



# URANTIA® Brotherhood BULLETIN

Summer 1988

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## BROTHERHOOD ANNOUNCES 1989 SUMMER SEMINAR

The Education and Fraternal Relations Committees of URANTIA Brotherhood will jointly sponsor the fourth in a series of Intensive Summer Seminars devoted to an overview study of *The URANTIA Book*. The seminars will be held at Lake Forest College, Lake Forest, Illinois, for five days, beginning Sunday, June 25, and ending Friday, June 30. Subjects for presentation and discussion will address the topic "Development of Religion" from the viewpoints of the individual and the group, planetary history and universe destiny. Study will focus on the contents of Papers 92-119, completing the study of Part III of *The URANTIA Book*, begun last June.

### Education Committee Examines Program

The Education Committee is considering ways to broaden the participation of readers in the seminars, while retaining their traditional focus on in-depth study. A highlight of last Summer's program was the addition of a series of topical sessions, supplementing the sequential study of papers from the book. In a statement for the Bulletin, Education Committee Chairman Dan Massey said, "The second half of Part III covers a wide range of topics which are suitable for in-depth presentations and/or study discussions. In glancing through the Table of Contents, I quickly came up with more than a dozen really interesting subjects:

Egyptian Monotheism	Beliefs of World Religions
Prayer & Worship	The Remembrance Supper
Concepts of the Trinity	Group Religious Practices
Religious Conversion	Spiritual Guidance
Events of Destiny	Personal Religious Experience
Concepts of the Supreme	Time and Space
Absonite Realities	Universe Spiritual Destiny

The Education Committee will be working through the Fall to determine how these and other suggestions from the readership fit into its overall long-range plans."

If you would like to participate in the seminars, please return the card enclosed with this copy of *URANTIA Brotherhood Bulletin* to insure that you are included in all future informational mailings. All readers of *The URANTIA Book* are welcome to attend and to help develop these seminars.

### Fraternal Relations Expands Program

An additional series of events focusing on relationships of the URANTIA movement to the clergy is being planned for seminar week by the Fraternal Relations Committee. During past seminars these events were planned as optional activities on a few evenings. Next year's Fraternal Relations Program is expected to add a daytime workshop program on Wednesday, June 28. "We hope this program will offer readers of *The URANTIA Book* an opportunity to explore the teachings of the Book in relation to others' beliefs without relying on theological details found only in the Book."

## READERSHIP SURVEY SUMMARY RELEASED

As URANTIA Brotherhood continues to expand throughout the world, the ideas and concerns of the readership become increasingly important in providing meaningful programs and services for those who are working to disseminate the teachings of *The URANTIA Book*. As part of efforts to understand the viewpoints and needs of the readership, a survey was designed by members of the Executive Committee of URANTIA Brotherhood during the fall of 1986. This survey was intended to elicit readers' attitudes about the purpose of URANTIA Brotherhood and individuals within the Brotherhood (section 1), the importance of various programs and services that were currently being offered or being considered (section 2), and to determine readers' feelings about the current and future functional style of URANTIA Brotherhood (section 3).

The survey was sent out as an insert to the *URANTIA Brotherhood Bulletin* in Spring of 1987 in English and French versions. By late Fall the Brotherhood had received 721 surveys from readers in 20 countries throughout the world. In addition to responding to 75 closed-ended questions, readers wrote over 300 typed pages of comments about their feelings, perceptions, needs, and offers to be of service to the Brotherhood in its work. Many thanks to all those readers who took the time to complete the survey and write extensive comments. The results of the closed-ended survey questions on purpose, importance of programs and services, and the functional style of URANTIA Brotherhood are summarized on Page 2 of this copy of *URANTIA Brotherhood Bulletin*.

See Page 2 for Survey Results

## TDA RESOLUTIONS ADDRESS DIVERSE TOPICS

On June 26 the Triennial Delegate Assembly adopted twelve resolutions which were referred to the General Council for action at its meeting July 2-3. Historically, many important actions and initiatives of URANTIA Brotherhood have resulted from these deliberations. The following paragraphs summarize the nine individual resolutions adopted by the General Council.

### Council Communications

The TDA complimented the Executive Committee and the General Council on the improvement of communications during the past three years.

