

# Golden Gate Circle for students of THE URANTIA BOOK

---

"Of all human knowledge, that which is of greatest value is to know the religious life of Jesus and how he lived it." 196:1.3 (2090D)

## SOCIETY CONSTITUTION

### ARTICLE I

#### NAME:

**Section 1.1** — The name of this organization shall be the **Golden Gate Circle for students of *The Urantia Book***, hereinafter referred to as Society.

### ARTICLE II

#### PURPOSE:

**Section 2.1** — The specific and primary purpose of this Society shall be to study and disseminate the teachings of *The Urantia Book*, to develop in our lives and to encourage in the lives of others, the realization and appreciation of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of men and women.

The general purpose and powers of this society are to have and exercise all rights and powers conferred on non-profit, unincorporated associations under the laws of the State of California and the United States of America. . This society does not contemplate pecuniary gain or profit to the members thereof, as it is organized for non-profit purposes. Except to an insubstantial degree, this Society shall not engage in any activities or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of its primary purpose.

No substantial part of the activities of this Society shall consist of carrying on political propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation. The Society shall not participate, or intervene, in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

## ARTICLE III

### AFFILIATION:

**Section 3.1 — Society Affiliation:** This Society, while autonomous in its conduct of local affairs, is subject to the Constitution and By-Laws of The Fellowship of Readers of *The Urantia Book*, hereinafter referred to as The Fellowship.

**Section 3.2 — Member Affiliation:** By virtue of this Society's Charter, its members are *ipso facto* members of The Fellowship.

## ARTICLE IV

### MEMBERSHIP:

**Section 4.1 — Qualifications:** This Society and The Fellowship are both social organizations with a religious purpose, and draw essential inspiration from the teachings of *The Urantia Book*. Accordingly, and to foster the most active and effective Society possible, we require that all prospective Society members :

- a) have carefully read, or are in the process of reading, in its entirety, *The Urantia Book* ;
- b) have participated regularly and actively in a study group, or groups, whose primary purpose is a study of *The Urantia Book*, for at least one year;
- c) have attained the age of fourteen (14) years;
- d) and are residents in good standing with their community and country.

As members in good standing, we further commend to each other certain habits of active participation that promote an effective Society in more direct organizational ways. These go beyond individual reading and study groups to include:

- e) regular attendance at Society meetings and other Society sponsored events;
- f) timely payment of Society dues, and other assessments as may be deemed appropriate;
- g) willing contribution of time, effort, and other resources to committees, as elected Officers and in other capacities;
- h) wise application of cooperative problem solving skills to the changing needs of our spiritually-centered organization; and
- i) personal dedication to active lives of spiritual and temporal service.

Any person who shall be adjudged:

- j) by personal interview of the Membership Committee of this Society;
- k) by evidence a sincere desire and willingness to learn and understand the teachings of *The*



*Urantia Book*, and;

**1)** who shall declare their willingness to accept this Constitution and By-Laws (and hence, the Constitution and By-Laws of The Fellowship), shall be eligible for membership in this Society.

Membership in any church, religious organization, or fraternal Society shall not disqualify a candidate from membership in the Society.

**Section 4.2 — Application for Membership:** Application for membership in this Society shall be made in writing to the Membership Committee, in the form deemed appropriate by that Committee. (By-Laws, Chapter 1)

**Section 4.3 — Initiation of Members:** The initiation of new members shall be under the supervision of the Membership Committee, and shall basically consist of the minimum ritual prescribed by the Charter Committee of The Fellowship, with whatever additional features the Membership Committee may deem appropriate.

**Section 4.4 — Voting Membership:** A Voting Member of this Society, herein referred to as member, shall be one who:

- a) participates actively in the Society; and
- b) makes timely payment of Society dues and assessments.

**Section 4.5 — Termination of Membership:** If a member has not participated actively in the Society nor paid Society dues by the date of the first Semi Annual Meeting of the year, the Secretary shall within thirty days of that meeting inform the member that the continued non-participation in the Society and non-payment of all outstanding dues by the second Semi-Annual Meeting of the year will result in that member's name being dropped from the Membership roll of this Society.

