

STUDY GROUP HERALD

A colorful illustration of a man with a beard and long hair, wearing a white tunic and sandals, kneeling on a sandy beach. He is holding a large, brown, textured cloth or shawl. A young girl in a pink dress stands behind him, looking down. A young boy in a white tunic is kneeling in the foreground, holding a small crab. In the background, there are wooden boats on the sand and a white dove flying in the sky.

Unto Us A Son Is Given

*Celebrating the Birth
of the Creator Son
on Urantia*

Welcome to the New *Study Group Herald*

Imagine a publication that combines the artistic beauty and intellectual refinement of *The Journal* with the news of *The Bulletin* and the best features of *The Study Group Herald*. That's what you have in store as you read this issue. We've merged our three prior newsletters into this, the first Fellowship magazine.

Along with this major change in the structure of our publications, you may see some other variations. Notice, for instance, our new nameplate on the cover. It was designed by Joel Aviom, the New York artist who designed the cover of The Fellowship's edition of *The Urantia Book*.

This issue also serves as our memorial observance of the 2,000th anniversary of the birth of our Creator Son, Michael of Nebadon, as the baby Jesus. We have dedicated a lot of print to Jesus, including the colorful cover. To develop our topic further, we invited an Episcopalian minister to write his views about Jesus the man as a hero. Father Kelly's cover story looks at this subject from the traditional Christian perspective with a companion piece written by a longtime *Urantia Book* reader. We hope this is the start of a new trend, inviting spiritual leaders of all walks of life to write on assigned topics.

Also, you'll see referenced in a couple of news stories that the first printing of *The Urantia Book* occurred 40 years ago. We didn't want to let that historic landmark go by unnoticed.

This Fellowship magazine should be arriving in your mailbox three times a year — in the spring, autumn and at end of year. If you have anything you'd like to submit for publication, please send it to the headquarters of The Fellowship (address below). We're always searching for good photography, poetry, stories, and news. Share your talent with us and we'll give it the best treatment we can.

The Fellowship Study Group Herald

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Letters to the Fellowship

Thanks to all who organized the 1995 Summer Seminar. I had been under the false impression that these events were rather "dry." I was mistaken; it was enriching and enjoyable.

P.A.
Salem, MA

The Fellowship provides a wonderful opportunity for ordinary people to come together, be inspired, and go home and do extraordinary acts which help make this world a little bit better.

D.H.
Hamburg, NJ

At first I had trouble with *The Urantia Book* because of what I had been taught and believed, so I stopped reading it. But I kept thinking about what I had read. Now I'm on my third reading.

J.H.
Alger, OH

Allow the Urantia words to be spread in a natural way, not forced in a "pressured" way. Slow growth equals true progress.

M.G.
Slidell, LA

Although I am not organizationally active in the movement, I'm definitely a God-directed individual. I express the views of *The Urantia Book* to the people I come in contact with in both word and deed. I make a constant effort to follow the teachings of Michael, even when I don't understand why, because God is way beyond our comprehension. I suggest that you target the scientific, technical, medical and journalist types to expand the Urantia corps of believers. Right now it's not so important how many we are as what type we are.

A.J.D.
Denver, CO

I hope there will be a reconciliation with the Foundation. Urantia readers are a small group; the planet is a big place. Consistent editions, distribution and translation are vital.

R.S.
Flushing, NY

We are relieved that *The Urantia Book* is finally in the public domain, and pray that it stays there. We believe a broader outlook is needed. More than one publisher of the book would be a very positive step. Consider the many publishers of the Bible; it hasn't hurt that book.

G. & G.M.
Kansas City, MO

The messages and requirements of *The Urantia Book* have become central to my life. They guide me as a father of four children, as a business owner and as a business consultant. I intend to become more and more active in my personal ministry related to Urantia.

J.R.
Sandstone, MN

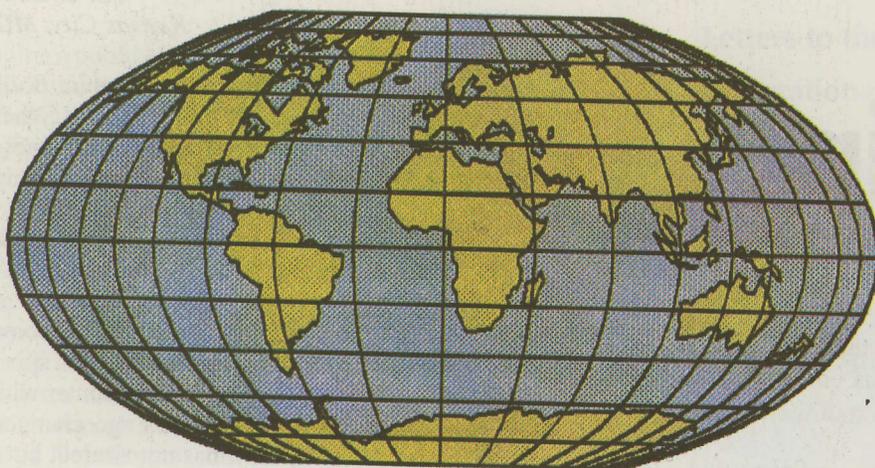
It is truthful to say that *The Urantia Book* has become my religion. As an individual who has sought after spiritual truths from my early youth, my chance encounter with *The Urantia Book* in a book store 25 years ago changed my way of life. My enthusiasm for it has not altered, but I do often wonder why this revelation has not touched more mortals in high places who have so much power over the lives of so many others.

W.C.R.
Las Vegas, NV

For the past four or five years I have regularly sent in *Urantia Book* passages to Religious Viewpoint in *The Royal Gazette*, which they often print. I started by signing my real name, but after getting no feedback from anybody, I simply began signing the name of the angelic being that truly authored the piece. A while back I went into a book store and saw that one of my letters had been cut out and was stuck on the wall. So, however meekly, the message is getting out there.

T.O.
Harrington Sound, Bermuda





An Invitation to Join Study in Ireland

It is with great empathy that I read Chilufya's [Chilufya Thompson is International Editor of the *Herald*.] letter in the latest edition of the *Study Group Herald*. I lived for six years in London in the mid-80s, and was introduced to the big blue book by a long-time student, Gez Lamb. In London there is an active study group that meets on a regular basis, and attending the group was a great sustainer of my enthusiasm for the book.

I returned here to my native country in May 1990 and immediately set about trying to find those in this country who are readers of *The UB*. My search turned up three individuals, all of whom live a considerable distance from my home. The first lives in the northwest of the country and conversation with her revealed that she had read the book once, a long time ago, and that she was not at all interested in taking it up again.

The other two names were Jim and Lorraine Breffni, a couple who live in the north of the island. They were delighted to hear from me, and within three months we met and started the Irish Study Group. We only manage to meet about five times a year, but we greatly value these afternoons together. We tend to choose a paper per session and take turns reading aloud, and then we share our interpretations of what we have read.

Sessions last about two hours.

We now have a fourth member in the group, my wife, Sabrina. I introduced her to the book during our courtship and she greatly enjoys coming to the meetings to pose difficult and stimulating questions to the group.

Like you, I would dearly love to have an active study group near where I live, which would be able to meet once a week. To this end I also have three copies of the book which I loan out to those who express an interest in it. So far, I have not succeeded in getting anyone interested enough that they want to join in our study sessions. Nevertheless, I am an optimist and I firmly believe that it is only a matter of time before we succeed in having a thriving study group here in Dublin.

Finally, I would like to extend an invitation to all readers of the book who read these words: If you are ever in Ireland on holidays, get in contact with me prior to your departure and I will convene a meeting to enable you to share your ideas on the book with us here in Ireland. I hope you all agree that it would be a great interchange of ideas and cultures. Looking forward to seeing you.

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A Bosnian Voice Rings Clear

By Nora Abdemoakher

In 1992 I found myself in Sweden, in cold Scandinavia. I had left Bosnia with relief, leaving behind the graveyard of the Balkans with its war and destruction. As I relaxed, I started to unpack my luggage.

I had left my home with one suitcase, but with much baggage. One was labeled fears, another labeled confusion, a third, who am I and what am I doing? I was lost in my prayers, with no clear idea to whom I was praying.

Then I went one evening to the Magasinet Depot, an old railway storage facility in Stockholm that served as a youth center. There I met Sandy and Christel Garrick, who were making preparations to start a choir.

"What will it be called?" I asked. "POEGWAM," answered Sandy, "an acronym for Peace On Earth and Good Will Among Men."

I was skeptical, I must admit. I knew that there certainly was something more than things we could touch and see, but what was it all about? Psychology, maybe, or metaphysics; it never occurred to me that this other reality had to do with religion.

Religious affiliations were greatly discouraged in my country. In school I was taught that religion was an expression of fear, a refuge for weak, primitive reasoning that could not be rescinded, but was destined to extinction as humanity progressed. For the last couple of years, as religious institutions awakened in my country, they called people into war, in the name of "God and nation."

Watching the Garricks, I realized that there was some unshakable foundation beyond their works, something different from what I have seen. Their acts were based on much love, reflection, understanding, patience, and compassion.

"What is religion?" I finally dared

to ask.

"It is sharing your inner life with God," replied Sandy.

This answer shook me to the root of my being.

The choir grew and we soon numbered 20, often more. There I met Saed Abdemoakher, an Iranian Kurd, whom I have married.

The Garricks, Saed, and I started studying *The Urantia Book*. They told only those who asked about the book. Many others never found out that some big blue book bolstered this act of love in our choir. But they learned of its principles. They sang cheerfully about love, kindness, compassion, and patience.

We prayed together a lot and we did it with humor and from the bottom of our hearts. The Garricks always reminded us to thank God for his fragment that lives within us, that leads us and draws us closer to him.

The rehearsals were something we all looked forward to. These gatherings enriched our lives, drawing all the best from our personal experience and beliefs, different cultural backgrounds, and faiths.

"The name of the Father," said one of the songs from our repertoire. "What's the difference if you call the name of the Father Allah, Buddha, Elohim, Yehova, all the same loving Father."

We sang in churches, senior centers, and hospitals.

My subsequent study of *The Urantia Book* didn't take away my negative baggage, but it made it easier for me to sort through, for I knew I wasn't alone. It answered many of my questions as well as giving rise to new questions. It opened horizons I never dreamed of.

I believe in movements such as POEGWAM, as I see how positively this choir touched the lives of all who joined it. As Sandy said, "This is the message that doesn't argue with any religion or creed, rather adheres to



Members of the POEGWAM choir gather during a recording session. (Front line from right to left:) Diana Houdek, Meliha Klanco, Zana and Mersiha Mesihovic (Bosnia), Marina Ohlsson, Ake Aylander, Maria Netzel, Lena-Maria Hoegh, Helene Du Rietz, Agneta Henriksson-Gogelberg, Kerstin Johansson (Sweden), Jayaseelan (Sri Lanka), Kamal Mawlood (Iraq), Nina Petajaemaa (Finland), Christel and Sandy Garrick (Canada), Thomas Oebrink, Peter Hedfors, Agneta Pettersson (Sweden), Gert Palmgrantz (recording engineer, Sweden), Saed Abdemoakher (Iran), and Nora Abdemoakher (Bosnia).

what has united the prophetic thought of all ages. Peace On Earth and Good Will Among Man could (should) turn out to be the saving grace of all mankind through the universal language of music."

And now, as I am writing this, I have received news that Sandy Garrick has departed to the mansion worlds. I can't believe it. I see him sitting at the kitchen table, cigarette in hand, *The Urantia Book* in front of him, laughing. "Daughter," he called me when we first met and always after. As a refugee myself, I have found Sandy as living proof that one can, in spite of everything, come out of genocide with optimism, love, and faith.

Born in Hungary, under the threat of Jewish holocaust, as a 13-year-old, he embarked on a NATO ship and escaped to Canada. He lived in a dozen countries over the world, including the United States, Sweden, England, Germany, Australia, and Japan. As a professional musician, he conducted orchestra, played and re-

corded music, and together with his loving wife and children, lived a life in friendship and love.

His approach to the divine was through music and humor. The minister in one of the churches where Sandy conducted a gospel choir said, "What I have learned from Sandy was to laugh, to take God and religion easily, with humor and song."

On his last day, Sandy died without pain, with a big hamburger and Coke in his hands, and with a complaint that they weren't as good as those in New York, as he thought nothing in Sweden to be as good as in the United States. "I have lived a most charming life" were his last words.

Nora Abdemoakher now resides in Berkeley, California, and has begun translating The Urantia Book into Serbo-Croatian, to make "its precious teaching available to family and friends." This project is being sponsored by the Golden Gate Circle Society.

