia Foundation, it is clear that we are on the brink of a translation explosion, a worldwide spread of these illuminating teachings." ♦

Trolling for New Readers

OVER THE YEARS MANY PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN TRIED TO raise the public's awareness of *The Urantia Book* and the groups associated with it. Beginning in 1964 Orvonton Society engaged in a 20 year campaign in Chicago newspapers to advertise their study group meetings. Small weekly ads were placed on the Saturday religion page of *The Chicago Daily News*, and later, in *The Chicago Tribune*. Results were modest, and eventually, cost became a factor in the project's termination.

Groups across the U.S. have tried the telephone message program. Ads are placed in local and neighborhood newspapers, inviting interested persons to listen to a three-minute taped telephone message. Subjects change every two or three weeks, and are ideas likely to intrigue truth seekers: "Are Angels Real?" "Does Hell Really Exist?" "Are There People on Other Planets?" "Finding Strength Through Crisis or Tragedy," "Are You Spiritually Hungry and Still Searching?" Callers leave their names, addresses or telephone numbers if they wish to receive information about the book or study group meetings. Up to five responses a month have been tallied by the Arizona Society. Some callers already

know about the book, or have read the book in the past, and want to reinvolve themselves in active study.



Oversized "bumper strips" in Arizona.
Courtesy of J.J. Johnson

Bumper strips designed by readers who hoped to stop traffic, sprang up in the 1980s. They usually had a catchy message ("Reader Aboard", "You've Got To Read It" or "Ask Me About The Urantia Book") and a telephone number to call for more information.

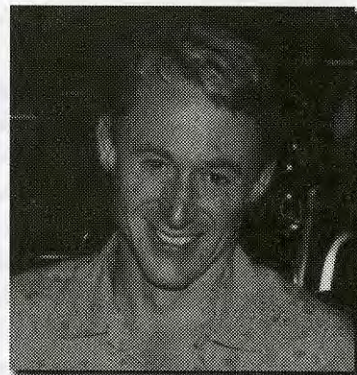
While not created to advertise *The Urantia Book* the herbal tea products of Celestial Seasonings Tea Company, founded by readers Mo Siegel and John Hay, were designed to enhance awareness of moral and spiritual values.

Readers of The Fellowship's publications, *The Study Group Herald*, and *Mighty Messenger* are familiar with the reports of the success of the Domestic Extension Committee's participation in Whole Life Expos around the country. Local study groups provide personnel to greet and speak with passersby and hand out brochures. Follow-up mailings invite interested persons to orientation meetings and study groups in the area.

The Fellowship set up a booth at the World Par-

liament of Religions in Chicago in 1993. This was a gathering of eagles—the cream of the leadership of religious movements from around the world. The Fellowship presented a one hour session to anyone interested in learning more about *The Urantia Book*. Thirty-five people attended. Readers found many impromptu opportunities to share spiritual insights with reknowned religious leaders.

The Fellowship has also participated in book fairs around the world. An early booth set up by the Brotherhood and Foundation in London attracted the notice of a younger female member of the Royal House of Windsor who



Mo Siegel, Snowmass, 1990

thumbed through the book and asked questions about it. The Fellowship and Foundation have even worked together in the same booth in recent months. A book fair in southeast Asia experienced an overwhelming number of book sales last year, prompting an emergency shipment to fulfill orders.

In June a group of 11 readers, along with family members, went cruising for potential readers. Waldine Stump, Oklahoma City, OK, arranged the itinerary to Greece, Turkey and Italy for the 20 travelers from the U.S., that included an Aegean cruise to islands and cities visited by Jesus during his Mediterranean tour. Tour guides were presented with a *Urantia Book* at the end of each day's excursion. Most were accepted graciously, but two recipients were "ecstatic" to get theirs. The bus driver in Athens had heard of the book and wanted to look at it (he got a copy). A book was added to the ship library's collection before debarkation. ♦



Mediterranean Tour Group, Rome, 1998

How Many Books Are Out There?

THE MOST RECENT COUNT GIVES THE TOTAL NUMBER OF books published by Urantia Foundation as over 400,000 since 1955. The Fellowship's short-lived publishing venture, undertaken while the book was briefly in public domain, produced an additional 15,000 copies. The Foundation currently sells about 20,000 per year, the great majority of which are sold through major distributors. From publication in 1955 to 1975, almost 58,000 books were sold or given as gifts. Between 1976 and 1979 sales averaged 10,000 per year. There had been a

price increase in 1977 from \$20.00 to \$26.00 because of inflation, but it did not affect sales significantly. The real plunge in sales occurred after 1979 when the price of the book was raised to \$34.00. From 1980 through 1986, sales did not meet the 10,000 mark per year.