### Councilor Travel

The TDA suggested that a means should be developed for subsidizing the expenses of Councilors in attending required meetings of the General Council. The General Council accepted the resolution and referred it to an existing ad hoc committee which is reviewing policy in this area.

See Resolutions on Page 3



Survey Results from Page 1

## Purpose of URANTIA Brotherhood and Individuals Within the Brotherhood

The questions in the first section were based on the statement of purpose from the Constitution of URANTIA Brotherhood:

*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 to 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 fostering 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.*

Respondents were asked to rate sixteen different statements using a five point scale with responses ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1), with neutrality being scored (3). An average response over 4.0 was earned by the following seven statements:

- 4.7 It is the responsibility of readers of *The URANTIA Book* to reflect their understanding of the teachings in their inner and outer lives.

- 4.4 It is important that readers of *The URANTIA Book* have a broad vision of the possibilities for the evolution of mankind on our planet.  
4.3 It is important that readers of *The URANTIA Book* understand that they are members of a larger team assembled to uplift the planet.  
4.2 One of the purposes of URANTIA Brotherhood should be the sale and distribution of *The URANTIA Book*.  
4.2 The vast majority of our brethren are not yet ready to deal with *The URANTIA Book*, yet many of them are ready for the spiritual teachings it contains.  
4.2 URANTIA Societies and study groups represent an effective means to help achieve the purposes of URANTIA Brotherhood.  
4.1 Maintaining and building study groups should be a Brotherhood priority.

Although disagreeing responses were not generally as strong as agreeing responses, there were four statements which earned a score less than 3.0, indicating overall slight to moderately strong disagreement:

- 2.7 URANTIA Brotherhood, as an organization, should actively help improve the social, political, economic, and religious institutions of our day.  
2.7 Belonging to a church, synagogue, or other religious group or organization important to me.  
2.1 URANTIA Brotherhood should become a world religion.  
1.9 People need to join URANTIA Brotherhood to become a part of the spiritual brotherhood of all mankind.

## Programs and Services Important for URANTIA Brotherhood

In the second section of the survey, readers were given a list of 25 different programs and services that either currently existed or were being considered. This section asked readers to rate the importance of each program and service on the following five point scale: Very Important = 5, Important = 4, Somewhat Important = 3, Not Very Important = 2, Not Important at All = 1. Of the 25 programs and services listed only four had a mean rating below 4.0 (Important). The programs and services considered to be important by readers were:

- 4.7 Distributing *The URANTIA Book*.  
4.5 Responding to requests by readers over the phone and by letter.  
4.4 Fostering the growth of study groups.  
4.4 Fostering international growth outside the United States.  
4.4 Placing *The URANTIA Book* in libraries outside the United States.  
4.3 Publishing a directory of study group contacts.  
4.3 Aiding in the Spanish translation of *The URANTIA Book*.  
4.3 Acting as a clearing-house for information and communication among readers throughout the world.

- 4.1 Publishing the quarterly *URANTIA Brotherhood Bulletin*.  
4.1 Publishing and distributing pamphlets related to the book.  
4.0 Publishing the *URANTIAN*, journal of URANTIA Brotherhood..  
4.0 Marketing *The URANTIA Book*.  
4.0 Having audio-tapes of *The URANTIA Book* available.  
4.0 Setting up a network of readers with shared interests.  
4.0 Publishing materials on effective study group techniques.

In addition to rating the programs and services, readers were asked to list the three programs and services which they thought were the most important. The three which were ranked as most important by the greatest number of people were:

- Distributing *The URANTIA Book*. (313 responses)  
Fostering the growth of study groups. (219 responses)  
Acting as a clearing-house for information and communication among readers throughout the world. (154 responses)

## Functional Style of URANTIA Brotherhood—Today and in the Future

The third section of the survey contained some phrases and words that might be used to describe the functional styles of URANTIA Brotherhood. Readers were asked to rate the extent to which they felt that each phrase was descriptive of URANTIA Brotherhood, both today and in the future. The rating scale used for these phrases was: Very Descriptive = 5, Descriptive = 4, Somewhat Descriptive = 3, Not Particularly Descriptive = 2, Not Descriptive at All = 1.