If a member has not participated actively in the society and has not paid all outstanding dues by the second Semi-Annual meeting of the year, their name will be dropped from the roll "without prejudice". Termination of membership by dropping from the roll, as provided in this Section, shall be without prejudice to any further application for membership in this or any other Fellowship Society or for Membership-at-Large in The Fellowship and shall so be specified (i.e., "dropped from the roll without prejudice") by the Secretary in all correspondence concerning a dropped member.

**Section 4.6 — Reinstatement of Voting Privileges:** A member's voting privileges may be reinstated upon renewed fulfillment of the membership requirements (Section 4.4), including the payment of all outstanding dues and assessments.

**Section 4.7 — Transfer of Membership:** A member shall have the right to transfer their membership from this Fellowship Society to another Fellowship Society upon obtaining the consent of the Membership committee of the latter Society.

**Section 4.8 — Expulsion:** No member shall be expelled from membership in this Society unless, adjudged by this Society, the attitude, conduct or influence of such member shall be prejudicial to the interests and work of this Society. A member may not be expelled except upon:

- a) filing by the Membership Committee of a petition with the Governing Committee for the expulsion of such member;



- b) the summoning of such member by the Governing Committee to show cause why the membership in question should not be revoked;
- c) the affirmation by the Governing Committee that such membership should be revoked;
- d) the calling of the members of the Society for a Special Meeting. At such a Special Meeting of the members of the Society, the case for the expulsion of the member shall be presented by a member of the Governing Committee. The member facing expulsion may represent their case in person or may choose to be represented by any member of the Society. After all the evidence has been presented and all arguments have been heard, the accused member shall withdraw. The members of this Society, by secret ballot, shall then affirm or reverse the decision of the Governing Committee. The decision of a majority of a quorum of the members of this Society shall be final. This decision shall be communicated by the Secretary of this Society to its membership and to The Fellowship. A disaffirmance by the Governing Committee shall constitute a final determination dismissing the case. A member expelled from this Society may appeal to the Judicial Committee of The Fellowship in accordance with The Fellowship's Constitution and By-Laws.

## ARTICLE V

### MEETINGS:

**Section 5.1 — Informal Meetings:** Informal meeting shall be held primarily for the purpose of studying *The Urantia Book* at such times as may be determined at any Formal Meeting. Non-member students of *The Urantia Book*, and other interested visitors, may be welcome to attend these Informal Meetings.

**Section 5.2 — Formal Meetings:** Formal Meetings shall be as follows:

- a) **Semi-Annual Meetings:** Two Semi-Annual Meetings of the membership of this Society shall be held each calendar year at the Society's usual place of meeting, or at times and places designated by the Governing Committee. These Semi-Annual Meetings shall be held approximately every six (6) months. Notice of such meetings shall be given at least thirty (30) days prior to their being held.
- b) **Special Meetings:** Special Meetings may be called at any time by the Governing Committee, or upon the written request of twenty percent (20%) of the members. Notice thereof shall be given no less than one (1) week prior to being held and shall state the purpose, or purposes, for conducting the Special Meeting.
- c) **Triennial Meetings:** The election of one (1) delegate and one (1) alternate delegate to the Triennial Delegate Assembly (TDA) shall be in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution for the nomination and election of Officers of this Society. The time of this election and the report of its results and certification of delegates shall be in accordance with the requirements of the Constitution and By-Laws of The Fellowship.

**Section 5.3 — Quorum:** A quorum at any Formal Meeting, properly called and convened, shall consist of no fewer than seven (7) Voting Members. The Presiding Officer at any meeting may vote only in cases of a tied vote, excepting Elections of Officers (Section 6.1). Any motion presented at any



meeting at which a quorum is present shall be decided by a majority vote, except as otherwise provided in this Constitution.

**Section 5.4 — Powers:** This Society in formal meetings shall have the following powers:

- a) All powers not specifically restricted to the Officers, the Governing Committee, the Membership Committee, and which are not prohibited to this Society by this Constitution and By-Laws, or by the Constitution and By-Laws of The Fellowship, may be exercised by this Society.
- b) This Society shall have the power to adopt By-Laws to make effective the terms and provisions of this Constitution and to regulate the conduct of this Society.