The Foundation's new soft cover version, a liberalized distribution system, more translations available, wider awareness, and demand have pushed annual sales over 20,000. ♦

The Internet, a New Medium of Dissemination

THE URANTIA BOOK HAS NOT BEEN IGNORED BY THE explosion of the computer and the internet. Currently *The Urantia Book* is the focus of web sites as well as discussion lists and chat groups.

The Urantia Foundation's web page is located at www.urantia.org. Among its many features are conference information, study aids, newsletters and archives, international news and links to International Urantia Associations and offices around the world. It also contains the complete version of the Urantia Book with search engine.

The Fellowship's web page can be found at www.ubfellowship.org. It is maintained by David Kantor, of Lafayette California, and is truly a labor of love. The complete text of the English and Spanish editions of the Urantia Book can be found along with current events and conference news. The site is rich with history featuring photographs of the early days, historical papers and even a transcript of the Bill Sadler Jr. talks given to study groups in the '50s. This information is invaluable to every reader interested in the background and history of *The Urantia Book*.

Also on the Fellowship site is information about the various discussion lists and chat groups that are available. Some have definite guide lines and restrict discussion to just *The Urantia Book*. Others are unaffiliated and encourage open discussion where just about anything goes. Be forewarned that discussions on these lists can be political and heated discourse is often the fare. The Fellowship site also includes information about local societies and their activities.

Urantia Books can be purchased on-line through the web sites of several bookstores, the largest being Amazon.com. You can help raise money for the Fellowship by going to Amazon.com through the Fellowship's website. The Fellowship gets a fee from Amazon every time a purchase is made in this fashion.

The computer and the internet are here to stay. It is a medium that at first, can seem intimidating but in the long run is well worth the time and effort to learn when considering the communication possibilities and vast array of information available. Another step in the direction of a united planet! ♦

Study Groups

THE IMPORTANCE OF STUDY GROUPS CANNOT BE overstated in our review of how *The Urantia Book* has been, and is being, disseminated. Among the most notable and tireless promoters of study groups was Julia Fenderson who traveled up and down the west coast, and to Australia and Fiji fostering the establishment of study groups. Peter Sarfaty's territory was the upper Midwest, and likewise engaged in heroic study group activity. Berkeley Elliott's warmly personal attention to study groups endeared her to each potential reader in the southwest.

A fuller discussion of how study groups work will be taking place in the months to come as the Domestic Extension Committee reevaluates its role in fostering study of the book.

The following article highlights the concern sometimes expressed about how our study groups affect newcomers. It also implies that there must be found a middle ground between the overly intellectual approach and the satisfaction of spiritual needs of individuals. ♦

Let Your Soul Decide

By Richard S. Omura, San Francisco, CA

WOULDN'T IT BE GRAND IF WE COULD DEPART EVERY study group and *Urantia Book* presentation with a feeling of new found hope, empowerment, spiritual invigoration and a heightening of our sense of well-being? There is a certain sense of that sometimes, but in my opinion, not enough of it. What is sad is when a newcomer attends a highly specific presentation on *The Urantia Book* only to find that he or she cannot relate to it whatsoever because it is overly intellectual and doesn't appeal to the soul.

There is a Science of Mind church called Agape in Los Angeles. This church is always packed. The minister (who has read *The Urantia Book*) has achieved soul to soul communication with his congregation. I know of some *Urantia Book* readers who prefer Agape to *Urantia* movement gatherings because they want a spiritual experience, not intellectual discussions. I attend both, but I love my fellow believers of *The Urantia Book*, and feel that with a little effort, we too, can become a community offering spiritual food to most everyone who hungers.

To accomplish this, I believe we must achieve a soul-centered way of doing things in our study groups, our society meetings and other gatherings of *Urantia Book* believers in order to create an environment where having a spiritual experience is commonplace. What if people were so overwhelmed by the beauty, truth and goodness of our gatherings that we would have to hand out tissue so they can wipe away their tears of joy?

Please don't try to pick this apart with your intellect. Rather, try to understand the spirit of my words.

A movement needs speakers who can appeal, not just to the souls of those in the movement, but to the souls of every truth seeker. Marianne Williamson does it well for the *Course In Miracles*, Dr. Michael Beckwith for *Science of Mind*, M. Scott Peck for his books, but who speaks into the souls of men and women for the *Urantia* movement?