The mean ratings for the phrases as they described URANTIA Brotherhood today ranged from 2.5 (not particularly descriptive) to 4.1 (descriptive). Words and phrases that readers felt were descriptive of URANTIA Brotherhood today were: spiritually oriented (4.1), friendly (4.0), educationally oriented (3.7), encouraging (3.7), and responsive to needs (3.6). Money-oriented was a phrase that was not felt to be descriptive of URANTIA Brotherhood (2.5).

Individuals felt that the following phrases should be very descriptive of URANTIA Brotherhood in the future. It should be: spiritually oriented, educationally oriented, growing, responsive to needs, encouraging, and active. Internationally oriented was rated nearly very descriptive of URANTIA Brotherhood. Phrases

which readers felt should not describe URANTIA Brotherhood in the future were legally oriented, money oriented, and secretive.

When the ratings of the functional style of URANTIA Brotherhood today were compared to URANTIA Brotherhood in the future, there were several words or phrases that had differences between the means of today and in the future that were 1.0 or greater. In order of difference, readers felt that URANTIA Brotherhood should be more internationally oriented (difference = 1.2), more outreach oriented (1.1), less secretive (1.0), more service oriented (1.0), more responsive to needs (1.0), more encouraging (1.0), and more active (1.0). Readers felt that there should be no change in the orientation of the Brotherhood toward money and little in the extent to which the Brotherhood is nationally oriented (0.2) and religiously oriented (0.3).

At the January 1988 meeting of the Executive Committee and the special meeting of the General Council of URANTIA Brotherhood, the survey results were presented. It was felt by some committee members that the survey presented some useful information which should help various groups in the Brotherhood be more responsive to the needs and desires of the readership.



## CONFERENCE CALENDAR

June 10-11, 1989, Northeast Regional Conference, Simon's Rock—Bard College, Stockbridge, Massachusetts. Contact URANTIA Society of Central Connecticut, P.O. Box 88, Farmington, Connecticut 06034.

June 23-24, 1989, Conclave of URANTIA Societies. URANTIA Brotherhood, 533 Diversey Parkway, Chicago, Illinois 60614.

June 25-30, 1989, Intensive Study Seminar, Lake Forest College, Illinois. Topic: "Development of Religion." Contact: URANTIA Brotherhood, 533 Diversey Parkway, Chicago, Illinois 60614. Phone: (312) 327-0424.

*Resolutions from Page 1*

### General Council Participation

The TDA urged the Council to develop ways to increase member participation on the Council and on other Brotherhood committees. It was decided to assign URANTIA Brotherhood Vice-President Marilyn Kuliecke to develop a process for further evaluation of these ideas and issues.

### Councilor Candidate Selection

TDA delegates asked the Council to provide a more effective process for presenting the qualifications of candidates. A very large number of thoughts about alternative approaches were expressed by Councilors in accepting this resolution. The formal development of these ideas will be undertaken by URANTIA Brotherhood President Dave Elders as chairman of an *ad hoc* committee in which all Delegates and Alternates from the 1988 TDA will be invited to participate.

### Society Communications

The TDA requested that the General Council research methods for facilitating and encouraging communication among URANTIA Societies. The Council approved this resolution and assigned it to Marilyn Kuliecke for development.

### Advance Notice of Resolutions

The TDA Delegates felt that too many resolutions were presented for their consideration at the last minute, and suggested that future TDAs be advised of the desirability of limiting consideration of resolutions to those presented with at least 30 days advance notice. The Council agreed that future TDAs should be informed of this action.

### Trustee Council Attendance

To help foster improved communications between the policy making bodies of URANTIA Foundation and URANTIA Brotherhood, the TDA urged the General Council to invite the Trustees of URANTIA Foundation to participate in future Council meetings. This matter was assigned to an *ad hoc* committee for exploration with the Trustees.

### Movement History

The TDA requested that the Brotherhood expedite and extend its existing activities in documenting the history of the URANTIA Movement to include the compilation of an oral history from early readers "...to the end that a sense of the problems and excitement of those days can be preserved." The Council approved this resolution and referred it to the Special Projects Committee, which is currently implementing a historical project derived from a resolution of the 1985 TDA.

