



URANTIA BROTHERHOOD
333 DIVERSEY PARKWAY CHICAGO ILLINOIS 60614

Dear Friend,

From its inception, a fundamental precept of the URANTIA movement has been that thousands of study groups be formed, and it's time for us to address that goal more energetically and systematically. We have been adding study groups every year, but unfortunately, losing about as many due to people drifting apart for one reason or another, and hence we have not been making much net growth. Our present need is to stabilize what we already have, and then build on it.

As an important step toward meeting that need, this letter is to announce the formation of the Study Group Fellowship of URANTIA Brotherhood, dedicated to the welfare of study groups, the grass roots and soul of our movement.

Requirements for membership

As is proper, quite a long process is involved for a study group to become chartered as a URANTIA Society. In contrast, there is only one requirement for your group to join the Study Group Fellowship: that at least three of your members commit to meet together to study the book on a regular basis, attending at least 75% of your group's regularly scheduled meetings.

This requirement is structured as a bare-bones minimum, and is grounded in the fact that The URANTIA Book defines three as the minimum size of a social group, and because a group must meet in order to be a group. The benchmark of 75% attendance is somewhat arbitrary, but is designed to elicit a definite commitment on the part of members toward their group, in the belief that such a commitment is one of the surest means of protecting and enhancing the spiritual lives of all persons involved.

There is no requirement of individual membership in URANTIA Brotherhood or of having read the book in its entirety to join the Study Group Fellowship. "Whosoever will, let him come." All that is required is that a minimum of three readers complete and send in the attached application form, which is renewable on an annual basis.

Your membership in the Study Group Fellowship is altogether voluntary, and you will not be thought less of if you choose, for any reason, not to join. No one from headquarters will be taking roll to check up on whether your members show up at meetings; the 75% participation benchmark represents an encouraging challenge designed to foster your members' commitment toward your group and to give your members more of a sense of being part of a larger cause--the network of thousands of study groups which are critical to the eventual ushering-in of the spiritual kingdom on Urantia.

URANTIA

We are requesting that each group name itself; this is intended to give your group an existence independent of any one member who may have founded or led it, and to help foster a greater loyalty on the part of your members toward the group. (In naming your group, it would be preferable not to call it "John & Jane's Group," as they may move, or the "Tuesday night group" for a similar reason. The name of the town you meet in, or some name from The URANTIA Book would be fine, first-come, first-served.)

Membership benefits

Periodically, member study groups will be invited to attend a conclave of study groups, which will probably meet at or around the time of the Brotherhood summer seminars. At these meetings, all matters relating to the welfare and extension of study groups will be deliberated. There will be no "political" dimension to the Fellowship; there will be no offices to hold. It will be exclusively dedicated to helping study groups better serve the needs of their members. By the sharing of experience more effective methods for study will become more widely known. We will accelerate the process of learning what works and what does not work.

One benefit of Fellowship membership will be inclusion in a study group directory, which will list your members' names, the dates and times of your meetings, and the telephone number of a designated contact person for groups open to visitors. Other than the city name, no addresses will be given so as to allow you control over, or notice of, who might be attending. The directory will unquestionably induce many interesting guests, traveling in the vicinity, to adjust their schedules to be able to attend, thus promoting an invigorating cross-fertilization of our entire movement. The identification of near-by study groups will lead to more regional activities at the study group level.

Another benefit of Fellowship membership will be periodic mailings containing the best available resource material for study groups, how-to articles by successful study group leaders, and any noteworthy news of concern to study groups.

Each year your study group may reaffirm its membership in the Fellowship simply by renewing its commitment to meet, hopefully with increasing membership as the years pass. Eventual chartered URANTIA Society standing is not what every group will necessarily desire, but if that is the course which the group has chosen, membership in the Study Group Fellowship should be very helpful. The Fellowship should also help give geographically isolated study groups more a sense of being an integral part of the URANTIA movement.