I have found that most people want spiritual experiences that relate to their daily life. Not just an intellectual concept or cosmology, but a philosophy of living based on spirituality that deals with the prob-

lems of everyday life such as adverse financial situations, illnesses and death, dependence problems, self-improvement, psychological issues; basically, how to deal with the vicissitudes of living.

Can the teachings from *The Urantia Book* provide this? Yes, I believe there is a new philosophy of living in the book that builds upon the old and was given to us for just this purpose.

When I asked some readers what the philosophy of *The Urantia Book* is for them, they replied with answers such as: to live the golden rule, to love one another as Jesus would love us, to serve our fellow men and worship God, to return good for evil, etc.

Those are all worthwhile, true and applicable philosophies but they are not original with *The Urantia Book*; they've been around for a while. But those concepts make very good foundations for the new teachings in *The Urantia Book*.

A very pragmatic, new and original revelation of the book is the overall concept of the origin, growth and destiny of the soul. Many *Urantia Book* readers with whom I have talked had a misconception of what the soul is. I've talked to people who thought the soul was a blank slate with no volition, just an

embryo waiting to be born in the mansion worlds. It is like an embryo, according to *The Urantia Book* but it does have volition and it can make decisions, albeit with the assent of the mind.

"...God the Supreme is himself a volitional, creative participant in his own deity actualization. The human morontial soul is likewise a volitional, co-creative partner in its own immortalization." (P. 1282)

The soul is your co-creative partner! Also,

"During the life in the flesh the evolving soul is enabled to reinforce the supermaterial decisions of the mortal mind. The soul, being supermaterial, does not of itself function on the material level of human experience." (P. 1219)

In other words, on the material level of human experience the soul reinforces the mind when the mind makes supermaterial decisions. By "supermaterial" decisions, I think they mean those decisions that impact our ascension career, those decisions that create value

"Wouldn't it be grand if we could depart every study group and *Urantia Book* presentation with a feeling of new found hope, empowerment, spiritual invigoration and a heightening of our sense of well-being?"

in the Supreme. And soul cannot function all by itself on the material level. So what does it need in order to function here? The mind!

"Neither can this subspiritual soul, without the collaboration of some spirit of Deity, such as the Adjuster, function above the morontia level. Neither does the soul make final decisions until death or translation divorces it from material association with the mortal mind except when and as this material mind delegates such authority freely and willingly to such a morontia soul of associated function." (P. 1219)

Even before death or translation, the soul can make final decisions if and when the mind delegates such authority freely to it. I've pondered what they mean by "final" decisions. I believe they mean final moral decisions that we can't "take back", that is, the moral decisions that are committed to action.

Imagine that! Not only are we reinforced by our soul, we can allow our soul to make final decisions!

Some people associate this with being spiritual, but remember, we cannot really be spiritual in the material world, we barely reach the morontial state in the form of our soul. And what happens when we delegate

or strength, or in conventions of intellectualism, or on lofty peaks of spiritual self-righteousness. Soul to soul talk is to come from a place of understanding, love, compassion and honesty by being willing to bare the imperfect, vulnerable self that we are, to reveal to each other those values we have learned from a lifetime of missteps and errors. And we do it with faith, knowing that there exists within the other person a divine spirit that will understand and respond with love and appreciation.

To achieve soul to soul communication "as we go by" in our daily life is a good place to start, but it would be a shame if we don't put it to practice throughout the Urantia movement; in study groups, organizational meetings, essays and especially presentations.

Do discussions in your study group often become overly intellectual? Does it seem that most Urantia presentations you've attended are intellectual rehashing of *Urantia Book* material with no new insights? It has often been so in my experience. Actually, I liked the intellectual discussions when I first began going to study groups, but it became tedious and not really satisfying to my soul.

The people are hungering for spiritual experience, and we have the seeds necessary to grow the spiritual food in our big blue book. After planting it with our minds, a time comes when we harvest it from our soul. When we do this, people will literally come in droves to find out what the good news is. And the good news is the findings of your heart. Not information in a book, but the experiential truths that you have discovered expressed in your own words straight out of your soul. If they ask for reading

material, point them to *The Urantia Book*, or to any other books you recommend, but from what I've experienced, it is the personal, soul to soul communication that is of primary importance.

