

## Thoughts on Purpose and Philosophy

This spring issue featuring URANTIA societies is an excellent time to share with you some of the thoughts on purpose and philosophy which have been expressed over the years in URANTIA Brotherhood and which are now held by present-day leaders.

The statement of purpose of URANTIA Brotherhood is found in the URANTIA Brotherhood Constitution, Article II:

"The purposes of URANTIA Brotherhood are the study and dissemination of the teachings of The URANTIA Book; the promotion, improvement, and expansion among the peoples of the world of the comprehension and understanding of cosmology and the relation of the planet on which we live to the universe, of the genesis and destiny of man and his relation to God, and of the teachings of Jesus Christ; and the inculcation and encouragement of the realization and appreciation of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man--in order to increase and enhance the comfort, happiness, and well-being of man, as an individual and as a member of society, by fastening a religion, a philosophy, and a cosmology which are commensurate with man's intellectual and cultural development, through the medium of fraternal association, ever obedient and subservient to the laws of this country and of all countries wherein URANTIA Brotherhood may extend."

URANTIA Brotherhood started in the United States, but, as Martin Myers, Chicago, Illinois, International Fellowship Committee Chairman, recently expressed, URANTIA Brotherhood is intended to become a world-wide federation of students of The URANTIA Book who wish to join others in a common cause.

It has often been emphasized that URANTIA Brotherhood is not the spiritual brotherhood, the invisible spiritual fellowship of believers which transcends all social institutions. URANTIA Brotherhood is a voluntary fraternal association which is not necessary for one's spiritual development or salvation. Not all dedicated students of the URANTIA revelation will choose to join URANTIA Brotherhood.

Another view which has often been expressed is the need to beware of the dangers of institutional religion while promoting the real purposes of the socialization of religion. (Page 1092, paragraphs three and four, of The URANTIA Book is often referred to for a list of each.)

Another central idea is the protective function of URANTIA Brotherhood, a function emphasized in the early days and recently restated by the current President, Meredith Sprunger, Fort Wayne, Indiana. Many groups would claim to be the "true" guardian of The URANTIA Book, perhaps changing the book or imposing their interpretations upon others, unless URANTIA Foundation and URANTIA Brotherhood existed to guard individual freedom.

URANTIA Brotherhood has thus been viewed as a scaffolding, a facilitator, of the invisible brotherhood. The first Brotherhood President, Bill Sadler, Jr., observed that "God is the only true end." URANTIA Brotherhood and The URANTIA Book are only means to the end, tools in the adventure of knowing God and realizing the brotherhood of man.

*Copies of the constitution are available upon request for those who are considering membership in URANTIA Brotherhood.*

## Letters

The Bulletin staff wishes to acknowledge the many encouraging responses we have received. We welcome your comments and suggestions.

"We were very pleased with the recent mailing of the Bulletin, and were especially glad to have the pictures and to read about current activities of the Brotherhood world-wide."

--Bradenton, Florida

"I was delighted to receive the Bulletin with the pictures of people who I have felt I knew well but have never seen! It was like a personal visit!"

--Santa Rosa, California

"The 'familiar faces' were such a welcome addition to the interesting news. It was a joy to some of us for removed from 533."

--Richfield, Minnesota

### URANTIA Brotherhood BULLETIN

Published quarterly by  
URANTIA Brotherhood  
533 Diversey Parkway  
Chicago, Illinois 60614

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Here is the picture many of you have asked for: 533 Diversey Parkway, Chicago, Illinois. URANTIA Foundation and URANTIA Brotherhood have their offices on the first floor. There is a meeting room on the second floor, and storage and apartments in the rest of the building.

Photo by John Hales, Lisle, Illinois.

## URANTIA Societies

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that the group has been meeting and experience in and integration into URANTIA Brotherhood activities are equally important factors.

Society membership is the primary way individuals become members of URANTIA Brotherhood. Membership-at-large is for exceptional cases where one for some reason, such as geographical location, cannot join a URANTIA society.

The first group to study the URANTIA teachings was the Forum, which studied the original manuscript of The URANTIA Book while efforts to publish the book were underway. The Forum continued as a study group until First URANTIA Society was organized in 1956. Two other societies, First URANTIA Society of Los Angeles (FUSLA) and URANTIA Society of Glenview, both in 1957, had founders who had been in the Forum.