Activities in Ghana

By Dr. R. A. Quaynor

We are happy here together as a group and meet on Sunday evenings for teachings into the deeper mysteries.

We recently organized a convention on a small scale and were privileged to have our brothers and sisters come all the way from America to grace the occasion with lectures.

We operate a Clinical Service Programme, located in various regions throughout Ghana. Accra is the headquarters, of course, and there are two other centers in Cape Coast in the central region and Takeradi in the western region. We go by the name Agrata Natural Healing and Radionic Centre, producing natural herbal medicine in our laboratory and factory.

In the years to come it is our intention to establish contact with all Urantia groups throughout the world, and we hope that our relationship shall be cemented to promote the spread of the Urantia teachings.

Dr. R. A. Quaynor is a member of Urantia Nazareth Brotherhood and may be contacted at P.O. Box 4291, Accra, Ghana. (Telephone: Cape Coast 042-32875, Accra 021-232130, fax number 042-32644).



Dr. R.A. Quaynor, standing (top), meets with members of the visiting team in Ghana in June 1995. At left, Dr. Quaynor poses with some *Urantia Book* readers who are employees at the Agrata Natural Healing and Radionic Centre in Accra.

A Place Apart

Centering Prayer Can Make Each Day A Little Brighter

By Gard Jameson

In the early days of the church, Jesus was expected to return very soon. Said Peter, "We are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth."

When Jesus did not appear, there was disappointment and the realization that it would be difficult to live up to the moral standards which he had established. Members of the early church knew that their society was morally shipwrecked and that it would be best to flee the sinking ship.

In so doing, they sought solitude and silence in the deserts surrounding their towns. A story of one of the early desert fathers, Abba Arsenius, illustrates a common experience amongst the members of this early community.

Arsenius was a tutor who lived comfortably in the court of the Roman Emperor Theodosius in the fourth century. From a material perspective, he had everything that a person could want. But Arsenius experienced what Augustine characterized as divine unrest. While living in the palace, Arsenius prayed, "Lord, lead me in the way of salvation." Arsenius sensed a clear response telling him, "Arsenius, flee from the world and you will be saved."

Arsenius fled to the desert outside of Alexandria. There he prayed once again, "Lord, lead me in the way of salvation." In response to this prayer came the answer, "Arsenius, be solitary, be silent, be at rest. These are the roots of a life without sin."

In this simple story we are given the essence of what comprises the contemplative tradition, the tradition of inner communion, in the West.

There are three key elements to inner communion:

1. *Solitude, a place apart.* Said Jesus, "When you pray, go away by yourself."

2. *Silence.* The Psalmist declared, "Be still and know that I am God." Without silence we simply will not hear the "still, small voice within" that lovingly reaches out to each of us in communion.

From our personal communion with the Father emerges our ability to love and serve our brothers and sisters.

3. *Resting in God,* simply giving God the fullness of our loving attentiveness. This resting in God is the prayer of the heart, or in the language of *The Urantia Book*, worship. It is a gentle movement of our soul to God with the sole purpose of personal communion, pure relation with the Father of all creation, whose love "absolutely individualizes" each of us "as a unique child of the Universal Father, a child without duplicate in infinity, a will creature irreplaceable in all eternity." (page 138)

A very interesting institution arose in the tradition of Christianity as a result of this desire to seek solitude, be still, and rest in God. This was

the monastic tradition, again, a response to the realization that Jesus was perhaps not returning as quickly as anticipated in the days of Peter and Paul. From a desire to preserve the values of the Christian tradition evolved a movement that separated itself from the mainstream of what was perceived as a polluted society.

Since that historical time, there has existed the mistaken notion that contemplative prayer, inner communion, is a practice reserved for the monastic community. It is clear, however, in an understanding of Jesus' message and from studying *The Urantia Book*, that the practice of the contemplative prayer of worship is recommended to any person who would sincerely follow the teachings of Jesus.

As already noted, contemplative prayer or worship is at the root of a life of faith. It should be the first and last step we take in our daily spiritual journey. *The Urantia Book* states that "the Father desires all his creatures to be in personal communion with him." From the first page of the revelation to the last, we are invited to such personal communion.

From our personal communion with the Father emerges our ability to love and serve our brothers and sisters. Without the practice of that personal communion on a daily basis, our life of faith is at best a facade for our shallow egos.

In his book *Celebration of Discipline*, Richard Foster writes, "Superficiality is the curse of our age ... The desperate need today is not for a greater number of intelligent people or gifted people, but for deep people ... the spiritual disciplines urge us to be the answer to a hollow world ... [W]e must not be led to believe that the disciplines are only for spiritual

giants ... God intends the disciplines of the spiritual life to be for ordinary human beings, people who have jobs, who care for children, who wash dishes and mow lawns."

Inner communion is a daily practice which seeks solitude, a place apart, enters the stillness within our soul, and rests in the purity of our relationship with our loving heavenly Father.

This practice is a simple one. All that is required is our intention to take the time, first, to create the place; second, to be still; and, third, to turn our attention to God, experiencing ourselves as the beloved son or daughter that we are.

This, indeed, is the heart of the gospel, that we should inwardly experience ourselves as the beloved, and then outwardly, in that love, serve others.

In the fourth century, at the outset of John Cassian's conferences with his spiritual mentor, Abba Isaac, this young monk from Dalmatia experienced an incredible epiphany as he listened to this great spiritual leader relate how the love of God manifests itself in the life of one who practices the prayer of the heart. When John returned to his sleeping quarters that night, he was spiritually soaring until, in a panic, he turned to his friend Germanos and exclaimed, "But how do we do it?"

The next morning the two young lads flew across the desert sands to the home of Abba Isaac and learned the practice of what is today popularly referred to as the prayer of the heart or centering prayer.

It is only within the last 30 years, since Vatican II, that the monastic community has opened its doors to share this practice of contemplative prayer with the world. Realizing the threat of emigration of Catholics seeking a genuine experience of God's love to the traditions of the East, several monastic leaders in the Catholic tradition have begun to share the practices taught in the desert centuries ago, passed down through the generations from one monastic community to the next.

Among the individuals most influential in the teaching of these practices is Thomas Merton, a Trappist monk, who said, "Monastic prayer

begins not so much with considerations as with a return to the heart, finding one's deepest center, awakening to the profound depths of our being in the presence of God, who is the source of our being and of our life."

Basil Pennington, a student of Merton, writes that Merton "spoke frequently of attaining to the experience of God by going to one's center and passing through it to the center of God."

In the words of *The Urantia Book*, in our solitude we move to silence, "the dim realms of embryonic soul-

*Knowing how much God
loves each of us, why do
we not run to embrace
him at every opportunity?*

consciousness," and from there we move in faith to personal communion with Him, "to the borderland of spirit-consciousness" dwelling in our depths.

Such personal communion is not a function of our intellects, although intellect is needed to create the intention of the soul's movement toward God. The pathway to such inner communion has been illuminated for us by the teachings in *The Urantia Book* and by spiritual pioneers through the centuries like John Cassian; Teresa of Avila; John of the Cross; John Climacus, author of *The Cloud of Unknowing*; Rufus Jones; and so many others.

In moving toward personal communion, *The Urantia Book* states that all that is required is four attitudes: humility; a hunger for personal goodness; a teachable, receptive heart; and purity of soul, a simple childlike faith.

Knowing how much God loves each of us, why do we not run to embrace him at every opportunity? Why do we not set aside time each day for this experience of personal communion? There is a wellspring of love irradiating every part of our being if we would but open our hearts in faith and

experience ourselves as the beloved.

We live in a society not unlike that of ancient Rome, with moral foundations eroding and crumbling. Ours, however, is not to flee to the desert, but to make sanctuaries of solitude in our own homes. Ours is not to leave the obligations of family and community, but to take the time to create a still space within our minds on a daily basis to engage in inner communion.

Ours is not to miss our calling to serve the spread of the revelation and to engage in all manner of projects to this end, but in doing these things, we should be ever mindful that our success in promoting the fifth epochal revelation depends first and foremost upon knowing how to rest in God, and to develop this personal communion with the Father so that we can in faith and in fact manifest a "fatherly love" in everything we do. We are called to express a higher love which emanates from our soul's movement toward unbroken communion with the very source of Divine Love.

Remember the story of Mary and Martha. Mary sat at the Master's feet drinking in the spirit of his word while Martha was busy in the kitchen preparing the evening meal. Both were doing something important. Martha was indeed being of service in the kingdom, but Mary was refreshing her soul in personal communion with the Master.

And said Jesus, "Only one thing is really worthwhile, and since Mary has chosen this good and needful part, I shall not take it away from her ... [W]hen will both of you learn to live as I have taught you: both serving in cooperation and both refreshing your souls in unison?"

In his life and teachings Jesus placed a strong priority on our personal communion with the Father. Living faith is predicated upon this personal communion.

On the last page of *The Urantia Book* we read, "The great challenge of modern man is to achieve better communications with the divine monitor that dwells within the human mind. Man's greatest adventure in the flesh consists in the well-balanced and sane effort to advance the borders of self-consciousness out through the dim realms of embryonic soul-consciousness in a wholehearted effort to

(Continued on page 32)

Study Group Herald

Defining Spiritual Service

A Look Back Gives Thought For the Future

By David Kantor

The successful integration of strong spiritual passions with the needs of physical and social existence remains one of the primary unsolved problems of our age. Service as an expression of those passions has varied over the centuries. In one age this passion went so far as to encourage believers to fight in the Crusades.

No doubt this urge has been responsible for many unique and intriguing experiences of those individuals unselfishly dedicated to spreading an awareness of the God or religion of their lives. This urge is just as strong in our generation and how we respond to it is just as challenging as it was for our forebears.

By looking to traditions of the past, we may be able to better understand the opportunities which face us today as we march forward to the drumbeat of this ever-present urge to sow seeds of goodness for the benefit of the world.

20/20 Hindsight

The 17th century saw a rapid and radical shift of interest on the part of the best minds on the planet from religion to science and technology. A primary factor driving this change was a revulsion towards the religious fanaticism which followed the Protestant Reformation. Therefore, science was initially promoted not as a substitute for religion, but as an antidote to this religious fanaticism which was destroying European society.

During the 18th century, the technological, military and economic vitality of the West continued to grow. As a result, a large part of the world committed itself to Western ways, unaware that Western civilization itself

was in a transitory phase and contained within it a serious, unsolved religious problem.

This is like buying a car without noticing that the manufacturer forgot to include a jack and spare tire. Sooner or later circumstances will bring the fact to your attention.

The Romantic backlash of the 19th century muddied the waters and created much philosophic confusion. This trend found individuals trying to salvage spirituality by completely moving it into the domain of feeling, impervious to the ravages of rational inquiry. Many contemporary religious movements retain an anti-intellectual bias inherited from this period and, as a result, lack the rational tools which are essential for the integration of spiritual experience with factual reality.

Historian Arnold Toynbee emphasized that the reality of this spiritual crisis will inevitably rise to the surface and demand attention. He maintained that the West cannot avoid a re-encounter with its ancestral Judeo-Christian foundations and that this re-evaluation of its spiritual heritage may be the most significant crossroads.

Current Views

There are many indications that this re-evaluation has indeed begun.

In the past century the intellectual engine of the Western mind, which has penetrated distant galaxies as well as the intricacies of the living cell, has been increasingly focused on the human situation itself and our religious traditions in particular.

Since the publication of Albert Schweitzer's *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* early in this century, a number of competent and even eminent scholars have produced significant

new studies of Jesus. Now in the mid 1990s, Jesus has become the subject of serious scholarly discourse to a greater degree than in any period since the fourth century. Heavily footnoted books about Jesus, intended for an academic audience, have found their way into local bookstores.

Twentieth century developments in the field of psychology, particularly the work of Carl Jung, have provided productive insights into the way in which mind forms images and symbols to represent spiritual experience. Late-century thinkers, such as Sallie McFague and Joseph Campbell, have expanded our understanding of the nature of the metaphoric and mythological contexts in which all thought is undertaken.

From the mid-20th century to present time, we have also seen a serious reconsideration of the issue of revelation. Keith Ward, Professor of Divinity at the University of Oxford, recently delivered a lecture series devoted to the examination of revelation in the world's religions.

A recent study done at Stanford University found that the main concern of students in Jewish seminaries across North America is how to bring a greater sense of spirituality into synagogue services.

True to Toynbee's insight, the foundational precepts of Western religious culture are being carefully scrutinized as never before in history. Events are unfolding all around us in which it appears that it is time for *The Urantia Book* to inform those undertaking this re-evaluation.