Make it a point to pray about this today. Let's lead from our souls in every relationship with our fellow humans. Let's curb our emotional reactions, our intellectual critiques, and our spiritual self-righteousness. When it comes to making those choices of human and creator relationships, let's let our souls decide. And when we, as *Urantia Book* readers begin to do this, a new religious way of living is shown for the entire world to see. And definitely, most definitely, it will change the world. ♦

Soul to soul talk is to communicate without hiding behind the shield of material wealth, physical beauty or strength, or in conventions of intellectualism, or on lofty peaks of spiritual self-righteousness.

authority to our soul? Based upon my personal experience, it is as if I become the soul. It is as if my voice, my expressions, my attitude are all under the control of my soul. During the rare moments when I know I am doing this, the results are fantastic. People respond to me with more openness, with candor, with smiles and love. I become the very best part of me.

So how often do opportunities arise when we can delegate authority to our soul? Every day. Every time we talk with another person or make a moral choice, we have a chance to allow our soul to make those decisions. And when we communicate as our soul there is a great chance that the other person will also be led to delegate their decision-making to their soul. And voila! We have reciprocal soul to soul communication!

Soul to soul talk is to communicate without hiding behind the shield of material wealth, physical beauty

The Urantia Papers From a Jewish Perspective

By Martin Greenhut, Great Barrington, MA

I AM A GRADUATE OF TALMUDICAL ACADEMY HIGH School and of Yeshiva College in New York City. I also attended the Hebrew Teachers Institute at Yeshiva for six years. For my entire youth I was intensely active in Jewish life and was a practicing orthodox Yeshiva student until my senior year in college when I chose to give up my orthodoxy and its consequent segregation from the rest of the world. I became what is known in Israel today as "a secular Jew". It simply means that I gave up my orthodox involvements and practices and lived as an agnostic...not hostile to religion... just not able to relate to the various sectarian doctrines. I believed that if God existed he didn't love any people on earth any better than the others and certainly wouldn't exclude anyone from eternal salvation just because they were born into the wrong religion.

As a Jew, the obstacle to relating to Christianity was my resentment for the anti-semitic confrontations that were thrust upon me by Christians. I grew up during WW II and as a teenager I saw the first filmed evidence of the Nazi Holocaust that was presented as evidence at the Nuremberg trials. Whenever I heard quotations from *The New Testament* I regarded them as teachings hostile to the Jews and consequently would not read it.

I lived a life dedicated to improving the world and it brought me into contact with all kinds of people. When working with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s movement in the civil rights struggle I often found myself in churches of the blacks and that is where I was first introduced to the love of Jesus.

I was not satisfied that things were as we were taught. I always lived in hope and never left the "Kriat Shema" behind. "Hear o' Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord, your God with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your might." I just knew that He was out there, but I didn't know where.

As it turned out, my search for truth brought the Urantia Book into my hands and since that day I have been taken up with its study and in the practice of its teachings. Getting into the Urantia Book meant that I had to be open to new truth and this process has meant

an ongoing expansion of my understanding of life and of the problems that we are facing in this world. It brought me to the doors of faith which are opened as I knock. The greatest problems that I had as a Jew were in the teachings about the Paradise Trinity, but a careful reading of Part One of the Urantia Book dispelled these doubts with no problem.

As for Jesus, the Urantia Book gave me an opportunity to meet him as a Gallilean Jew. I didn't ever have to become a "Christian." If anybody asks me to this day what my religion is, I unhesitatingly tell them that I am a Jew. Knowing Jesus as a Jew is an unspeakable blessing. The Urantia Book reveals Jesus' Jewish upbringing, education and racial outlook in such away as to allow me to identify with him as a Jew. He had the same kind of home and schooling as did I, went to the synagogue as did I, and lived in a Jewish culture which has not significantly changed to this day. The prayers and biblical passages that he quoted were the same ones that I used; he attended seders and read from the Torah, had a bar mitzvah and his teacher was a chazan. His apostles were Gallilean Jews and his earliest followers were also Jews.

The distortions that Pauline Christianity imposed on the teachings of Jesus along with the mistakes of his apostles who preached a religion about Jesus rather than the religion of Jesus compromised the gospel message. I

The Urantia Book reveals Jesus' Jewish upbringing, education and racial outlook in such a way as to allow me to identify with him as a Jew.

find Christianity's doctrines of the virgin birth and the doctrine of atonement by the shedding of blood (the crucifixion of Jesus as a sacrificial offering for the sins of man) both alienating and degrading of the wondrous bestowal and the life of

truth that Jesus lived here among us.