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On the second floor of 533 Diversey Parkway, First URANTIA Society meets every Sunday, 2-4 p.m., September-May. Leaders conduct the program of study and discussion of URANTIA Book papers. Here, Bill Martin, upper-right hand corner, conducts the meeting. First URANTIA Society has 122 members. About 20-40 attend the weekly Sunday programs, and members are active in several study groups.

Photo by Robert Killeke, Evanston, Illinois.





FUSLA faces: Jackie and Kermit Anderson; Julia Fenderson and Scott Forsythe. Kermit is President of FUSLA. Julia was a society founder and is a Brotherhood Field Representative. Scott is a former FUSLA President. FUSLA has an all-society meeting once a month and meets in numerous study groups the rest of the time. FUSLA has 99 members.

Photos by Dick MacDonald, Van Nuys, California.

## URANTIA Societies

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The First URANTIA Society of Oklahoma, installed in 1957, was the first society without former Forum members among its founders. Orvonton URANTIA Society of Chicago was founded in 1961 and now has 36 members. The Orvonton society is in charge of the evening entertainment at the conference this summer. After meeting as a study group for 10 years, the First URANTIA Society of Fort Wayne, Indiana, was installed in 1969. They are the hosts for the party on the first night of the conference, Sunday, August 13.

The 1970's brought the last four societies. First URANTIA Society of Wenatchee, Washington, now has 18 members, and is coordinating the morning sessions of the General Conference. First URANTIA Society of Houston now has 31 members. First URANTIA Society of Western Springs met for 20 years as a study group and now has eight members, although 15-20 regularly attend their weekly Friday night meetings. The San Francisco Bay Area URANTIA Society (SFBAUS) has

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The URANTIA Society of Glenview meets every other Friday night for study and fellowship. Front row, left to right, are: Brent Stricker and his son Jesse, Larry Posner, Glenview President, Kristen Hovda and her father, Norm, Henry Schulte. Back row: Lana Stricker, Norm Hetland, Martin Yoder, Lisa and David Renn and son, Kevin, Randy and Mary Renn, Suzanne Hales, David Pierce, Patty Hovda. Glenview has 22 members and will serve as "conference companions" to help participants get settled at the conference this summer.

Photo by John Hales, Kentworth, Illinois.





The First URANTIA Society of Oklahoma has 108 members who meet in several study groups. 20-25 attend weekly Sunday evening meetings in the home of Berkeley Elliott, a society founder and Brotherhood Field Representative. Pictured are: Vernon Chapman, Berkeley Elliott, Waldine Stump, Otis Rich, Frankie Goodman, Ginny Allen Lytel, and Fred Farha.

Photos by Richard Brittain, Midwest City, Oklahoma.

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26 members and is conducting the Remembrance Service on Thursday evening of the conference.

URANTIA societies are governed locally by their own constitutions, which they write and adopt prior to installation. Our 10 societies are very different, in size, age, activities, background, and methods of organization. Some societies have business meetings only once a year while others meet frequently, particularly in committee or project groups. All emphasize the importance of study groups and are open to sincere students of The URANTIA Book regardless of membership; some societies are very dedicated to fostering study groups.

URANTIA societies are federally governed by the constitution of URANTIA Brotherhood. They send delegates to the Triennial Delegate Assembly which elects General Councilors. The next Triennial Delegate Assembly will be in 1979.



The First URANTIA Society of Fort Wayne, Indiana, has 22 members. Pictured at their annual meeting are, front row: Frank Serovey, Don Boyd, Everett Sloffer, Neils Hansen. 2nd row: Irene Sprunger, Fort Wayne President, Celia Hansen, Isabell Masel, John Kurtz, Mary Lou Kurtz, Mel Quinn. 3rd row: Rozella Hinton, Dorothy Sloffer, David Schlundt, Sally Schlundt, Robert Serovey, Amy Serovey, Laura Meyers, Marilyn Buchanan.

Photo by Meredith Sprunger, Fort Wayne, Indiana.



A SFBAUS annual meeting at the home of Vern and Nancy Grimsley. Left to right are: David Gray, SFBAUS President, Francyl Gawryn, Marilyn Nelson, Sue Kantor (standing), Gard Jameson, Brian Cox, Mary Blessing, Terry McCade, Eldon Warman, and Nathaniel Blackstock. Members are active in several study groups.

Photo by Bob Blackstock, Albany, California.