The late Kenneth Boulding, in his book *The Meaning of the Twentieth Century*, discusses what he calls "the great transition." *The Urantia Book* is less semantically benign in describing this phenomenon as "moral crosscurrents," "sociologic rip tides,"

“cyclonic transitions” and “philosophic chaos.”

Boulding views history itself as a record of the ebb and flow of ideologies through human communities. In his view an understanding of ideologies, of their inevitable appearance and of the circumstances under which they can be modified, is crucial knowledge during this challenging time in civilization.

His point is that the course of civilization will be shaped by ideology. Our task, as readers of *The Urantia Book*, is to determine whether we will create a competing ideology or focus on the transformation of those which already influence human affairs.

Boulding suggests that the great challenge facing those whose lives are devoted to shepherding humanity through this transition is to learn how to develop and implement strategies rather than propagate ideologies. Strategy here implies a focus on ideals and values rather than on ideas.

Spiritual Awakenings

With the mid-century destruction of fascism and the collapse of communism, along with the continued materialistic secularism in Europe and North America, the West appears to have lapsed into a state of relative ideological quiescence (although I must confess to some concerns about smoldering combustibles in the religious right in North America).

It does seem, however, that the values and ideals of a culture would be most amenable to strengthening and uplifting during a period of ideological dormancy rather than when ideological high tides are engulfing culture.

The spiritual values contained within Judeo-Christian culture will no doubt shape the moral perspective of the next wave of ideology to develop in the West. As for the East, *The Urantia Book* implies that India is a virtual tinderbox awaiting the spark of a clear presentation of Jesus' gospel. Islam, although highly divided internally, is surging in many parts of the world. Buddhism and Confucianism remain vital forces, and there are many other active religious cultures, each of which claims millions of adherents.

The global economy, with regard to travel and communication, provides a unique opportunity for the diffusion of spiritual insights between these major religious cultures.

We should bear in mind, however, Toynbee's assessment that any culture which has imported Western patterns of social and industrial organization contains within itself a potential spiritual crisis similar to that which is unfolding in North America.

The former Soviet republics and Eastern Europe, where the moral and spiritual values of Judeo-Christian culture have been aggressively suppressed for 70 years, suffer from a devastation of their cultural morality. This morality springing from the religious life of the people is what makes civilization possible.

Such is the magnitude of the service opportunities and challenges which lie before us as temporary custodians of an epochal revelation at this juncture in planetary history.

At the close of his epic work, *The Rise of the West*, historian William McNeill says, “The burden of present uncertainties and the drastic scope of alternative possibilities ... oppress the minds of many sensitive people. But great dangers alone produce great victories; and without the possibility of failure, all human achievement would be savorless.” Life in Jesus' Palestine, in the China of Confucius, and in Mohammed's Arabia was violent, risky and uncertain; hopes struggled with fears; greatness teetered perilously on the brim of disaster. We belong in this high company and should count ourselves fortunate to live in one of the great ages of the world.

The Big Picture

Let us now study a cosmological context of service drawn from *The Urantia Book*. There are two fundamental facts upon which to develop this deeper understanding: the evolution of the Supreme and the fact of a personal universe.

Growing in our understanding of the nature of Supremacy enhances our appreciation of finite reality as a continual process of becoming. Whitehead provides a description of this process as “a creative advance into novelty.”

Finite reality is created anew each moment as a repercussion of the sum total of the choices which were made in the previous moment. Hence Whitehead's description of the Supreme as “the consequent God.”

The reality of a personal universe is one of the great themes woven throughout *The Urantia Book*. From the Paradise Trinity to the mortals on the worlds of space, personalities and their relationships comprise the primary structural elements in the universe.

In the domain of the finite, that structure itself—the qualitative state of all the interpersonal relationships in the universe—is evolving toward an expression of Paradise perfection. Wisely and creatively contributing to this process is the essence of service.

For instance, all those families of universe personalities revealed in *The Urantia Book* are organized and classified on the basis of the service they render. Many of these spirit personalities appear to have been specifically designed to serve within relationships between other personalities, to interpose their facilitating presences within the relationship process itself.

The Urantia Book describes life as a “process which takes place between the organism and its environment.” Spiritual life can be described as a process which takes place between personalities.

For example, in this context the Angels of Family Life may be understood as functioning within the matrix of personal relationships between family members. Jesus is present for us in such a manner. He tells us that “wherever two or three of you are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of you.” His spirit presence manifests itself within our relationships.

Unselfish service is the attitude which Jesus challenges us to bring to all of our relationships. And as we do this, we participate in the actualization of the divine potentials which exist within and between every personality in this personal cosmos.

As we engage in the process of unselfish service, we bring into temporary existence a living context within which the spiritual forces around us can more effectively function.

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Reaching Out in Faith

Some Thoughts on Sharing the Fifth Epochal Revelation

By Ramon Barbosa

Outreach activities within the Urantia movement could benefit from a holistic attitude. Upon 16 years of observation of the episodes that have come and gone in the movement, I feel an upswell of gratitude for God's all-wise plan mixed with grief for the human experience of error and misjudgment.

There is no excuse for divisiveness and petty strife among those of us who are fortunate to have had our lives upstepped by the fifth epochal revelation. This revelation can only be regarded as the greatest existing material evidence of the high regard in which we are held, and of the profound confidence that has been invested in our human potentials. Certainly, we don't come with perfectly integrated personalities from the start, but, still, we know better than to hang ourselves with an egotistical noose.

There can be no *one* personality or *elite* group who can presume to be adequately qualified to authoritatively represent the unprecedented phenomenon of an epochal revelation in book form. Those of us who are cognizant of the blessed service rendered to us by the renewed presentation of the facts of divine reality and the life of our beloved Master on this world can only respond with one accord: "Father, may we become more and more worthy of your divine grace."

Jesus, our beloved Master, is to each of us the only unfailing and eminently qualified leader, teacher, and partner in the everyday experience of living and revealing the spiritual dimension of his heavenly kingdom. Praise be to God for the honor and privilege of our participation. Surely ours is a high trust.

The Urantia Book is not meant to serve only as a source of spiritual and cultural teachings exclusively for

those already born of the spirit. Rather have many individuals, as will untold millions in the future, become sublimely spirit-conscious as a result of exposure to the incomparable teachings found in the book.

This revelation is not exclusively the guide book for those who are already within the kingdom. It is for anyone with an ear to hear these spiritual truths. As a freely accessible resource, *The Urantia Book* will leaven the spiritual strata of the world by serving as one more, albeit very effective, catalyst for the faith-discovery of a personal relationship with God.

Jesus' use of parables as a teaching method in his ministry was not meant to conceal teachings from anyone. His teachings were for everyone, even for all generations on all worlds. But only those who were sincerely searching could perceive the meanings of his parables. His intention was not, and is not, to exclude anyone.

Introducing *The Urantia Book* should not be withheld until one has presumed to judge that the individual to whom it is to be introduced is disposed to believe it is a revelation. Such an attitude is arrogant and smacks of elitism. There are many long-time students of the book who hold it in high regard, yet do not accept the book as a revelation. Such a disclosure should not shock or offend anyone.

What matters most is that the revelatory teachings of *The Urantia Book* are bringing the spiritual pressure of enlightenment into the thought stream of human religious consciousness.

A sincere heart and an objective, motivated, and inquiring mind are the only prerequisites for an individual to consider the teachings of *The Urantia Book*. The seed of the faith-discovery of a personal relationship with God may or may not germinate, but it will

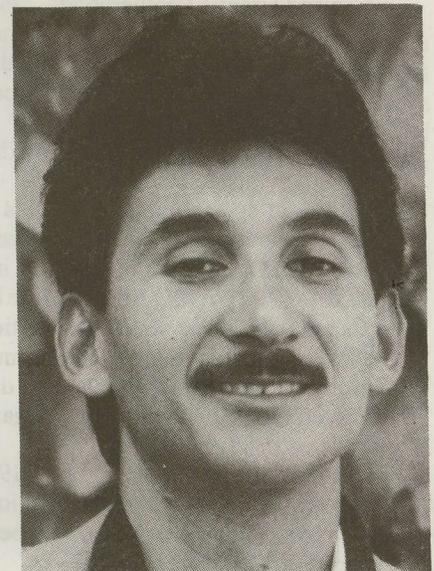
be sown.

The phenomenon of any one individual coming to the honest, spirited conclusion that *The Urantia Book* is a revelation is exclusively a personal matter between man and God. Moreover, it is within the domain of that personal, spiritual relationship in which further decisions are made as to whether and to what degree an individual will participate in study groups and other social activities of the Urantia movement.

There will always be a low ratio of readers who choose to engage in study groups and social activities compared to the larger body of readers who choose to remain uninvolved with such a community. To decry this phenomenon is to suggest that the readership should exist primarily to expand the visible ranks of believers of the Urantia revelation rather than to expand the invisible, spiritual brotherhood of kingdom believers.

Most individuals consider themselves highly engaged with life. Some grapple with constantly changing circumstances, leaving very little time to

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Last of Founding Trustees Passes Away

By Carolyn Kendall

An era came to an end June 25, 1995. With the death of William Merchant Hales, 87, the last of the founding trustees of Urantia Foundation, the early years of Foundation history no longer have an eyewitness. Hales passed away after a long illness at his home in Winnetka, Illinois.

The thought of Hales brings to mind the word "gentlemanly." His gracious manners and courtly ways fostered dignity in the Foundation and its goals. His tenure as president, from 1950 to 1973, occurred during a period of calm, gradual development within the Urantia movement. Due to illness, Hales retired in 1973, after which he served as a Trustee Emeritus. The copyright infringements that began in the mid-1970s increasingly occupied the Foundation's attention, and Hales was reappointed to the Board in 1975, serving for another 10 years.

In a widely circulated memo dated June 7, 1990, Hales outlined the histories of the Urantia organizations: "About 1940 the leaders of the Forum started working with qualified attorneys to draw up the proper and necessary documents for creating what would be Urantia Foundation and Urantia Brotherhood. ... In January 1950 five individuals were selected to apply to the State of Illinois for a charter to create the Urantia Foundation. The charter was granted and these five individuals became the initial five trustees and officers."

Hales was one of the five individuals, and he was elected president by his associates.

He laid special emphasis in his memo on the fact that there was never supposed to have been any tie between the Foundation, whose responsibilities included publishing and translating *The Urantia Book*, and the Brotherhood, which was to undertake the social outreach duties and dissemination of the teachings. He wrote, "In the formulation of the [Foundation and Brotherhood] documents during the 1940s it was stressed that the two subsequent organizations were not to be connected in any way."

He added, "... [On January 3,] 1955 the Urantia Brotherhood came into being by the execution of a proper document signed by 36 Forum members who became the Charter Members of Urantia Brotherhood."

Marian Rowley, in a letter dated January 4, 1955 to the late Julia Fenderson, described what came next in an eventful meeting of the preceding day, "... [B]efore we broke up, the five trustees of the Urantia Foundation held a short meeting with all of us as an audience. Bill Hales read a provisional declaration of intention stating that since the decision was in their hands as of January 1, 1955, they intended to proceed with the publication of the book unless they were formally estopped before February 11, 1955 ... It was a most exciting day"

Forty years have passed since *The Urantia Book* was published and ready for distribution on October 12, 1955. Were it not for the dedication and fortitude of early leaders, as well as generous financial contributions by persons such as Hales, we might not have the book in its present form.

Hales was a dissenter in the Foundation's 1961 decision to allow the French translator of *The Urantia Book* to publish his edition in three separate volumes. This was a decision that came to haunt the Trustees in later years.

Extra copies of the third volume, consisting of Part IV, *The Life and Teachings of Jesus*, were printed by the translator, which was a breach of contract with the Foundation. Further publication of the French book was suspended for seven years while the French courts adjudicated the case.

Although never previously taking a public stand on controversial issues, Hales stood up in a gathering of General Councilors and society representatives in Nordic Hills, Illinois on November 18, 1989 to explain why he had just resigned as Trustee Emeritus, an honorary position he held from 1985 to 1989. He had opposed cancellation of the Confirmatory Licensing Agreement by the Foundation of the Brotherhood's (now Fellowship's) right to use the name Urantia and concentric circles symbol. He also spoke against the rising authoritarian trend of the Foundation leadership at that time.