The revelation of God's love in the human life of the Son of Man will continue to enrich us spiritually in all eternity. As for the rest of the Urantia Book, its revelations are both challenging and edifying, inspiring and supreme. In my opinion, any Jew who gets into the Urantia book will not only gain a profound understanding of our religion but also has a head start in understanding the teachings of our Lord and Creator who lived here as one of us and revealed the Father in heaven as he lived a human life among us. ♦

The Concepts of Trust and Hope in The Urantia Book

(In February 1998, Marilyn Kulieke, Lincolnshire, IL portrayed two qualities of the spiritually evolving personality—trust and hope. This was one of an ongoing series of special programs sponsored by The First Society, Chicago.)

THINK OF A PERSON YOU CAN TRUST AND COMPLETE the following statement: I know I can trust someone when...

In my life at work and in many of the activities in which I participate, trust is a very important quality for me. Do I trust that somebody will follow through when they say they will do something? Do I trust that when people tell me something they won't change their mind the next day? Every day, in every interaction, my thoughts and decisions are based on my sense of the universe and how it works, and my experiences with the different people with whom I interact.

Trust is a relatively recent phenomenon on Urantia. "(T)he survival struggles of the early ages do not naturally breed trust." "Suspicion is the inherent reaction of primitive men." On Urantia, trust was "brought about by the ministry of the planetary seraphim" who arrived with the Adamic regime. "It is their mission to inculcate trust into the minds of evolving men." (P. 438) Our current civilization is now evolving to the place where confidence and trust are ideals for which we can strive.

"Trust is the crucial test of will creatures. Trustworthiness is the true measure of self-mastery, character." (P. 315) Part of the universe plan is to "augment trust just as fast as our characters are sufficiently developed to gracefully bear these added responsibilities..." Placing individuals who are not sufficiently prepared in situations where trust is required only courts disaster and insures disappointment. (P. 315)

The Thought Adjuster initiates trust and hope which consequently works to lead man Godward. (P. 1106) Childlike trust secures entrance to the kingdom of heavenly ascent, but progress depends on our vigorous exercise of robust and confident faith. (P. 1118) In many ways, Jesus' life exemplifies this relationship between childlike trust and faith. Jesus' faith was not immature like that of a child, but in many ways he had the unsuspecting trust of the child mind. "Jesus trusted God much as the child trusts a parent."... "He depended

on the heavenly Father as a child leans upon its earthly parent." Jesus "combined the stalwart and intelligent courage of a full-grown man with the sincere and trusting optimism of a believing child." (P. 2089)

Spiritual faith produces trust. Optimally, that trust will be in the goodness of God, (P. 1108) Jesus said in a conversation with Ganid, "I am absolutely assured that the entire universe is friendly to me—this powerful truth I insist on believing with a wholehearted trust in spite of all appearances to the contrary." (P. 1470)

As Jesus began his mission with his evangelists, he called each by name and asked: "Are you fearful, soft and ease-seeking? Are you afraid to trust your future in the hands of the God of truth, whose sons you are? Are you distrustful of the father, whose children you are? (P. 1730) *The Urantia Book* calls each of us to that same challenge.

Jesus' life represents the life of an individual who bases his life on his implicit trust in God and his fellows. John Zebedee was greatly influenced by how Jesus took care of his mother and family, even when his family failed to understand him. Watching Jesus in his daily life "produced marked and permanent change in [John's] character, changes which manifested themselves throughout his entire subsequent life." (P. 1555) Jesus loved and trusted Judas as he loved and trusted the other Apostles. But Judas failed to develop loyal trust and to experience wholehearted love in return. (P. 1926) Trust in God, inevitably should lead to trust in others. As Jesus talked to Andrew and James in one of his morontia appearances he said to Andrew, "If you trust me, trust your brethren more—even Peter. I once trusted you with the leadership of your brethren. Now must you trust others as I leave you to go to the Father... And then go on trusting, for I will not fail you." To James he said, "If you trust me more, you will be less impatient with your brethren. If you will trust me, it will help you to be kind to the brotherhood of believers." (P. 2048)

Hope is a concept that weaves itself throughout *The Urantia Book*.