## ARTICLE VI

### OFFICERS:

**Section 6.1 — Election of Officers:** Officers of this Society shall be elected at its first Semi-Annual meeting, held in the first six (6) months of the year, and shall hold office for a term of two (2) years and/or until their successors are duly qualified and elected. Election of the Officers shall be by secret ballot from the candidates nominated for each office by a Nominating Committee appointed by the President. In the event of a tie, balloting shall continue until a candidate for each office has received a majority. The Secretary will announce the results of the balloting.

**Section 6.2 — Duties of Officers:** Officers of the Society shall consist of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

- a) **Duties of the President:** The President shall be the principle Executive Officer. The President shall preside at all meetings of this Society and at all meetings of the Governing Committee (Article VII).
- b) **Duties of Vice-President:** In the event the President is unable to perform the duties of office, the Vice-President shall perform the duties and exercise the powers of the President. The Vice-President shall also aid the President in co-ordinating the activities of all committees except the Governing Committee, and shall be the Executive Officer for all special projects, except those delegated to other officers, Appointees of the President, or those chosen by a majority of Voting Members.
- c) **Duties of the Secretary:** The Secretary shall keep and preserve the records of the proceedings of all Formal and Special Meetings, and shall perform the various duties prescribed by the Constitution and By-Laws of The Fellowship. In the event that both the President and the Vice-President are unable to perform the duties of their offices, the Secretary shall perform the duties and exercise the powers of the President as the Executive Officer.
- d) **Duties of the Treasurer:** The Treasurer shall be the principal Financial Officer and shall have general control and supervision of the moneys and assets of this Society. The Treasurer shall render a full and complete report on the financial affairs of this Society at the Semi-Annual Meetings. The Treasurer shall make reports and perform duties in conformity with the requirements of the Constitution and By-Laws of The Fellowship. The Treasurer, in consultation with the Governing Committee, shall also propose an annual Society budget and



co-ordinate any and all Society fund-raising activities.

**Section 6.3 —** (Intentionally left blank.)

**Section 6.4 — Vacancies:** Whenever any vacancy shall occur in any of the foregoing offices, such vacancies may be filled at any Formal or Special Meeting of this Society. The Voting Members may elect a successor to such office to serve the remainder of the term, from nominees submitted by the Governing Committee, or from nominations made by Voting Members from the floor.

**Section 6.5.— Limitations:** No person shall hold more than one office at a time, except as may be provided in this Constitution (Sections 6.2b, 6.2c), nor shall any Officer serve as an Officer of a Standing Committee.

## ARTICLE VII

### GOVERNING COMMITTEE:

**Section 7.1 — Members:** The Governing Committee shall consist of the Officers of this Society and the Chairpersons of the Standing Committees. The President and the Secretary of this Society shall serve as Chairperson and Secretary of the Governing Committee.

**Section 7.2 — Powers and Duties:** The Governing Committee shall be vested with the powers to actively manage all the affairs of this Society in accordance with this Constitution. It shall have the power to veto, modify, or over-ride any act of any Officer, Standing Committee, or representative of this Society.

**Section 7.3 — Meetings:** The Governing Committee shall meet at least once each quarter. Special Meetings shall be at the call of the Chairperson and notice thereof shall be given at least one (1) week prior to convening, stating time, place, purpose, or purposes, of the Meeting. A quorum of the Governing Committee consists of a majority of its members.

## ARTICLE VIII

### STANDING COMMITTEES:

**Section 8.1 — Membership Committee:** The Membership Committee shall pass upon the eligibility and qualifications of all candidates for membership in this Society, and shall notify the Governing Committee of such action. This Committee shall be responsible for planning and conducting the initiation ceremony for new members, in accordance with certain minimum requirements of the Charter Committee of The Fellowship.

**Section 8.2 — Study Group Committee:** The Study Group Committee shall initiate and coordinate activities too promote the formation of new study groups and to increase the effectiveness of existing study groups.

**Section 8.3 — Communications Committee:** The Communications Committee shall foster communication within, and for, the Society, by means of those viable technologies as may be available and effective, including publication of the Society newsletter.

**Section 8.4 — Program Committee:** The Program Committee shall plan and implement the annual Society events.

**Section 8.5 — Composition of Standing Committees:** Each Standing Committee shall consist of, at least, three (3) Voting Members, appointed by the President with the consent of the other Officers of the Society. The President shall appoint one of these Members as Chairperson for each of the respective Standing Committees.