Hales was born in Oak Park, Illinois, the son of G. Willard and Carrie Hales. Both parents were members of the Forum. He was a graduate of Williams College. He and his wife Mary Lou celebrated their 62nd anniversary last February. Mary Lou served as chairman of the Brotherhood's Charter Committee, installing many new societies. Their son John is a long-



William Merchant Hales

(Continued on page 32)

"Living Faith"



Gearing Up for IC 96

"Of God, the most inescapable of all presences, the most real of all facts, the most living of all truths, the most loving of all friends, and the most divine of all values, we have the right to be the most certain of all universe experiences."
(The Urantia Book, page 1127)

By Melissa Wells
Raleigh, North Carolina

At IC 93, everyone met in Ste. Hyacinth, near the beautiful bluffs of Montreal. Before that, on the high peaks at Snowmass in Colorado, and before that, in the pine forests of Bowdoin College in Maine. Now it's time for readers of *The Urantia Book* to celebrate their "Living Faith" at IC 96 in Flagstaff, Arizona, in the midst of the San Francisco mountain range.

The International Conference has been scheduled August 3 through 8, 1996, at the campus of Northern Arizona University.

Attendance at previous international conferences has varied from 850 in Montreal to more than 1,000 in Snowmass, the largest gathering of readers from around the world to date.

"We will be mailing postcards with beautiful artwork to ensure publicity for the conference," says Janet Farrington, Vice President of the Fellowship, who is in charge of IC 96. "As a result of these efforts, we expect as many as 1,500 people."

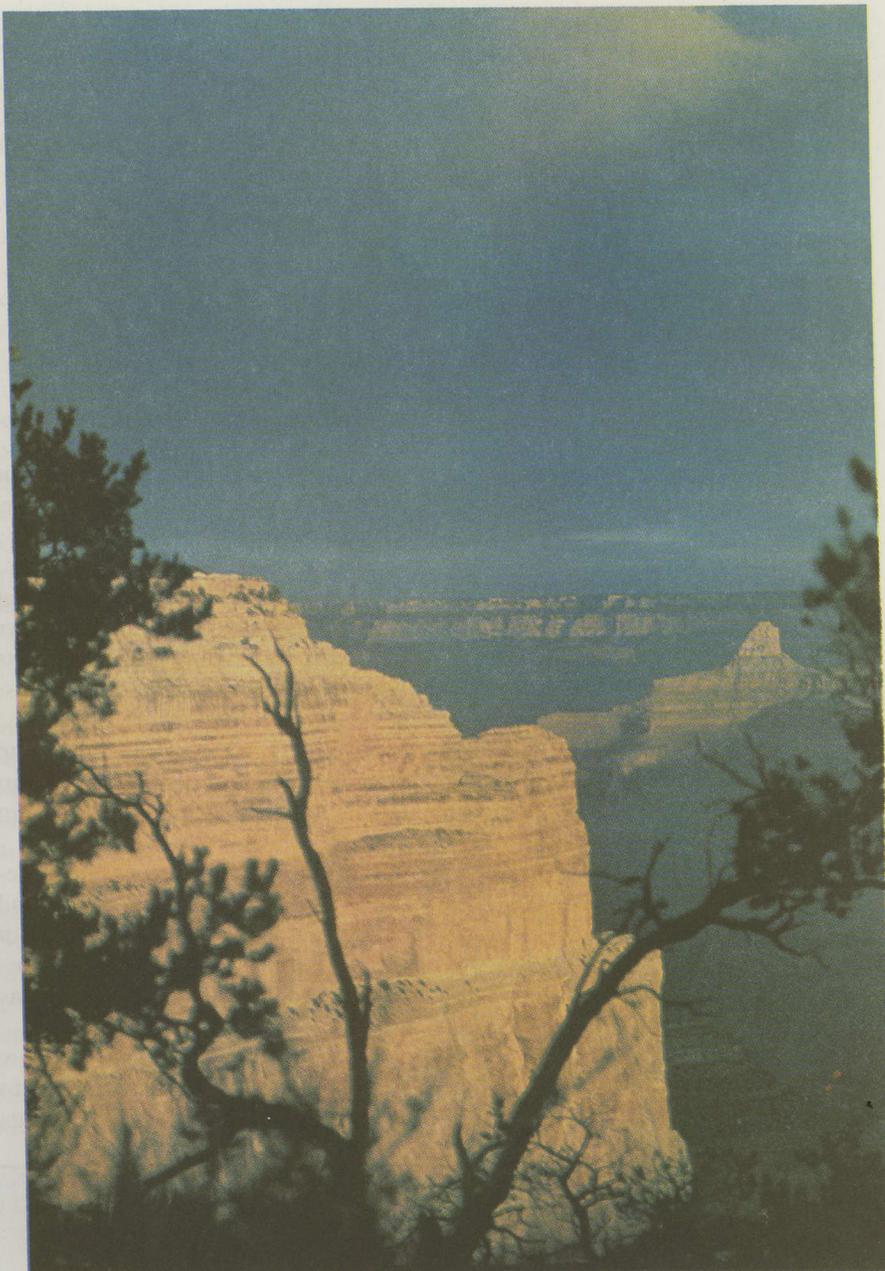
The theme of Living Faith is to share ideas regarding integration of the revelation into daily life. Variations of the theme which will be developed are Cosmic Family, Global Family, Human Family and Faith

Family. "Each day we will study a topic by listening to presentations from some of the most innovative thinkers from around the world and by opening dialogue between readers with a wide range of experience," Farrington says.

Plenary sessions with guest speakers will be offered in the morning followed by dialogue groups in the afternoon. As an alternative to the afternoon sessions, activities for the whole family will be available, including games, sports, music, art, hiking and horseback riding.

Afternoon dialogue sessions are open for presentation by any individuals who would like to request a track.

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Jesus

The Man, The Hero

By The Rev. Canon James F. Kelly

Editor's Note: This is the first in a continuing series of articles written by noted spiritual leaders. In many cases, the authors may not be Urantia Book readers. Nevertheless, we hope other viewpoints will strengthen your personal study and enhance your spiritual journey.

At a recent conference on leadership, one of our group said that he did not have any heroes, and that there were no heroes left in the world.

We began to talk about heroes and leadership, and came to the conclusion that this man was probably right — almost.

Gradually we came to the insight that a leader or a hero needs a com-

PELLING vision for life's journey. A true hero calls others to share the vision. So, are there any heroes left?

How about Jesus?

I have always thought of Jesus as a friend and savior — not as a hero. But if the real meaning of hero is one who we look up to, a person who possesses unique qualities, someone who is beyond us, and one who calls us to be more than we are, to grow into our talents and gifts, then Jesus is a hero after all.

In searching for heroes, we sometimes look in the wrong places and employ a misplaced set of values. But Jesus as hero calls us to look into ourselves, to the core of who we are as humans.

He is not someone to follow blindly, but someone who urges us to grow from within, to tap our talents

and gifts and use the potential we have to become more than we are. He calls us to overcome fear and to move ahead with living, to see more than our narrow needs.

Jesus is the watchman of each of us, and of the world. He watches for us and with us. He is the watchman of history.

This image of Jesus as watchman may become clearer if we recall the Passion narratives of the Gospels. The watchman is not perched upon a high tower in comfort, but from the place of the cross. Jesus has come here to watch over us from within the vulnerability of dying.

"Who is this man?" Matthew asks in chapter 27 — this man with a sign above his head that reads, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews." But what a strange place from which to watch. How can death bring life and vision? Later Matthew gives us more understanding. "Forever in death, Jesus calls out faith, and the watching is faithful."

The centurion who nailed him to the cross professes: "In truth this man was the Son of God."

This image of Jesus completes the vision of a God who has watched his people from the beginning. Jesus is the guardian, come in flesh.

From John chapter 1: "Indeed, from his fullness, we have all received one gift replacing another." We can

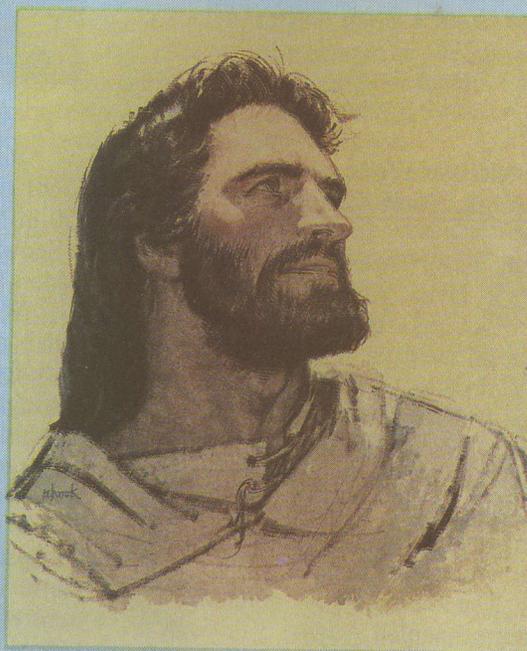
A Hero For All

By Melissa Wells
Raleigh, North Carolina

We've all had heroes. As kids we had Daniel Boone, Davy Crockett, Superman, Mickey Mantle ... the list goes on and on. Our heroes were there for us, bigger than life, able to handle any difficulty, always emerging victorious.

We felt safe with our heroes. We aspired to be like them. We needed them.

The years have passed since I dreamed and talked about my heroes, but the need hasn't disappeared. In fact, as an adult, I've relied on my heroes more than ever. But I've rolled the qualities I loved so much in my many heroes into one person. And thanks to the unique presentation of Jesus that I discovered in *The Urantia Book*, he is the hero to beat all heroes.



affirm in our faith that Jesus still watches over us in the life of his spirit. In his earthly ministry, the 17th chapter of John says: "I have watched over them, I was with them, I kept those you have given me true to your name. I have watched over them."

Jesus' historic protection is not one of violence, but one which offers and gives peace, giving life itself to all.

There is also the image of Jesus as protector of our souls. Though a watchman and a protector of us in peace — not in violence — there is the cleansing of the temple as told in the second chapter of John. With a whip Jesus drove out the cattle to warn those who would make the temple a marketplace. In so doing, Jesus is protecting the sacred place of God's presence in his time. In our time, it is ourselves and God's presence in us that Jesus is protecting.

As Jesus spoke to the leaders of the time, he spoke of his body as a temple — as well as his own resurrection from the dead. His disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the scripture and what he said. This is determination, this is strength, this is leadership — but all in a spirit of peace.

Another image of Jesus as hero occurs when he calms the storm, as found in Matthew, Mark and Luke. "Save us, Lord, for we are lost," says

Matthew. "Master, master we are lost," states Luke. "Master do you not care, we are lost," states Mark. And in each instance, Jesus calls his disciples to faith in his leadership, faith in his word. And the power of his word calms the storm, and brings them to safe harbor.

Jesus protects us from all that seeks to destroy the goodness and grace offered to us over and over again by a God who loves us and asks us to give love and faithfulness. Jesus, as hero, is the central figure in our human history. He breaks into our darkness and brings us the unique qualities of a God who cares enough to come into our world to become flesh so that we can see and experience God among us.

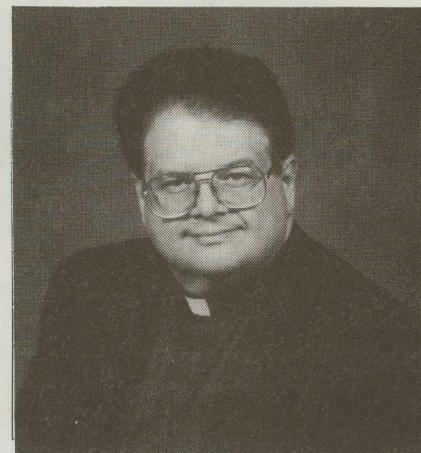
In our world, Jesus changes forever what is possible for humankind. If we care to accept this hero who watches over us, who protects us — a hero to follow through our earthly journey into a heavenly existence — Jesus then is an eternal hero, not just an earthly one.

Are there any heroes left? Yes, we meet them on the journey. Jesus, however, is a hero on a different plane. Faith is needed to comprehend how to break through the hero stereotypes set upon us by our present culture. He is a hero in time, out of time. He is human, he is divine. He is flesh and blood, spirit and life. Says the 7th

chapter of John: "From his heart shall flow streams of living water."

So, friend, as you talk about heroes, remember to look deep, look beyond. Jesus is our watchman and protector. He calms the storms within us. He lives and gives life.

Now, Jesus calls us to be heroes to each other. And within each of us lies the potential of heroic deeds and a heroic life. So come follow this hero on an eternal journey. God bless you.



The Rev. Canon James F. Kelly is Canon Educator of the Cathedral Church of St. Peter, the Episcopal Cathedral of the Diocese of Southwest Florida in St. Petersburg. Born in Brooklyn, Father Kelly was ordained a priest in 1969. He is active in many ecclesiastical and community organizations. Father Kelly lives in Clearwater, with his wife, Kathleen, and Simon, the cat.

Hero For All (continued)

He's one of us, yet bigger than life. Facing all the problems life can offer, and tirelessly achieving that which seems impossible. Always landing on his feet, and when faced with defeat, handling it gracefully and moving forward to the next challenge, all the better prepared.