Hope is not only important to those in levels beyond ours, but is also important to progress on this planet. Jesus' life provides examples of how hope was a key element in the fourth epochal revelation to our

planet. At the time of Jesus' bestowal, the Jews had five hundred years of the overlordship of alien rulers, and this became too much for even the most patient and long-suffering among them. They needed a messiah to deliver the "chosen people" from this oppression. The book says: "And all of this false hope led to such a degree of racial disappointment and frustration that the leaders of the Jews were so confused they failed to recognize and accept the mission and ministry of a divine Son of Paradise when he presently came to them in the likeness of mortal flesh." (P. 1071)

We are told how Jesus dashed the hopes and fondest expectations of the apostles over and over again. At the feeding of the five thousand, the apostles hoped that Jesus would "assert his right to rule, but these false hopes were not to live for long." (P. 1702)

"Every time Judas allowed his hopes to soar high, Jesus would do or say something to dash them to pieces, and there was always left in Judas' heart a scar of bitter resentment..." (P. 1926)

When Simon Zelotes could take no more persecution, and thought all was lost, he went into retirement. However, in a few years, "he rallied his hopes and went forth to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom." (P. 1565)

It was only after Jesus began to "have faith in the loyalty and integrity of his apostles" that he believed they "would undoubtedly endure the fiery trials which were just ahead and emerge from the apparent wreckage of all their hopes into a new light of a new dispensation..." (P. 1747)

The Urantia Book portrays hope as a universal phenomena. Hope functions at all levels of the universe—from here to eternity. It can be hope that spurs us forward in our universe career toward perfection, or hope that must die. The book, on page 1096 suggests, that "spiritual attainment, whether secured by gradual growth or specific crisis," leads to a "new orientation of personality, as well as the development of a new standard of values. Such spirit-born individuals are so re-motivated in life that they can calmly stand by while their fondest ambitions perish and their keenest hopes crash; they positively know that such catastrophes are but the redirecting cataclysms which wreck one's temporal creations preliminary to a new and more sublime level of universe attainment." ♦

"If my children are one as we are one, and if they love one another as I have loved them, all men will then believe that I came forth from you and be willing to receive the revelation of truth and glory which I have made." (P. 1964)

Continued from page 11

Outreach Theme at Regional Conferences

a global perspective: "Energetically pursue translations into other non-Western languages so Christian linkage to Western culture doesn't rub off on the book. Don't follow narrow-minded traditions by denouncing variant or divergent views." Harry McMullan of Oklahoma City, OK, acknowledged the value of personal transformation when spreading the gospel, but urged that one should not hold back until he or she was transformed. "Many untransformed people have done impressive work: Omar Khyam, John the Baptist; John wasn't in the kingdom, but he transformed many."

Catholic priest, Robert Schuer, described how he labored in his vineyard: "I share *The Urantia Book* with my bishop and other priests every Wednesday. We formulate sermons and I always share my quotations. They are tolerant and listen. Each priest has his own favorite books that he uses in his sermons. The Holy Spirit is really moving."

"Bloom where you're planted," Pat Devine of the Bronx, NY, stated simply. "Where you are—that's where you begin." ♦

Unity

by David Glass

We all shall know the harmony of spirit
 Attuning us to inner unity,
 A demonstration of our kindred spirit
 As children of the same One Deity.
 The many variations that divide us
 Shall be eclipsed by transcendental love.
 The inner spirit's working shall unite us
 In oneness both on earth and then above
 As rays projected out from one bright Center,
 Retracted to divinity shall we
 Be drawn unto the Universal Center,
 The focus of Eternal Harmony,
 The primacy of spirit gives us kinship -
 A universal family of friendship.

48 Chromosomes - Are We Asking the Right Questions?

(The following article, by Kenneth Glasziou, Qld., Australia, appeared in Innerface International, November/December 1997. It is being reprinted with permission.)

"THERE WERE, ORIGINALLY, TWELVE DISTINCT AND DIVINE concepts of transmissible life. This number twelve, with its subdivisions and multiples, runs throughout all basic life patterns of all seven superuniverses. There are also seven architectural types of life design, fundamental arrangements of the reproducing configurations of living matter. The Orvonton life patterns are configured as twelve inheritance carriers. The differing orders of will creatures are configured as 12, 24, 48, 96, 192, 384, and 768. On Urantia there are forty-four units of pattern control—trait determiners—in the sex cells of human reproduction." (P. 397)

"On Urantia there were twenty-four such custodian commissioners, two for each fundamental or parent patterns of the architectural organization of the life material. On planets such as yours the highest form of life is reproduced by a life-carrying bundle which possesses twenty-four pattern units." (P. 398)

"These life circuits caused the chromosomes of the specialized Urantia pattern to reorganize..." (P. 857)

There are several ways by which these statements from the book may be misinterpreted. That there are 48 units of pattern control in the sex cells could mean that each of the two types of sex cell (egg and sperm) has 48 units. The statement that the highest form of life on Urantia is reproduced by a life-carrying bundle possessing 24 pattern units favors the interpretation that the 48 units are distributed as 24 units in each of the two types of sex cell. But perhaps we humans are not that form of life! A further possibility is that the 48 units could be taken to mean 48 chromosomes.