**Section 8.6 — Duties of a Standing Committee Chairperson:** The Chairperson shall appoint a Secretary for their respective committee from among the committee members, and may appoint other persons to such duties and responsibilities as may be deemed necessary by the Chairperson to carry out the charge of their committee.

**Section 8.7 — Additional Standing Committees:** If deemed expedient, the Society may establish additional Standing Committees.

## ARTICLE IX

### SUCCESSION ON DISSOLUTION:

**Section 9.1 —** In the event of the dissolution of this Society, all its assets shall be distributed to its successor organization, if any, if the same shall qualify for exemption from Federal income tax. If there is no successor to this Society, then all its assets shall be distributed to The Fellowship, or its successor, with which said Society had been affiliated.

## ARTICLE X

### AMENDMENTS:

**Section 10.1 —** This Constitution, as well as its By-Laws, may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those Voting Members present at any Formal or Special Meeting, provided that all members have been sent a copy of the amendment or amendments to be voted upon at least fifteen (15) days in advance of the meeting, and have been notified of the time and place of the meeting, at least thirty (30) days prior to convening.

## ARTICLE XI

### PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY:



**Section 11.1 — *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 1990***, shall be the parliamentary authority in all matters not specified in this Constitution.

**Section 11.2 — Society Property:** The property of this Society is irrevocably dedicated to religious purposes and no part of its net income or assets shall ever inure to the benefit of any private individual. Upon the dissolution or winding up of this Society, its assets remaining after payment, or provision for payment, of all debts and liabilities of the association, shall be distributed to the successor organization of said Society, if any, which is organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes and which has established its tax-exempt status under **Section 501c.3** of the Internal Revenue Code. If there be no such successor to this Society, then all its assets shall be distributed to The Fellowship, the organization with which said Society is affiliated. If this Society holds any assets in trust, or a corporation is formed for charitable purposes, such assets shall be disposed of in such a manner as may be directed by decree of the Superior Court of the county in which the Society has its principal residence, upon petition therefore by the Attorney General or by a person concerned in the liquidation, in a proceeding to which the Attorney General is a party.



# BY-LAWS OF GOLDEN GATE CIRCLE

## CHAPTER I

### MEMBERSHIP:

#### Section 1.1 — Membership Committee Procedures:

- a) A prospective member should return a completed Application Form provided by the Membership Committee along with a check for annual dues. (If membership is denied, check will be returned.)
- b) Members of the Membership Committee shall review the Application Form submitted.
- c) The Applicant is contacted by Member(s) of Membership Committee for follow-up, informal interview(s) to determine whether it is necessary to hold a formal interview with the Applicant and Sponsoring Society Member to familiarize the Applicant with the purpose of the Society, and to determine if the Applicant meets the minimum criteria for membership.
- d) Applicant's membership is formalized at the next appropriate meeting of the Society, as determined by the Membership Committee.

#### Section 1.2 — Transfer of membership from another Society or from

**Membership-at-Large:** Any person requesting the transfer of their membership in another Fellowship Society to this Society shall submit a written request to the Membership Committee, along with a letter from their current Society; or from the Executive Committee of The Fellowship, in the case of a Member-at-Large; stating that they are a member in good standing.

Approval of the transfer shall depend on the Applicant's meeting the minimum requirements of this Society (Article IV, Section 4.1). Transfer members meeting these requirements may be accepted as Society members at the next Semi-Annual Meeting of the Society, subject to the procedures as set forth in Chapter I, Section 1, of these By-Laws.

**Section 1.3 — Active Participation in the Society:** Participation adjudged by the Membership Committee to be consistent with, and in the spirit of, Article IV., Section 4.1 of the Society Constitution.

#### Section 1.4 — Timely Payment of Society Dues:

- a) Payment of annual Society dues for the next calendar year shall be due and payable in December of the previous year, and shall be preceded by a mailed request for payment, which may be included along with other communications (e.g., newsletters, announcements, etc.).
- b) A second request shall follow to all non-paying members who failed to pay in December of the previous year. This late payment is due by the date of the first Semi-Annual meeting of the Society in that year.