That's how I want to be.

But when the going gets tough, all my shortcomings surface just when I need most to rely on my inner strengths.

In my studies I've discovered that my hero, Jesus, is willing to walk with me through any situation. In my life I've found this to be true. And in my heart this experience creates a gratitude beyond expression, because my hero does for me what I can't do for myself.

Jesus The Steadfast

In all my studies of Jesus, I've learned most from his ability to face and work through life's challenges. While I respect and adore the divinity in his nature, it is his *human* response to the very problems which I've also faced that inspires me to work a little harder.

When I read in *The Urantia Book* of the difficulties Jesus faced while raising his siblings and the financial pressures that came along with this responsibility, it has helped me in no small measure to know that I pray to someone who understands what it's like for me as a single mom.

When I lost my job and faced the challenge of finding another position, with no real positive leads and two

children absolutely dependent upon me for their well being, again it helped to have my hero to look to for guidance and inspiration.

"Apparently all Jesus' plans for a career were thwarted. The future did not look bright as matters now developed. But he did not falter; he was not discouraged. He lived on, day by day, doing well the present duty and faithfully discharging the immediate responsibilities of his station in life." (page 1393)

The manner in which my next job — the beginning of a true career — unfolded relayed that my hero and his helpers had a hand in that important next step of my life.

(Continued on page 16)

Hero (continued from page 15)

Jesus The Sincere

I don't like anyone to question my motives or actions. In family life, that happens a lot. But again I learned from Jesus how to handle suspicion and mistrust.

"True and genuine inward certainty does not in the least fear outward analysis, nor does truth resent honest criticism ... Sincere men are unafraid of the critical examination of their true convictions and noble ideals." (page 1641)

"Let us be patient; the truth never suffers from honest examination." (page 1711)

When my mother critically questioned my reasons for separating from my husband and depriving my children of a close relationship with their father, I felt powerless to show her my side of the story. But I faced her tirades of anger, I didn't wither before her misinterpretations of fact, and gently was able to help her see that I was only doing my best in a bad situation. All the while, during those moments of conflict, I held onto images of Jesus standing forthright and representing the truth as he knew it. And it gave me strength to face one of the most important people in my life who had temporarily lost faith in me.

Jesus The Strategist

It never ceases to amaze me how Jesus could so successfully handle the attempts of his enemies to embarrass him in public. Such wisdom, such agility, such clear reasoning are a wonder to me. And I love him all the more for that, because I have so little of it, except in my ability to appreciate it in him.

"Jesus would have good-naturedly managed the crowd and effectively disarmed even his violent enemies ... Jesus had long taught the apostles that a soft answer turns away wrath." (pages 1686-1687)

"On both friends and foes he exercised a strong and peculiarly fascinating influence. Multitudes would follow him for weeks, just to hear his gracious words and behold his simple life. Devoted men and women loved Jesus with a

well-nigh superhuman affection. And the better they knew him the more they loved him. And all this is still true; even today and in all future ages, the more man comes to know this God-man, the more he will love and follow after him." (page 1672)

Jesus, My Friend

One of my favorite childhood experiences is when I, as the big sister, attempted to teach my younger siblings about Jesus. I acted the schoolmarm and sat the rowdy young boys down to teach them about the Son of God. The exercise warmed my heart and later that night, as I lay in bed to go to sleep, Jesus' spirit came and befriended me.

That connection has led to many moments of closeness, of learning how to become absolutely dependent on the one who is my spiritual mentor, savior, the center and circumference of all that is good in my life.

His Promise

My favorite testimony among people trying to live by God's will is to talk about what happened when I hit bottom. All that I had done on my own for success in life failed. When the moment of truth came and I realized that I had to stop running from life and grow up, I made yet another bargain with God. Only this time I meant it.

I prayed to him, "Since I can't escape this problem, I'll face it, but I want to know that you're really going to be there to help me." And ever since then I've known that I have help from a power far greater than myself. My hero is the best, and he can be yours, too, just for the asking.

"To you and to all who shall follow in your steps down through the ages, let me say: I always stand near, and my invitation-call is, and ever shall be, Come to me all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am true and loyal, and you shall find spiritual rest for your souls."

"And they found the Master's words to be true when they put his promises to the test. And since that day countless thousands also have tested and proved the surety of these same promises." (page 1808)

Two Prayer Poems

By Michael Bain

I

May the knowledge, wisdom, and truth that we glean
be transferred and exemplified in our daily living.
May your fragmented self, the Mystery Monitor, coalesce
these ideals in your mind and philosophy and faith.
May we be the reflective amplifiers of your Love & Light.
May they shine upon a gladly receiving world and may
every soul know You through us.

II

God grant me the courage and patience to deal with
those persons and situations that are a test to my faith.
I know that on this imperfect sphere trials
and tribulations are common,
but they can be effective tools
to shape my spiritual destiny.
May your unbounded Love conquer all.

Dateline



Marilynn Kulieke and Paula Thompson at the Whole Life Expo in Chicago.

Domestic Extension Hard At Work

The Domestic Extension Committee has attended 17 Whole Life Expos this year in Seattle, San Francisco, New York, Spokane, Pasadena, Denver, Boulder, Santa Fe, Sacramento, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Fort Lauderdale, Atlanta, Chicago and Boston. In addition, the outreach booth has appeared for the first time in Pittsburgh and Asheville this year.

Prior to each Expo, new volunteers are trained on how to answer difficult questions, creative listening, booth etiquette, and Jesus' outreach techniques. In 18 months, approximately 80 new booth volunteers have been trained.

"We continue to encourage Expo follow-up workshops in certain cities," says Mo Siegel, chairman of Domestic Extension. "These workshops are the next step in bringing new readers into existing study groups or initiating new study groups."

The committee has also published the *1995-1996 Study Group Directory*, listing 306 domestic groups and 67 international groups. "This is an increase of 26 groups over last year's total," Siegel says.

Summer Seminar Explores Spirituality

Approximately 75 students of *The Urantia Book* met at the Fairleigh Dickinson University campus in Teaneck, New Jersey in late July to explore the theme, "Spiritual Communion—Theory and Practice." The relatively small number of attendees allowed for a more intimate setting, which helped to foster a growing sense of communion in the participants as the program progressed.

Twenty-one workshops were offered in the course of the seminar, each featuring a unique viewpoint which, taken together, reflected the multiplicity of ways in which this theme is presented in *The Urantia Book*. Topics offered included "Habits Conducive to Spiritual Growth," "Seeing with the Heart: A New Spiritual Vision," "External Avenues for Internal Growth," "Toward a Common Fellowship," and "Communion and Creativity."

A free day was scheduled in the seminar to permit attendees to explore

the cultural riches of New York City, across the Hudson River from Teaneck. Evening entertainment was also provided, including a traditional Korean dance performance.

The program ended on an uplifting note with a plenary talk by Eileen Laurence on "Shared Communion" and a worship service conducted by Avi and Lila Dogim.

Golden Gate Circle

Readers from counties circling San Francisco met in early May on the campus of the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California to exchange views, as members and friends of the Golden Gate Circle Society, about the directions to be taken by our movement. Rebecca Kantor envisioned a time when we, as readers of *The Urantia Book*, might find ourselves on "odd sides of certain fences." For instance, we could discover that we are standing together with the more conservative Christian sects vouching for the divine nature of Jesus, in opposition to the so-called cutting edge of theologians who sometimes present the thesis that Christ was not divine. Kantor is enrolled as a student at the religious school in Berkeley.

Drawing upon several trips to Israel, as well as intensive study of the land of Jesus' birth, David Kantor presented a discussion and slides detailing the newest archeological discoveries in the Holy Land. He talked about a Galilean fishing boat, recently unearthed, that dates from Jesus' era. An excavation at Sepphoris arrested his attention. Kantor pointed out that Nazareth, where Jesus grew to manhood, was more of a suburb of Sepphoris, with the latter having a population of close to 30,000 people, while Nazareth had about 700. Of particular interest were the circles of El-Hiri in the Golan area. This ancient construction, consisting of five concentric circles one third of a mile in circumference, has been dated (by astronomical means) to about 3,000

B.C. An impressive burial cairn is situated in the center and is a more recent addition, circa 2000 B.C.

Kantor's overview of the active archeological sites of Israel and their relevance to *The Urantia Book* will be published in a book, *Pilgrimage 2000*, by Good Cheer Press.

Proposed New Wisconsin Society

Robert Arkens of Clintonville and Mark Kulieke, Green Bay, are spearheading efforts to form a new Fellowship society in Wisconsin. Prospective founders and charter members hail from all parts of the state, although clusters of readers meet regularly in study groups in their respective areas. Many in the group have been reading *The Urantia Book* for over 10 years, a few more than 20 years, and one or two are second-generation students.

The society-in-waiting has organized several conferences in recent years, including one near Iola in May and one at Sheboygan Falls in June. At the Sheboygan meeting, Martin Eigenberger spoke on "Evolution and the Neurological Foundations of Spiritual Experience."

Midwest Conference

The Midwest Conference has been a tradition since 1978. Planning and organization of the event has alternated among societies and study groups in a six-state area of the north central United States. This fall the First Society welcomed over 60 attendees at the spacious Inn at Eagle Creek State Park near Mattoon, Illinois. The theme was "Toward a Perfect World." Students shared their views of how our planet, beset by rebellion and present-day chaos, will sometime attain levels of light and life.

Keynote speaker David Kulieke of Lincolnshire, Illinois, warned about the "pervasive problem in America," the principle that all men are created equal, and what this has come to mean: "that all humans should end up at the same level of achievement." This implies that we must be accepting of all points of view as being equally valid. "But, the universe does have a center; there is a God," says Kulieke. "And in the plan of that God, we are to achieve perfection through growth. We are to seek higher values. In the growth and evolution of the universe, this means that some ideas are closer to the truth than others and

that some levels of achievement are higher ... Moving toward a perfect world can only happen if the citizens desire improvement, for the world, but especially for themselves."

In an address entitled "The Challenge of the 21st Century," Meredith J. Sprunger of Fort Wayne, Indiana identified the "basic dilemma of our times," which he described as having no unifying conception of reality. "The singular ingredient which will bring meaning and unity into planetary existence," says Sprunger, "is an inspiring paradigm of reality which will harmonize science, philosophy, and religion and inspire humankind to strive for common goals and objectives ... *The Urantia Book* is the only source of reality that is large enough and spiritually empowering to unify and energize the entire planet."

Society Conclave Held

Twelve representatives of the societies of the Fellowship attended the Society Conclave, held July 27, 1995 at Fairleigh Dickinson University in Teaneck, New Jersey, in conjunction with the 1995 Summer Seminar and General Council meeting. Issues discussed at the conclave included the Fellowship's decision to publish *The Urantia Book* and methods of distribution of this edition, society representation on the General Council, organizational communications with Urantia Foundation, scheduling regional conferences to avoid conflicts, and encouraging society members to become more active. The representatives were also given an update on the status of IC 96, scheduled August 3-8, 1996 at Flagstaff, Arizona, and how societies can participate in this event.

"I hope that society representatives share this information with their members," says Avi Dogim, chairman of the Charter Committee. "If anyone has questions concerning the matters discussed at the conclave, and didn't have a society representative present, do not hesitate to contact me. Society participation is most important, especially as major decisions have to be made regarding our organization's activities in the near future."

Dogim may be contacted through the Fellowship headquarters at (312) 327-0424 or (312) 327-6159 fax.



Fort Wayne Society President Clarence Lange meets with Marjorie Runkle and Marilyn Buchanan at Midwest Conference in October 1995.

New York Society Sponsors Russian Translation

The Society of Greater New York has made progress with a Korean translation of *The Urantia Book*. Now the society has undertaken a Russian translation as well. Professional translators are working on the project, under the supervision of an editor with feedback and corrections by long-time reader Lila Dogim, who is fluent in Russian.

"We need hardly tell you the importance of the availability of the fifth epochal revelation to the well over 200-million people on Urantia who can read Russian," says Dale Szejnberg in New York. "And we need hardly tell you about the spiritual hunger that exists among our brothers and sisters who happened to be born in what is now the former Soviet Union."

UB's 40th Birthday Celebrated in Arizona

Just 40 years ago, on October 12, 1955, the long-awaited publication of *The Urantia Book* occurred. And one of the newest members of Arizona's Grand Canyon Society, Nola Smith, was an eyewitness to what happened on that historic day.