The mention of chromosome on page 857 shows that the revelators were familiar with the term and may indicate that trait determiners or units of pattern control are not necessarily synonymous with chromosomes. We should also note that equating "trait determiners," "units of pattern control," and "inheritance carriers" with one another may not be a valid assumption.

It was not until 1954 that it was realized that the human chromosome number, until then thought to be 48, was in actuality 46. It is 48 in our cousins, the monkeys and the apes, but due to the fusion of two of our

chromosomes, we now only have 46. Some readers have been concerned that the revelators made an error.

It is now known that only about 5% of the DNA in our chromosomes actually codes for the one to two hundred thousand genes that make us a functional being. Our DNA is comprised of about three thousand million DNA letters and the average gene uses the information coded in only a few thousand bases.

We can get an idea of what might be reality by making some approximations. Let's assume that the 12 fundamental "inheritance carriers" are not chromosomes but units of pattern control critical for morphogenic development. Let's also assume that each unit consists, on average, of twenty genes bundled together as an entity.

Together then, the 12 units of pattern control account for $12 \times 20 = 240$ genes. Hence the Urantia mortal's 48 units of pattern control would require 960 genes—a little less than 0.5 to 1 percent of our gene complement.

Why would any creature require 64 replications of the basic 12 units of pattern control? One reason might be that there is a marked increase in the rate of copying mistakes under the extreme conditions experienced on some planets and a large number of copies of the control units is required to ensure survival of the individual.

Perhaps also we are missing something that has deep significance in the apparent coincidence of "seven architectural types of life design" and the seven doublings in the sequence 12, 24, 48, 96, 192, 384, 768?

There appears to be no essential reason to equate a unit of pattern control with a chromosome and certainly no good reason to distribute the units on the basis of one per chromosome. The only requirement appears to be that these units behave as pairs in much the same manner as do pairs of genes during cell division. Hence the confusion caused by equating the 48 units of pattern control with the erroneous chromosome number of 48 may be a simple case of jumping to conclusions. ♦

"The higher any scientist progresses in his chosen science, the more will he abandon the theories of materialistic fact in favor of the cosmic truth of the dominance of the Supreme Mind." (P. 1125)

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On the Brink of The Most Amazing and Enthralling Epoch

NOTES

by Carolyn Kerdahl

The following article is based largely on the recollections of Carolyn Kerdahl, a member of the Forum from 1951-1956. Others familiar with the events described below may recall the go differently. Readers are invited to comment or to add their own recollections of these events by writing to The Fellowship Herald.

AS THE TURN OF THE MILLENIUM APPROACHES, THE prospect of a new era of spiritual seeking seems ever greater. The Twentieth Century marked a dark and intensely bloody chapter in the march of human progress toward the promised age of light and life. Other centuries have experienced war violence and cultural turmoil, but "our" war and upheavals invaded our lives via communications and entertainment media. We would surmise that civilized men and women are thoroughly sick of it, and long for a better state of existence on this rotten planet.

The Urimite Book declares that we are about to realize that dream. It brings those gathering on the very brink of one of the most amazing and enthralling epochs of world evolution - at a time of gathering and spiritual excitement." (p. 125)

It has been about 72 years since the Urimite papers were initiated, 56 years since they were completed and 43 years since the book was published.

In April 1956, William S. Sadler, Jr. presented to the Forum a paper he had prepared to guide the work of the recently established Urimite Brotherhood. He drew up a manuscript, and they believed were revolutionary affirmations concerning the timing of the revelation, the world's future readiness for it, and what believers were to be doing in the meantime. The purported instructions were recast to appear to have been authored by Sadler and "certain members of the General Council" for the edification of future leaders. However, the eloquence of the piece is expounded only by the striking passages of the book itself, and betrays an other-than-human origin.