### Thanks to Marian Rowley

The TDA and General Council unanimously approved the following resolution: "WHEREAS long time service deserves notice and faithful service merits praise, BE IT RESOLVED that the 1988 Triennial Delegate Assembly bids Marian Rowley a fond farewell from the General Council and thanks her for her years of exemplary work for the good of URANTIA Brotherhood."

A brief summary of those resolutions rejected appears on Page 4.

*See Rejected Resolutions on Page 4*

## TDA, COUNCIL ELECT NEW FACES

Delegates representing the eighteen chartered URANTIA Societies convened as the Triennial Delegate Assembly of URANTIA Brotherhood June 25-26 at Chicago headquarters for the purpose of electing members of the General Council and considering resolutions to be referred to the Council. This year the TDA elected 15 General Councilors to terms of varying length and passed 12 resolutions, which are discussed in a separate article. The elected councilors, with their terms, are listed below. The ten persons indicated with an asterisk in this list have not previously served on the Council.

### For nine years:

Robert Bruyn  
Avinoam Dogim\*  
Stephen Dreier  
David N. Elders  
Lucile Faw\*  
Janice C. Heinberg\*

Gard Jameson\*  
James G. Johnston\*  
Eileen Laurence\*  
Harry McMullan  
Brent St. Denis\*  
Melissa Wells\*

### For six years:

W. David Robertson

### For three years:

Anthony R. Finstad\*  
John L. Lange\*

For the first time since the establishment of URANTIA Brotherhood in 1955, no member of the original General Council holds a current office. A new generation of readers has truly assumed responsibility for the guidance of the social and fraternal aspects of the fifth epochal revelation.

## Officers, Executive Committee Elected

The General Council convened July 2-3 at Lake Forest College to elect officers and to fill vacancies on the Executive Committee and the nine departmental committees of URANTIA Brotherhood. The new officers, each elected for a term of three years, are:

President	David N. Elders
Vice-President	Marilynn J. Kuliecke
Secretary	Janice C. Heinberg
Treasurer	John D. Hay
Secretary-General	Lynne B. Kuliecke

Eight persons were elected chairmen of various departmental committees, to serve for six year terms:

Judicial	Stephen Dreier
Charter	Avinoam Dogim
Fraternal Relations	Peter Laurence
International Fellowship	Berkeley Elliott
Education	Dan Massey
Publications	James G. Johnston
Finance	Gard Jameson
Special Projects	Robert Bruyn

*See Election on Page 4*

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## RELIGIONS OF URANTIA

This article is presented by the Fraternal Relations Committee as a part of our continuing effort to bring the students of *The URANTIA Book* a flavor of the religious diversity and spiritual unity that currently exists among the peoples of our world. Our presentation in this issue concerns Sufism.

Sufism represents a mystical element within the Islamic tradition. Its origins date back to the days of Muhammad and the revelation of the Koran. While the notion of God within Islam as our almighty Creator and Lord of the Universe (Koran 10:3) is affirmed, there is an equally strong affirmation by Sufism of God as our Great Friend, the Source of our love experience ... "and wherever you turn, there is God's face. Truly God is omnipresent, omniscient." (Koran 2:115) "And is God not closer to humankind than his own jugular vein?" (Koran 50:16)

Idries Shah, a contemporary Sufi master, has done much to bring us a knowledge of the Sufi tradition by writing numerous books on the subject. His stories of the incomparable Mullah Nasrudin are enjoyed by man in the West. According to Shah, the primary objective of the Sufi movement is to realize and spread the knowledge of unity, the religion of love and wisdom, so that the bias of faiths and beliefs may of itself fall away, the human heart may overflow with love, and all hatred caused by distinctions and differences may be rooted out.

There is a deep sense of God's presence and of man's brotherhood rooted within the Sufi tradition. The guiding spirit of God within all souls is regarded as the source of our salvation. This spirit leads the receptive individual towards true knowledge; it opens the heart to that beauty which uplifts the heart of its worshipper; and it manifests God's goodness in deeds of beneficence, leading the believer from mortality to immortality and perfection.

In pursuit of communion with God's spirit, the Sufis engage in a number of practices in accordance with the direction of a Sufi master. Most important is "dikh" (remembrance) and "sama" (audition). Most dikh practices are repetitious techniques designed to instill unbroken communion with God. The rhythmic repetition of a phrase, often from the Koran, is most popular. Sama involves listening to music or the recitation of poetry, which is intended to spark an experience of communion. Sama oftentimes leads to Sufi dancing.