At its October statewide meeting, the Arizona society met at the home of Michael and Ada Knoll in Phoenix, where Smith described how, 40 years ago in Chicago, Dr. William Sadler pulled open the sliding doors on the second-floor meeting room at 533 Diversey to reveal dozens of stacked boxes. He opened the boxes and handed *Urantia Books* to members of the Forum. These orders had been placed and prepaid many years previously, some for as little as \$5.

At this meeting Larry Bowman also presented a review of the first 40 years of Christianity. He spoke of the often tenuous relationships that existed between the apostles in the early years dedicated to the spread of the Master's gospel. He cited the fact that, unlike Christianity, the *Urantia* readership has not had to suffer persecutions, neither have any students been thrown to the lions.

Family Life Survey Results

The ad hoc Family Life Committee of the Fellowship published a survey in the Fall 1994 issue of *The Study Group Herald* in order to find out how best to serve the readership. The survey was developed to read the pulse of needs and interests of the many families that comprise the Fellowship. Here are results from respondents to the survey.

The top 10 priority needs for resources for family life are:

- Parenting materials based on principles of *The Urantia Book*
- Study guides for children
- Stories for children from *The Urantia Book*
- Premarital training materials
- Study guides for teens
- Death and dying within family
- Chosen family groups
- Family meetings
- Intergenerational care (elder care)
- Supportive partnerships

The four priority activities respondents would like to see the Family Life Committee sponsor are:

- Secondary works to introduce *The Urantia Book* to children and teens
- Family camps
- Marriage training seminars
- Supporting the dying and the grieving process
- Emphasis on family at conferences (with workshops for parents and experiential activities for children at all levels)

The Family Life Committee encourages your participation in any of these initiatives that will be developed. Here is how to reach the members of that committee:

Sara Blackstock, 120 Inverness Ct., Benicia, CA 94510 (707) 747-1854
Patrick Yesh, Box 693, Porthill, ID 83853 Fax (604) 428-2882
Cecelia Lampley, Reno, NV (702) 747-3546
Claudia Ayers & Larry Watkins, Sacramento, CA (916) 482-2082
Lee & Chrissy Smith, Soquel, CA (408) 462-4823

General Council Elections

At the July 27, 1995 meeting of the General Council in Teaneck, New Jersey, Alison Gardner, Sherborn, Massachusetts, was elected to fill a vacancy on the council. Ms. Gardner's term will run until the next Triennial Delegate Assembly in 1997. In addition, eight persons were elected to Fellowship committees and two others were appointed at the October 27 Executive Committee meeting in Chicago to fill vacancies until the next General Council meeting.

Judicial

David Owen, Chicago, 6 years

Charter

Francyl Gawryn, Mercer Island, WA, 6 years

Fraternal Relations

Eef Hoedemaker, Aldergrove, BC, 6 years

Domestic Extension

Ann Garner, Arlington, TX, 6 years
Mary Ebben, 5 years

International Fellowship

Douglas Fraser, Kingwood, TX, 6 years

Education

Stephen Zendt, San Francisco, 6 years

Publications

John Thiele, Fort Smith, AR, 6 years

Finance

Brian Smith, Leucadia, CA, 6 years

Special Projects

Larry Watkins, Sacramento, CA, 6 years

2,000th Birthday Party

*Readers Celebrate the Anniversary
of the Birth of Jesus*

Seekers Study Group, Chile



The bimillennial celebration in Chile consisted of an all-night vigil. It was held at the beautiful home of Humberto Andrade in Santiago, beginning early in the evening of August 20, 1994, as noontime in Bethlehem would bring in the new Millennium at 6 a.m. Sunday morning, Santiago time. Throughout the evening, a blue candle burned to commemorate Michael, and fellowship, food, and study filled the hours until dawn broke. At 6 a.m. the Chilean readership joined together for a joyous communion. After breakfast, friends in the U.S. were called, and messages went back and forth the next day, as a reminder of new and unique ties uniting us — a conscious realization of our true and deepening relation to one another through the mind and spirit of Michael, and through the continuing birth of his truth on the bestowal world that we share.

Northwest Colorado

On the weekend of August 21, 1994, *Urantia Book* readers gathered in the mountains of Northwest Colorado for a campout/birthday party. We enjoyed worship and fellowship under the whispering pine trees and sparkling stars to wish our beloved Jesus a most heartfelt Happy 2,000th Birthday.

Passages from *The Urantia Book* were read as the evening worship service began, and we honored the Spirit of Truth with a remembrance supper. Then we shared a birthday cake with

big, blue concentric circles on the frosting and wished Michael a very happy birthday.

As the sun made its way behind the Continental Divide and the stars began to twinkle, we gathered around the big campfire and sang Christmas carols and other festive songs. The younger children were tucked into their sleeping bags and most of the adults gathered around the campfire as the night grew chilly and waited for the designated hour — 2 a.m. — when we would wish Jesus a Happy Birthday at the exact time of 12 noon in Israel, where nearly 100 *Urantia*

Book readers gathered at Shepherd's Field. It was a wonderful worship, each of us silently and in unison joining our hearts with so many of our brothers and sisters around the world. With the stars as a canopy, we felt the reality of our global family.

We gathered a last time for lunch, and then began our journey down the mountain to our homes, inspired by serving God even more earnestly in the new millennium.

California

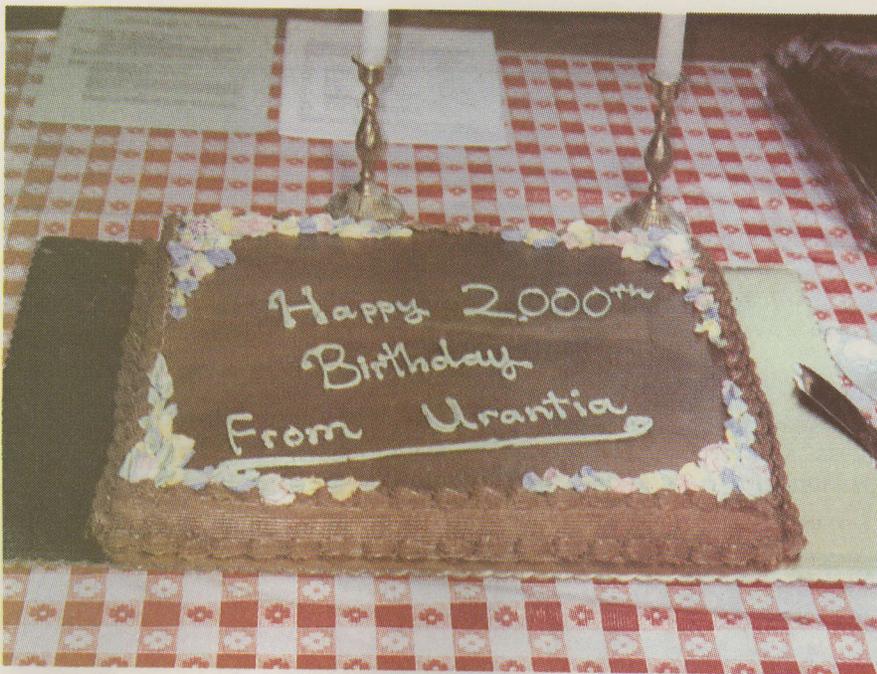
Our celebration was twofold, literally. The Northern California group went to the Shenoa Retreat Center near Booneville, east of Mendocino; the Central California group to the beach near Santa Cruz.

Some of the group arrived at the Shenoa Retreat Center the day before our celebration of the Master's birthday, on Saturday. It was a full-moon night and the sky was crystal clear. Our meditation and remembrance supper were deeply meaningful.

Shenoa was organized on the old campgrounds of Girl Scout property, rustic but comfortable. The Shenoa crew and leadership have had experience with Findhorn, the amazing Scottish center for spiritual life. As with all Findhorn-based retreat centers, there is a wonderful organic garden. Strolling about the grounds under the full moon was a treat for everyone.

On Sunday morning, we celebrated with a full service of fellowship and worship. The services were held in an open assembly tent. Inside the tent were a series of bright banners with spiritual sayings created by Pat Fearey. The central banner blazed, "As Jesus is to us, so may we be unto each other."

Our friends in Santa Cruz report that their gathering was also special, with the sea and the redwoods and lots of meaningful interaction.



Soon it was time for the remembrance supper. A large circle was formed with the chairs and everyone held hands and prayed. Then we read selected excerpts from "Establishing the Remembrance Supper" in *The Urantia Book* while the bread and wine were passed around. As people sipped their wine, some spoke of their feelings for Jesus and recalled how his life had impacted theirs.

First Society Celebration

Included among the many celebrations around the world of the 2,000th anniversary of the birth of Michael of Nebadon in human form was a continuation of the longest series of observances of Michael's incarnation on Urantia. First Society celebrated at its home for special events, Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois.

Since the 1920s, when study groups formed by Dr. William S. Sadler first observed this tradition in

(Continued on page 33)

Pilot Light Society of Seattle

We enjoyed a wonderful celebration of Michael's 2,000th anniversary in a retreat at Camp Brotherhood near Mt. Vernon, Washington. In keeping with our formula of balancing worship, study, and play, we offered a variety of workshops, recreational activities of swimming, hiking, volleyball, and basketball, and daily children's programs. One person brought a telescope for stargazing. The worldwide unity celebration took place at 1 a.m. in a large meadow with a dramatic appearance of the clouds opening up and moonlight bathing the worshipers just as the hour struck.

out over several picnic tables, and the feast and visiting began. The kids were very happy to be out in the country and kept a close eye on the big birthday cake for Christ Michael.

Alaska

Close to 40 *Urantia Book* readers met in Willow for a remembrance supper and potluck picnic. It had been many years since everyone from around the state had gathered, and Jesus' birthday was the perfect occasion to bring old friends together and meet new ones.

Willow is a small community two hours north of Anchorage. Dedicated readers traveled from as far away as Homer, eight hours, and Fairbanks, five hours, to attend. The group from Anchorage rented a van for the day, to journey together. As everyone arrived the food was unpacked and laid

Kansas City



Approximately 78 people from many areas of Missouri and Kansas were present and took part in a remembrance service in which bread and grapes served as the symbols of communion. Many made personal presentations relating to their feelings and thoughts on this special day. The birthday celebration was from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. with a special silent meditation at noon. A beautiful white birthday cake adorned with flowers was shared by all. A giant birthday card was signed by everybody and personal messages to Jesus were added. After lunch all members went outside and on that lovely sunny day each person released a balloon. The bright sky looked quite festive with all those blue and white colors floating heavenward. Each balloon was to represent a personal commitment to service by the individual. Everyone enjoyed wishing Michael a very Happy Birthday.

In Close Proximity — The World of the Nonbreathers

By Deborah Foster
Anchorage, Alaska

You would be more than interested in the planetary conduct of this type of mortal because such a race of beings inhabits a sphere in close proximity to Urantia. (The Urantia Book, page 564)

Among the many intriguing statements in *The Urantia Book*, the one concerning the location of a world of nonbreathing mortals has always been most tantalizing. What exactly is close proximity? Are the authors using their frames of reference or ours? Could humans possibly find this world?

Looking around our neighborhood, the nearest stars are in the Alpha Centauri system, about 4.29 light years (25-trillion miles)¹ from us. This is a triple star system containing Alpha Centauri A, Alpha Centauri B, and Proxima Centauri. And it might be a good candidate for the location of Anova.

"The oldest inhabited world of Satania, world number one, is Anova, one of the forty-four satellites revolving around an enormous dark planet but exposed to the differential light of three neighboring suns. Anova is in an advanced stage of progressive civilization." (page 559)

Twenty-five trillion miles is a trek, so looking a little closer to home, our own solar system, we read:

"In your solar system only three planets are at present suited to harbor life." (page 173)

The authors name these planets and denominate the types of mortals that would inhabit them. Venus would harbor superbreathers and Mars, with its thin atmosphere, would be the home of subbreathers. The other planet, of course, is Urantia. The Melchizedek of the Jerusem School of Planetary Administration, who



Europa at a range of 240,000 kilometers (to convert to miles multiply by .6214), showing the dark streaks. [P-21764C]

wrote Paper 49 — The Inhabited Worlds, then tells us:

"If mortals should inhabit a planet devoid of air, like your moon, they would belong to the separate order of nonbreathers. This type represents a radical or extreme adjustment to the planetary environment and is separately considered. Nonbreathers account for the remaining one and one-half per cent of Satania worlds." (page 561)

The operative word in these quotes is planet. Our moon is not a

planet and it lacks any atmosphere. If the search for nonbreathers is expanded to include the moons in our solar system, however, some very interesting facts emerge.