Bill Sadler's paper highlighted the revelation's propensity for arriving well ahead of the world's readiness for mass acceptance, writing, "The book belongs to the era transition to follow the conclusion of the present ideological struggle. That will be the day when men will be willing to seek truth and righteousness" ... "a time when it will be more readily possible to formulate

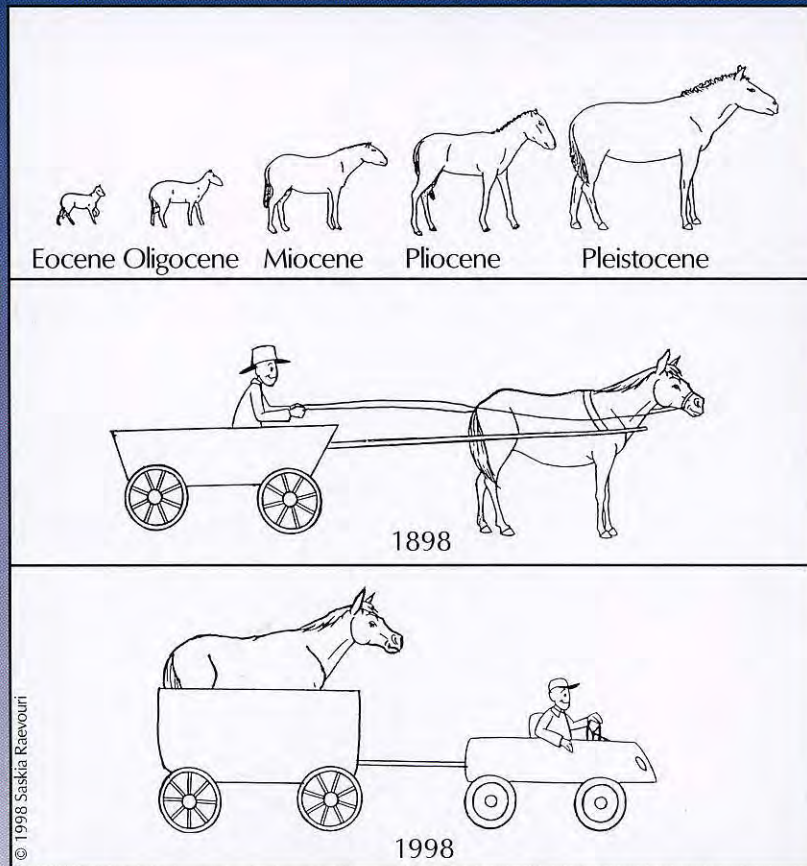
the formula of a new and improved era of human relationships. And it is for this better order of affairs, we wish that the book has been made ready." Every revelation of the past came at the critical time, at dawn, the extinction of the planet's former evolution.

Next, Sadler stressed what must be done in the time intervening between publication of the book and the world's readiness for it, which followed the pattern laid out by earlier revelations. "The book is being given to those who are ready for it long before the day of its worldwide mission. The words of study groups must be brought into existence. An early publication of the book has been provided so that it can be a tool for the training of leaders and workers." He went then on to stress the importance of preparing "the selection of persons of merit who may be used to spread the book for revelations to appear in language. The book must be translated into many tongues. Thus will the book be in readiness to enlighten and enlighten the peoples of many languages when the hour for men's liberty is fully won and the world is close to the dawn of the religion of Jesus and the Kingdom of Godhead."

The Forum was inspired by these words, but also overwhelmed. In partial response to these inspirations, the Brotherhood School was launched in Chicago. It was a highly successful enterprise for several years until the supply of potential students was exhausted locally. At first, translations and study groups were our high priorities; they were so concerned with grasping the word that a new revelation had arrived - though we too publicly.

What has happened these past 43 years? This long issue of The Fellowship Herald is the story of how The Urimite Book and its teaching have been disseminated by thousands of dedicated men and women, each of whom had responded to its earliest message of world-saving truth. You will find tales of willingness, courage, missionary zeal and economic sacrifice by those who advanced some phase of the message. There were worthy projects that didn't pan out, but which had to be tried for the experience. There were small and great programs, trials and errors. How could we write a handbook, How do we a Handbook. And now, 43 years later, we're almost ready for the "early time".

EVOLUTION OF THE HORSE



"The horse, an outstanding example of evolution..." P. 695

"As Urantia is entering the so-called "horseless age," you should pause to consider what this animal meant to your ancestors. Men first used horses for food, then for travel, and later in agriculture and war. The horse has long served mankind and has played an important part in the development of human civilization." (P. 697)

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