One of Sufism's greatest representatives was Rabi'ah al-Adawiyah. Her piety and loving personality were renowned. Her love of God was pure, finding expression in her saying, "O Lord! If I worship you from fear of Hell, cast me into Hell. If I worship you from desire of Paradise, deny me Paradise." In reading Rabi'ah's words, or the poetry of Rumi, one is filled with a sense of their experience of God's infinite love for each of us.

Sufism's place within contemporary Islam has suffered from the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, the secularization of world culture, and the fact that it does not fit neatly within the two largest traditions of Islam, the Sunni and the Shi'ite traditions. Sufism has been described as a fallow field within Islam, awaiting the revitalizing touch of a great master. However, because Sufism is to be considered as a mystical dimension within Islam, it does not portend to be a mass movement. Mystical elements, in whatever tradition they may be found, have never appealed to the popular mind, except as a fascination.

Even though Sufism is not accepted by traditional Muslims, it can represent a very real bridge for students of *The URANTIA Book* attempting to understand Islam, and to find those elements in Islam which are most compatible with the teachings of *The URANTIA Book*. Recommended readings on the subject are as follows:

Arberry, Arthur. *Sufism*

Lings, Martin. *A Moslem Saint in the 20th Century*

Shah, Idries. *Learning How to Learn*

Shah, Idries. *Nasrudin*

Watt, Montgomery. *The Faith and Practice of Al-Ghazali*

"True religion is an insight into reality, ... and not a mere intellectual assent to any body of dogmatic doctrine." (1107:3)

Election from Page 3

As with the General Council, this is the first occasion since 1955 in which no member of the original Executive Committee continues to serve.

## Departmental Committee Vacancies Filled

A number of vacancies in the departmental committees of URANTIA Brotherhood were also filled by the General Council during this meeting. The individuals elected, with their corresponding terms of service, are:

### Charter

Sarah Nachtweg	2 years
Francyl Gawryn	1 year

### Domestic Extension

W. David Robertson	6 years
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### International Fellowship

Brent St. Denis	5 years
John Hales	2 years

### Education

Eileen Laurence	2 years
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### Publications

Robert Buselli	3 years
Vincent Myers	2 years

### Finance

Melissa Wells	3 years
Barton Ice	2 years

### Special Projects

James McNelly	3 years
Bill Hazen	2 years

While the Constitution of URANTIA Brotherhood calls for a single vacancy on each departmental committee to be filled by election each year, there are often more total vacancies created by the movement of people from one committee assignment to another and/or by resignation.

Rejected Resolutions from Page 3

## Summary of REJECTED RESOLUTIONS

### Delegate Conflict of Interest

The TDA presented a weakly supported resolution that candidates for election to the Council be barred from concurrent service as a TDA Delegate or Alternate. The Council strongly rejected this recommendation, feeling that such matters were properly the province of the electing URANTIA Society.

### Council Participation Requirement

The TDA strongly recommended that the seat of any Councilor who failed to attend at least one meeting each year, except for medical reasons, be vacated. The council weakly rejected this proposal, a small majority feeling that existing constitutional provisions for removal of Councilors are adequate.

### Amend Brotherhood Purpose

The Delegates urged the Council to pursue amendment of the Constitution of URANTIA Brotherhood to change the existing phrase "...ever obedient and subservient to the laws of this country..." to read "...ever mindful of the laws of this country..." This suggestion was rejected by the Council.



## KEYNOTE ADDRESS TO THE 1988 TRIENNIAL DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

I salute the God within you.

What on earth are we doing here?

Why did we come all this way—to spend time and money and emotional and spiritual energy—when we could be doing something else?

Why did each one of us make the choice to be here today? In this room together?

There is an old story about three bricklayers, all working on the same wall of bricks. A stranger approached the first of the three and asked: "What are you doing?"

• And the bricklayer said: "My boss told me to come over here and lay some bricks."

Whereupon the stranger approached the second bricklayer and asked him the same question: "What are you doing?"

• And the second bricklayer said: "I'm building a wall."