In 1979 two NASA Voyager spacecraft began sending back pictures of most of the outer planets of our solar system and their moons. These pictures defined some new specialties in astronomy and geology. By matching the pictures from the Voyager missions with descriptions of the nonbreather spheres in *The Urantia Book*, one moon of the 44 known satellites stands out as the most likely



Jupiter as seen by Voyager 1 with the two inner Galilean moons, Io on the left and Europa on the right.
[P-21082C]

location for our nearest mortal neighbors.

This moon is Europa, the second of four Galilean moons in synchronous equatorial rotation around Jupiter. These satellites are called the Galileans because they were first observed by Galileo in 1610 with his new telescope. Io, the closest orb to Jupiter, is where active volcanism was first seen outside of Earth. This is in conformity with *The Urantia Book's* explanation (page 658) of tidal disruption forces acting on the moons of Jupiter. Ganymede and Callisto are the third and fourth moons, respectively.

Several characteristics point to Europa as the home of the nonbreathers:

1. Size. The moon is small enough not to have any appreciable atmosphere. This satellite is approximately 10 percent smaller than our own

moon, both in radius and density. Recently, astrophysicists using the Hubble space telescope have reported measuring atomic oxygen emissions from Europa that would be the equivalent of atmospheric pressure 150 miles above the Earth's surface.² Mars, by contrast, has an atmospheric pressure that is similar to living 18 miles above the earth.³ This is a pressure subbreathers would be comfortable with. Europa fits *The Urantia Book's* definition of "worlds of little or no air."

2. The satellite would be located where there is possibility for "disastrous electrical storms."

"These worlds are also subject to disastrous electrical storms of a nature unknown on Urantia. During such times of tremendous energy fluctuation the inhabitants must take refuge

in their special structures of protective insulation." (page 563)

Jupiter's rapid 10-hour rotation creates a huge magnetic field that envelops the planet, its moons, and the surrounding space area as far as Saturn. If visible from earth, this field, called the magnetosphere, would look as big as the sun. Within the magnetosphere are electric current sheets that rotate above and below the planet's equator, a plasma torus that carries 5-million amps of current at 400,000 volts. These radiation belts emit enough radiation to kill humans hundreds of times over.⁴

The largest aurora ever seen, 18,000 miles long, has been observed above Jupiter's northern latitudes, along with superbolts of lightning.⁵ The energies contained within the magnetosphere, in conjunction with

the energy received from the sun, are capable of causing "tremendous energy fluctuation" that would produce "disastrous electrical storms."

3. Evidence of protection from meteors, such as the absence of meteor craters.

"Millions upon millions of meteorites enter the atmosphere of Urantia daily coming in at the rate of almost two hundred miles a second. On the nonbreathing worlds the advanced races must do much to protect themselves from meteor damage by making electrical installations which operate to consume or shunt the meteors. Great danger confronts them when they venture beyond these protected zones." (page 563)

With installations that "consume or shunt meteors," the result of that action would be a world without serious cratering and some place that these meteors are shunted to. Europa has been likened to a "white billiard ball marked with a felt-tipped pen."⁶ It is the smoothest body in our solar system. Almost all the other satellites in our solar system have an appearance that is some variation of our own moon, with many craters of different sizes scattered all over their surfaces. But on Europa only three to twelve craters have been mapped with any certainty.

So, where are all the meteor craters that should be on Europa? Pushing aside the meteors so they impact another body is certainly the most permanent way to get rid of this problem. And there are several targets of opportunity for this celestial billiards shoot. One target that shows the most hits is Callisto, the fourth moon of Jupiter.

This body is the most densely cratered in the solar system. The distribution of the craters points to a meteor origin from within the Jupiter system. There is also a sharp decrease in any craters larger than 37 miles (60 km.) in diameter.⁷ This would seem to indicate that the nonbreathers prefer to deal with meteors of a certain size and may even chop them to a size that their facilities can handle.

This may explain the peculiar

shape of Comet Shoemaker-Levy 9, which crashed into Jupiter July 1994. It was likened to a "string of pearls" and consisted of 21 fragments lined up in a row.

4. Evidence of unusual features that may indicate creative minds at work.

"During such times of tremendous energy fluctuation the inhabitants must take refuge in their special structures of protective insulation." (page 563)

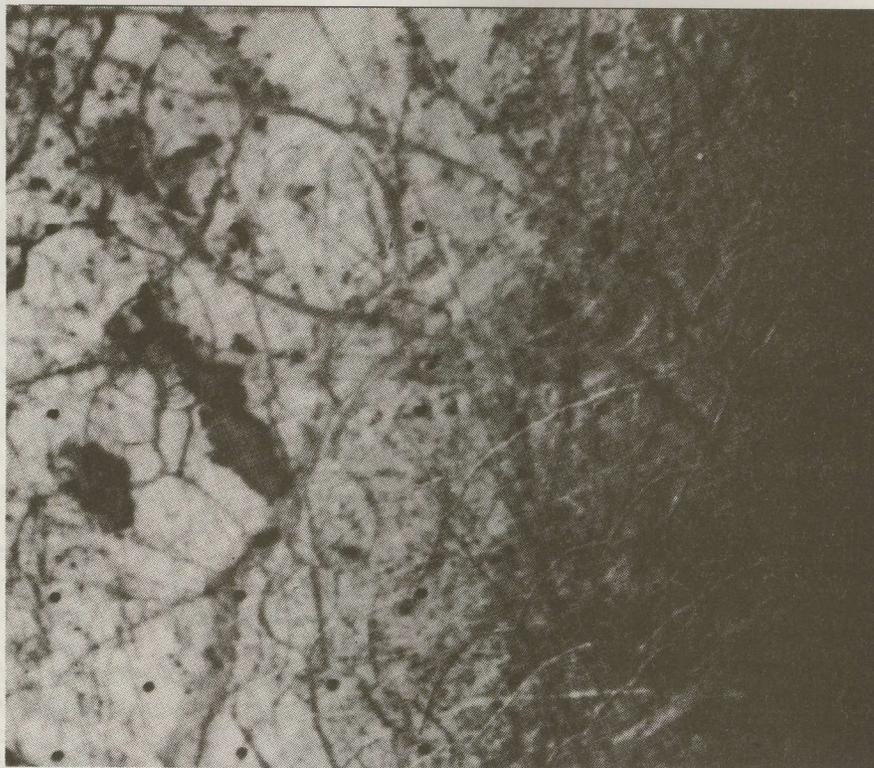
The moon is covered by light and dark streaks interspersed with many random dark spots. The darker areas have a definite organic appearance to the non-scientist. Perhaps these streaks are the plant life of Europa. This is the description of the light streaks by NASA: "One of the most remarkable geologic phenomena discovered by Voyager is the light streaks that appear on Europa. These are smaller than the dark streaks, only about 10 kilometers in width, but much more uniform. Seen at low Sun

angle, they show vertical relief to less than a few hundred meters. These light ridges are seen best at low Sun and tend to be visible at higher illumination angles. The most amazing thing about the light ridges is their form. Instead of being straight, they form scallops or cusps with smooth curves that repeat regularly on a scale of 100 to a few hundred kilometers. In some of the low-Sun-angle pictures, the surface of Europa seems to be covered with a beautiful network of these regular curving lines. The impression is so bizarre that one tends not to believe the reality of what is seen. Nothing remotely like it has ever been seen on any other planet."⁸

Perhaps these are their "special structures of protective insulation."

The most prevalent working model the scientific community has developed to explain the lack of meteor craters and the surface appearance of Europa is that it is covered by a cracked, icy surface with water underneath. The dark material wells up from the interior, filling the cracks, and all the meteors that should be impacting

(Continued on page 35)



Europa showing light ridges at low Sun angle. Scalloping is best seen in the lower right. The dark regular dots are calibration marks etched on the camera faceplate. [P-21766]

What Does Urantia Mean?

By Wayne and Ute Ferrier
Berkshire, New York

You introduce a friend to the Big Blue Book and one of their first questions is, "Urantia, what does that mean?" You say, "Urantia is the name of our world." Often your friend's inquisitiveness is satisfied.

Many longtime readers assume that the word Urantia came into use by humankind in the 1930s when *The Urantia Book* was written.

Actually if dictionaries were to list the word and its origin, Urantia can be traced at least as far back as the Sumerian era of languages some

5,000 years ago. That is old for a word. Roughly 5,000 years ago is about as far back as archaeologists have been able to track human civilization through artifacts like written records.

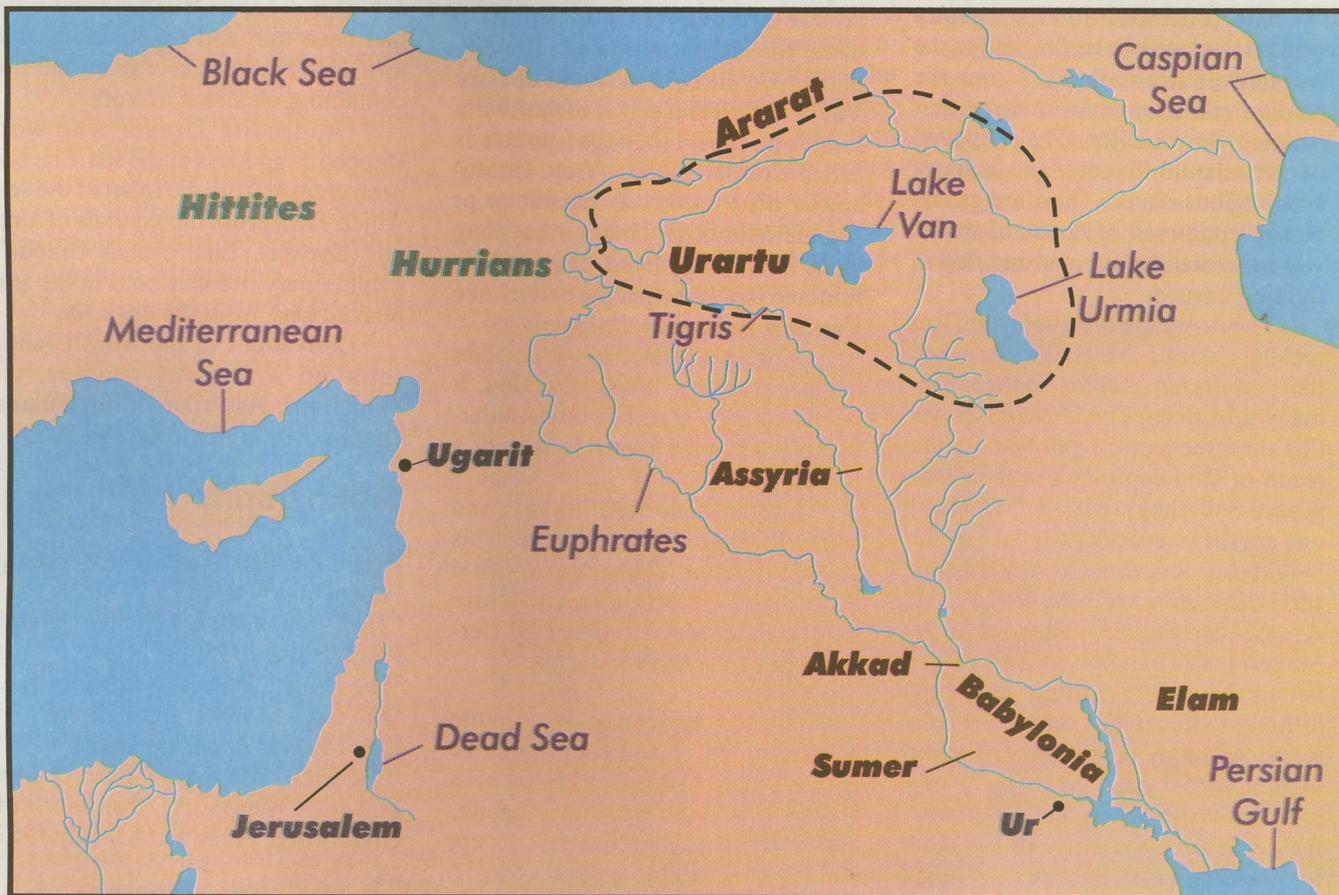
While we have other artifacts much older than that, it has been the writings that have given historians the most insight into how ancient societies were structured and what beliefs they held. Many of these records can be found in universities or libraries; for example, the clay tablet (from around 2000 B.C.) recounting the Sumerian flood story is in the custody of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia.

The Nodites

According to *The Urantia Book*, the Nodites go back 200,000 years. The Nodites were the ancestors of the Sumerians, from whom the western world inherited mathematics, astronomy, law, government, trade, art and a history veiled in mythology. The Nodites were the descendants of Caligastia's staff who have been described in the Bible as the "giants of old," and these giants were our cultural forefathers.