## CHAPTER II

### STANDING COMMITTEES:

**Section 2.1 — Terms of Office for Chairpersons:** Chairpersons of Standing Committees shall, normally, serve two-year terms concurrent with the terms of the Officers of the Society.

## CHAPTER III

### FINANCES:

#### Section 3.1 — Disbursements:

- a) All money disbursed by the Treasurer of the Society shall be paid by check and in accordance with agreements made by a simple majority of the quorum of the Governing Committee.
- b) Checks shall be signed by at least the Treasurer.
- c) Checks greater than five hundred dollars (\$500.00), must have an additional Officer's signature.
- d) Projects which have a total commitment of funds in excess of \$500.00 must have prior approval by a simple majority of a quorum of the Society at a Formal Meeting before expenditures are made.

## CHAPTER IV

### 'ON-LINE' COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

**Section 4.1 — Definitions:** For the purposes of this Chapter, references to Committee are as provided for in Articles VII and VIII, and include the Society Vice-President as an *ex officio*, non-voting member. On-line refers to any electronic means by which an exchange of ideas might be effected, and issues resolved, in other than conventional, same-location meetings.

**Section 4.2 — Appropriateness:** For conducting committee meetings, with the exception of the Membership Committee, on-line communication is deemed appropriate when it does not involve issues of a personal nature, e.g., interviews, elections, recalls, and similar issues, which by their very nature are best conducted more appropriately in person. Secret balloting is inappropriate for on-line use.

(It is recognized that at the time of this amendment to the By-Laws, there exists no foolproof way for validating the identities of participants in an on-line, non-visual meeting, therefore, the following procedures are deemed necessary in-lieu of validating proof of identity.)

**Section 4.3 — Access/Use:** All members of a Committee must, normally, have access to the means of communication involved at, or during, the time the scheduled on-line communication is to take place. All communications should be composed by their senders with the clear intent of



communicating effectively to eliminate vagaries and minimize confusion of readers/recipients.

**Section 4.4 — Notification:** Initial notifications of meetings must provide the following:

- a) time and date meeting is to be conducted. For time-independent meetings, e.g., electronic mail, a duration for the meeting, to allow for optimal participation, must be specified as well;
- b) ample time must be given for all members to respond to the Committee and, the Secretary of the Committee in particular, that they have received notification and are in agreement with the conditions specified in the notification. If unable to participate, recipient must so inform the Committee and its Secretary;
- c) an agenda of topic(s) to be discussed;
- d) a current listing of all members of that Committee.

**Section 4.5 — On-line Communications:** All Committee on-line communications must be sent to ALL members of their Committee, or in cases of non-text based communications, the Committee Secretary must maintain and distribute minutes of all proceedings as would normally be made during a conventional meeting, with such minutes requiring Committee review, approval, forwarding, and archiving, as procedurally appropriate.

**Section 4.6 — Validating On-line Committee Meetings:** The respective Committee Secretary will keep hard-copy files of all on-line communications indicating, especially, but not limited to, initial notifications, recipients, receipts of notification-and-agreement replies, members involved with meeting, individual voting, etc., organized and archived by meeting. Separate originals (e.g., email copies), as well as aggregate totals, must be maintained documenting participating members, topic(s)/motion(s) being discussed, and individual voting records per motion.

**Section 4.7 — Invalidating an On-Line Committee Meeting:** An on-line meeting may be deemed invalid and, therefore, unofficial for the purpose of conducting business, if:

- a) Any member of that Committee fails to notify the Committee and its Secretary that they have received a notification. The Committee Secretary shall be responsible for giving an accounting of all participants to the meeting prior to its official convening in order for the Chairperson to pronounce it an official meeting for conducting business.
- b) A single Committee Member may block the use of on-line communication for their Committee by submitting a written objection to the Society President, Vice-President, and Secretary, prior to its convening. In which case the Executive Officer will notify the Committee Chairperson that the meeting(s) so specified in the written objection is/are invalid for the purpose of conducting official business.

**Section 4.8 — Quorums:** Quorums must consist of, at least, two-thirds (2/3) of that Committee's Membership as selected by the Society President and recorded by the Society Secretary.

---

**Note:** Proposed changes to the 1988 Constitution were approved and recommended to the Society by the Governing Committee, November 15, 1997. This is the current Golden Gate Circle Constitution as

amended and approved by the Society.