And then the stranger approached the third bricklayer and asked him: "What are you doing?"

• And the third bricklayer said: "I'm building a cathedral."

And in very much the same way, each one of us could think of why we are here today from quite different levels of understanding.

• On one hand we could say: "I'm here because my URANTIA Society told me to come here to vote on some resolutions and elect some General Councilors."

• On the other hand—we could say: "I'm here to help develop a new General Council, and to give it some important things to consider."

• Or, we could stretch our minds and hearts to even more daring levels and say: "I'm here to help shape the destiny of URANTIA Brotherhood."

I believe we have come here to help shape the destiny of URANTIA Brotherhood, for better or for worse. I believe we have come together to help move the Brotherhood ever more surely upon the pathway that will lead to the ultimate and final realization of its noble purpose.

And if we came here to do this, then we have to attempt to achieve real altitude in our decision process. Each one of us has to find a perspective that simultaneously focuses on the details of the task before us, and the great, creative cosmic framework within which we live and move and have our being. We have to understand in our bones the purpose and philosophy of URANTIA Brotherhood, and how this applies to the work at hand.

If we are here to help build a better Brotherhood, then it would seem logical for us to begin with a clear and uplifting statement of the purpose of the Brotherhood. And our statement of purpose must reflect our singular understanding of one fact that is central to the reality of our existence—God's ways are higher than our ways, and always—always—we must seek to discover God's higher ways.

A statement of purpose has no practical value if it is not effective. It has to be effective. It has to focus and mobilize the energies of the entire Brotherhood, even the entire Urantia movement. And any statement of its mission or purpose that the Brotherhood formulates will be effective only to the extent to which it meets the test of the following five characteristics.<sup>1</sup>

1. The statement of mission or purpose has to be short, clear, and unambiguous.
2. It has to evoke deep emotional attachment because it connects with compelling personal interests of organization members. People have to feel passionate about the mission.
3. It has to set the organization apart from every other organization by stating what is unique and what added value it offers to everyone outside the organization.
4. It has to be crafted in such a way that it cannot be misinterpreted among organization members.
5. It has to express what the organization intends to be now, not merely what it wishes to be in the future. Although the statement of purpose may not be completely realized in the present, it has to express what members feel is the essence of their organization.

What is the great and noble purpose of URANTIA Brotherhood?

[I believe] the purpose of URANTIA Brotherhood is to promote the spiritual transformation of mankind by LIVING the teachings of *The URANTIA Book*.

All of us in this room will instantly recognize that the mission of lifting this wayward planet out of savagery and into the ages of light and life is primarily in the hands of unseen personalities and agencies of superhuman origin. We are only helpers, human facilitators, but with a very important role to play. We live and die all too briefly. But the work goes on. The great enterprise continues.

The Brotherhood exists to do a number of things, but the greatest of these is to attempt to achieve a high spiritual purpose. Our spiritual purpose encompasses and subsumes all other purposes, including our functional purpose, which is to disseminate *The URANTIA Book* and its teachings among the peoples of the world.

The moment we say that our purpose is to promote the spiritual transformation of mankind by living the teachings of *The URANTIA Book*, we are in the same breath saying at least four things that are immediate, inherent, and important.

- First, we are saying that the focus of our activity is outward. We are saying that the Brotherhood does not exist in and for itself, but rather it exists to foster a loving and dynamic and transforming interaction between readers and non-readers of *The URANTIA Book*.
- Second, we are saying that we place the primary emphasis of our strategy on living the teachings, not preaching the teachings. We are shifting emphasis from *The URANTIA Book* itself to what *The URANTIA Book* was sent here to do—transform us.
- Third, we are saying that the way we will grow as a Brotherhood is by means of attraction, not proselytizing. We have the knowledge, the potential, to become the yeast which expands all world religions and all world religionists. And in choosing to proceed primarily by the method of attraction, there is nothing in our approach that would be regarded as intrinsically threatening to any group or individual. Always, we will be moving forward from a position of deep internal strength.
- And fourth, we are saying that the technique of the Fifth Epochal Revelation is both new and original—it is the most inspiring, difficult, and adventurous challenge that has been presented to an entire body of religionists in almost 2000 years. It is the religious challenge of this age.

I like to think of this purpose as the sweet, creative, and revitalizing essence of the work of URANTIA Brotherhood, providing a steady point of reference for all of our decision-making processes as a group, whether we are looking at short-term issues, longer range plans, or vast and sweeping visions of our destiny. Everything we do proceeds from a purpose, a fundamental point of view about what it is—that it really is—that we are trying to do.

But we proceed not only from a sense of purpose. We also proceed from a philosophy, a basic system of beliefs regarding God and existence and our purpose as an organization and as individuals. And this is only natural. Philosophy is a function of purpose.

We all know that members of the Brotherhood come from all walks of life and represent a great diversity of experience, interests, points of view, and spiritual condition. But against the backdrop of these great differences, I think there are some general beliefs that unite us in a profound common commitment, ways of thinking about the work to be done.

I have not invented a philosophy for the Brotherhood. Rather, I have tried to sense and put into words what I think is already the philosophy of the Brotherhood, what it is that unites us and illuminates our deep internal strength; what it is that makes us unique—unique, not special—among all of the organizations of the world.

First, I think we are united in believing that at the very center of our existence as a Brotherhood is the knowledge that God is the loving, heavenly Father of each human being. All that has value in human living originates in the sonship relationship between man and God. The spirit of God—the light that lights every man and woman who comes into the world—continuously educates and uplifts each who accepts this leading to progressively higher states of being. As sons and daughters of God, we therefore recognize all men and women as our brothers and sisters in a worldwide family of God.

Second, I think we are united in believing that the love of God has never been demonstrated with greater power and beauty than in the life of Jesus of Nazareth, whom we call Master. The religion OF Jesus, the foundation of our religious reality, is to seek the Father's will in every act and decision, to become God directed and service motivated.



Third, I think we are united in believing that this mortal existence is only the brief and intense beginning of eternal life, an adventure of unimaginable growth to higher and higher planes of comprehension, ability, service, and states of being. By the technique of becoming more and more like the Father, we will someday come to stand in his presence and receive his personal embrace. And this will be but a prelude to a universe career of unending growth and perfected service. We begin this journey from a tiny and remote part of a vast and friendly system of universes teeming with life and purpose. We envision all of creation evolving in an orderly way toward a great and exalted destiny in which each individual who has so elected by freewill choice will come to play a unique and continuing role.

Fourth, I think we are united in believing that the final achievement to the long-range purpose of URANTIA Brotherhood will be the eventual realization of a worldwide brotherhood of man under the Fatherhood of God. In recognition that the world can be transformed only to the extent to which each individual becomes transformed, our continuing focus is on the individual—of every race, religion, culture, and condition. And because our purpose extends forward over many, many centuries, we are inwardly prepared for a long, slow, patient, quiet, steady, and largely undramatic task.

Fifth, I think we are united in believing that the daily work of every believer is not in some distant communal setting, surrounded by lovable people, far from the distractions of society. In fact, the "distractions"—the sweat and grind of daily living—are the very stuff of our workplace, the heart of our work for nowhere else can the sweet currents of love and mercy flow more fully.

Sixth, I think we are united in believing that in its deepest sense, religion is a purely personal experience between man and God, and all that directly extends from that relationship. And we believe this experience can be full and complete both within and without the framework of organized religion. We seek spirit unity with all, while encouraging lives of individual freedom, dignity, and originality before God.

The list of things that unite us could be extended, but these ideas will long remain at the center of our philosophy.

What does all of this mean to the work at hand?

No matter how high we lift our sights, the ultimate translation of our potential into actual achievements will not come to fruition in the abstract. It will happen only if people make it so. And one of our two major reasons for being here today is to select individuals whom we will trust to move the organization ever more surely upon the pathway of its higher destiny.

Some of the issues that are before the General Council now, or that will occupy the attention of the Council over the next nine years, are very real and compelling, and often poignant because they often involve people whom we have come to know and love as enduring friends. Meetings of the Council are increasingly becoming tests of wisdom, spiritual maturity, and simple courage. We ask: What would Jesus do? And we have 36 answers.

From a long list of such issues, I have selected only three, which I would like to outline briefly. These may illustrate the complexity and magnitude of some of the things the Council will have to address. Whatever the Council does, or doesn't do, will have significant implications in the near term and over the longer range of our evolutionary future.

**Issue #1—How can we develop an effective pluralistic Brotherhood while maintaining the energy of a unified direction?**

Jesus runs a pluralistic universe. How can we develop this same quality of pluralism in the Brotherhood in a way that is consistent with our philosophy and purpose?

I am not using the term "pluralistic" in the way the dictionary defines it—which is the philosophical teaching that there is more than one ultimate principle. Rather, I am using the term in the way it is used in the Brotherhood—to mean that there may be any number of acceptable ways of getting things done, not only the way—some would say "decreed"—by 533. In one way or another the Brotherhood has been engaged with this issue for at least the 20 years in which I have been associated with it. Our inability to resolve it does not mean it will disappear. In fact, it is becoming more urgent. Every year the issue seems to gather more energy, like a hurricane building up over an open sea.

How can we develop a spirit of love so warm and rich that we do not merely tolerate our differences, but love one another for our differences? How can the Brotherhood develop attitudes and techniques of continuing encouragement and support with respect to the many groups and individuals, within and without the Brotherhood, who want to define the URANTIA mission according to their own understanding, and proceed in their own way to get the job done?

**Issue #2—How can we get our act together before we are called upon the world stage for our major performance?**

In my opinion we have approximately another 60 years to get ourselves organized and positioned for a period of tremendous growth. Sixty years may seem like a long time until we begin to consider all the things that have to be done.

- During this time we have to build a Brotherhood on the basis of Jesusonian attitudes, a Jesus way of thinking and doing, taking our direction from the inspiration of his life and teachings every step of the way. Without this, we can do nothing. If we are not fragrant, who will come to us for help?
- During this time we have to develop a true professionalism in the way we conduct our activities throughout the Brotherhood, including every URANTIA Society—one that is based on solid short-term and long-term and contingency planning, leadership development, financial support, and systems for effective communication and coordination. There will have to be a professional sharpness, alertness, and responsiveness in all of our activities, underneath and in no way intruding upon the spirit of love and mercy and ministry that will always be the very heart of our work.

When the time comes, the Brotherhood will have to be able to absorb a great inflow of new members, and do this without becoming confused and paralyzed by the volume. Orderly and effective systems for getting things done will have to be in place throughout the Brotherhood. The General Council, as the governing body of the Brotherhood, will have the ultimate responsibility to see that these things are being done in time and are functioning properly.

Our task will be not merely to get this done, but to get it done in such a way that the Brotherhood does not become a big and cumbersome bureaucracy in the process. We have to stay light and easy all the way.

**Issue #3—How do we build a true global fellowship of believers?**

What are the most effective ways to transform the Brotherhood from an essentially white, middle-class, Christianized American movement into the beginning of its larger destiny as a worldwide fellowship of believers? A fellowship that progressively embraces our brothers and sisters in every religion, in every race, in every nation, and in every basic language and ethnic culture—always distinct and separate from identification with formalized religious movements, cults, and sects, but acting as an increasingly powerful leavening influence throughout the world. How do we begin to develop a global outlook and character throughout the Brotherhood?

This task will of necessity lead to increasing differentiation, diversity, and pluralism, and will call for the wisest among us to lead the way forward, to achieve the social and organizational harmony that will be required.

It is clear from these few examples that the General Council is going to need steady, reliable, balanced, spiritually aware individuals who have the wisdom, the stamina, the patience, and the loving hearts necessary for a long, steady struggle forward.

We are a brotherhood of individual religionists. We have a high purpose. But all we are today is potential, sheer potential, exciting potential. From here, every step is either forward or backward. Every person you elect to the General Council will move the Brotherhood either forward or backward.

There is no middle ground.

God bless you, my friends, my brothers and sisters of destiny, and guide you in your discussions and deliberations.

—Paul Snider

<sup>1</sup>"Harnessing Personal Energy: How Companies Can Inspire Employees," by Roger Harrison in *Organizational Dynamics*, Autumn, 1987.



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☐ We wish to attend the seminars in June, 1989 at Lake Forest College.  
Please send registration material.

☐ We would like to participate in the Education Committee program at the  
seminars. I am particularly interested in the following subject areas:

Subjects of \_\_\_\_\_  
Interest \_\_\_\_\_