Many Nodites took the side of the insurgents during the rebellion, but some left their leader Nod and joined in with Van, who had steadfastly re-

The Ancient Near and Middle East



150 Miles

fused to align himself with the fallen Planetary Prince. These Vanites settled in the Ararat region of Anatolia, what is now eastern Turkey.

The Nodites were also the builders of the tower of Babel. About 50,000 years after the death of Nod, the Nodites decided to do something in order to preserve their racial unity.¹ It is ironic that the project they decided on for this purpose ended up dividing the Nodite race.

In a council meeting of the tribes the plan of Bablot, a descendant of Nod, was accepted. Bablot was the architect and builder of the tower that was to glorify the Nodite race and the project was hence named after him.

The Nodites, however, were divided about what purpose the city of Bablot and its tower should have. The largest group wanted the tower as a memorial of Nodite superiority and to challenge future generations. The next largest faction wanted Bablot to preserve Dilmun culture and thought it would make a great center for commerce, art and manufacture.

The third and smallest group wanted the tower to be devoted to the worship of the Father, so that the Nodites could atone for their participation in the rebellion. They believed the city should function as a cultural and religious center. This third group, mostly composed of noncombatants, was immediately outvoted and fled as fighting ensued.

The tower of Babel conflict greatly reduced the Nodite race and the remaining peoples scattered in many directions. The Bible describes this disagreement of purpose as the result of God confounding their languages until they couldn't understand one another's speech.²

The descendants of the Nodite survivors split into three groups: the Assyrians, the Elamites and the Sumerians. These three groups retained a common written language, although they went their separate ways. At times they competed over dominion of certain areas.

The Assyrians, descendants from the western or Syrian Nodites, were the largest group of the three and ruled over the Babylonians. The eastern or Elamite Nodites, who later greatly blended with the Adamites, settled primarily in Iran. The central or pre-

Sumerian Nodites, the smallest group of the three, remained fairly pure for thousands of years before blending with the Adamites and becoming the Sumerians.³ The way modern day historians and archaeologists see it, it was from these Sumerians, who lived at the mouth of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers (near Ur) 5,000 ago, that civilization emerged.

The Land of Urartu

About 50,000 years before the tower of Babel conflict a group of Nodites separated from their leader Nod to follow Van and Amadon. This group known variously as northern Nodites, Amadonites or Vanites, settled around Lake Van in the Ararat region. In this region, Adamson founded the center of his civilization about 37,000 years ago. Mount Ararat became the sacred mountain of northern Mesopotamia.⁴

While Ararat today is the name of a particular mountain, it was known in pre-history as a region. The word Ararat is a derivation of Urartu, a name for ancient Armenia. The city of Van, on the eastern shores of Lake Van, was the chief center of the Urartu kingdom. The language spoken is called Urartian (coming from Urartu) and is also known as Chaldean or Vannic. Although Urartian has long since been considered extinct, it is rumored that some people in the Lake Van area still speak the language.

Urartian is related to all the other languages of that time and region. It seems unlikely that the close similarity to the word Urantia is merely a coincidence.

German historian, linguist and author Johannes Friedrich wrote in his book, *Extinct Languages*, how Sumerian, Urartian and Elamite words, though often spoken differently, have the same meaning:

"The spoken word may sound quite different in Sumerian and in Akkadian, in given cases also in Hittite, Hurrian, Urartian or Elamite, but the written symbol of the concept is identical in all these languages."⁵

These ancient languages were not confined to Urartu and they permeated into neighboring regions.

Mesopotamia, which had no natural boundaries, was eventually absorbed into other empires. Friedrich mentions that the clay tablets of cuneiform writing from Babylonia spread into remote parts of the Near East, Syria, Asia Minor and Minoa of prehistoric Greece. Since cuneiform writings are some of our oldest surviving records of written language, historians have been understandably intrigued, but according to *The Urantia Book*, the peculiar form of cuneiform writing evolved after the alphabet of Dalamatia had been lost.⁶

From this early center of Sumerian civilization, ideas and knowledge were exchanged on the trade routes along with commercial transactions.

Historian J.C. Margueron concluded that since Mesopotamia greatly influenced the Greeks, we ought to think of Mesopotamia as the cradle of western civilization. It was the Mesopotamian world that produced the first great civilization and bestowed its benefits on neighbors.⁷

Stories from Dalamatia and Eden had been told and retold, being distorted after thousands of years, but still containing elements of truth.

Aphrodite Urania was worshipped as goddess of the sea. She had been created from the foam of the sea, which came from the genitals of Uranus (heaven). Like Urania, Urantia's evolutionary life was born in the sea, planted here from the heavens.

Derivations of the word Urantia show up with many peoples, the Sumerians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Greeks and, in particular, Vanites.

Bibliography

Recommended *Urantia Book* reading: Papers 66 to Paper 78.

¹*The Urantia Book*. Chicago: Urantia Foundation, 1955; pg. 858.

²The Bible. Genesis, chapter 11.

³*The Urantia Book*; pg. 859-860.

⁴*The Urantia Book*; pg. 860.

⁵Friedrich, Johannes. *Extinct Languages*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press Publishers, 1957; pg. 37-38.

⁶*The Urantia Book*; pg. 860.

⁷Margueron, Jean-Claude. *Mesopotamia*. Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1965; pg. 180.

Study Groups of Tennessee

Watauga Valley

By Dean White

After discovering *The Urantia Book* in October 1979, I attended my first conference in Lake Forest, Illinois the following summer. I returned from that Summer Seminar with five extra *Urantia Books*, the names of two or three readers in northeastern Tennessee, and a desire to start a study group. In retrospect, I can see how our seraphim work to bring groups together. Our first group meeting was four months later on October 12, 1980. After some fifteen years, three couples who started reading with me in that first group are still active in our Urantia community.

Typically, members of our study group are very diverse in background, and some of us continue to be active in the traditional Christian churches we belonged to prior to finding *The Urantia Book*. Myself, the Miller family, and the Whitman family worship in First Presbyterian Church in Elizabethton. Billie Anderson attends a Christian church in Johnson City, and the Wolff family a Christian church in Erwin. Debby Reese serves as choir director for First Methodist Church in Mountain City, and Hal Miller plays the piano for a Universal Church in Johnson City.

We have welcomed visitors from various traditional and non-traditional religious organizations, including students from a conservative Christian university and New Agers from North Carolina who attend the Center for Spiritual Arts in Asheville. We are constantly reminding each other of Jesus' admonition to James, "When did I ever teach you that you should all see alike?"

Soon after starting our group, we began a sequential reading of the book. Reading a paper a week, with down time for vacations, hazardous winter weather, and illness, we completed the book almost five years later. We then began a study of our journey to Paradise, starting with our mortal career on Urantia and ending with our

induction into the Corps of Finality on Paradise. After completing that study, we experimented with various formats, meeting places, and meeting times. Our meetings currently include a monthly covered dish supper, an annual Pentecostal service, and a Urantia Family Picnic each August in celebration of Jesus' birthday.

Our monthly study group meeting starts around five o'clock on the last Sunday evening of each month. We meet in my home, visit for awhile and enjoy a meal together. A devotion and music follow the meal. We have a lot of musical talent in our Urantia community and we enjoy singing hymns together, with our children joining in. We conclude with an adult study while the children entertain themselves elsewhere.

The Watauga Valley Study Group annually hosts a Urantia Family Picnic, a day-long event held at the beautiful mountain farm home of Billie and Greg Anderson, near Elizabethton. The mountains surrounding the Watauga Valley provide a picturesque, peaceful setting in which to celebrate Jesus' birthday. The picnic, an all-day Saturday gathering, has become something of a regional event that typically draws 50 or more readers from across Tennessee and sev-

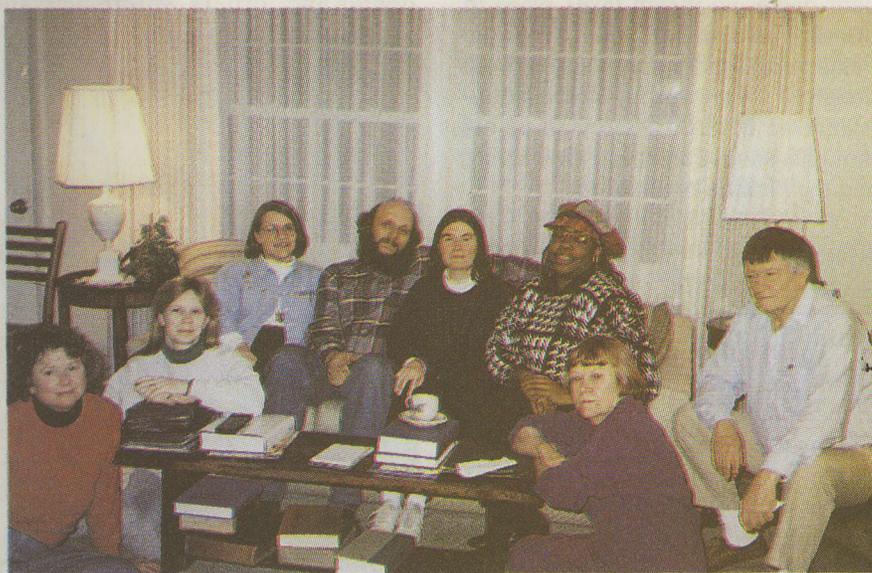
eral neighboring states. Many stay overnight and enjoy more fellowship on Sunday morning.

The picnic is a group project, with members readying the grounds, preparing and serving an evening meal, and planning and participating in a program that always includes music as well as topical presentations by guest speakers who have come from as far away as Texas and Canada. We invite one and all to join us for music, fellowship, wide-ranging discussion, recreation, and celebration here in the mountains of northeast Tennessee next August.

Starflight

By Billie Anderson

I think I would describe our little study group as an advanced, intimate study. Currently, we have three women who meet every Tuesday morning at the home of Dean White in Elizabethton. We enjoy three hours of sharing and study centered mostly around *The Urantia Book*. When I first came to this group, there were several people who met in the home of Richard and Ruth Tschanz in Mountain City. Usually, there were five seekers present, and we all felt



Members of the Watauga Valley study group. From left, Billie Anderson, Paula Whitman, Beth Bartley, Jim and Cheri Miller, Adora Dupree, Dean White and Hal Miller.



Members of the Knoxville study group. From left, (standing) Vance Page, Herman Sain, Bruce McCoy, Beth Bartley and Michael Gillespie. Seated are Terry Faulkner, Kindel and Kori Page, and Alvin and Helen Smith.

that our angels had arranged our group to meet and grow together. Over the course of 10 years, we have studied such topics as personality, mind, time/space reality, end-time prophecy, and many others. All topics seem to interrelate and we often feel exhilarated by new inspiration and personal connections to our everyday experience.

For the last two years, we have hosted a Pentecost celebration for our group and the Watauga Valley Study Group. We long to understand what it is to really worship. We have tried to allow the Spirit of Truth to guide our thoughts and activities at this outdoor gathering which takes place in the early evening around a symbolic Pentecost campfire. Last year we were delighted to have Debby Reece's minister, Don Morris, share with us his thoughts about Pentecost, the church, and the *Urantia* revelation.

Knoxville

By Bruce McCoy

The beginning of the Knoxville Study Group can only be understood in the context of Helen Hutchinson's coming to embrace *The Urantia Book*. In the late 60s in the University of Tennessee's off-campus student housing community adjacent to the university area, Helen lived just down the street from Epworth Methodist Church. She was a lay leader of this slowly dying church whose core was

a ladies' Sunday School class which also met weekly at Helen's house for quilting.

The local Methodist, Presbyterian, and Episcopalian churches pooled nine adjacent church-owned properties in the neighborhood and, with six houses, a vacant lot, and two small churches (including Helen's church), began a bold ecumenical experiment in cooperative urban community outreach which they called The Epworth Ministry.

Into the early 70s, they presented programs and opportunities which were friendly and attractive to students and others interested in

grassroots and community development activities. There was constant and, often, heated dialogue between people of widely divergent views on every topic under the sun. There were hippies, rednecks, students, university professors, and others who were drawn by the music.

Helen, a retired school teacher, was as loyal to her church as she was conservative in both her philosophy and her theology. But, she was also a devout Christian and therefore determinedly unwilling to have what she considered to be an un-Christian attitude, a heart and a mind closed to the ideas and the energy of the diverse group of people who rather suddenly descended upon her and her ladies' Sunday School class.

Helen's home became the *de facto* educational building of the new Epworth Ecumenical Church. Six or seven different groups of people met there for a variety of activities. One Sunday in early 1974, during a small group church service that consisted of a group of people sitting in a circle singing old Christian folk songs and discussing a topic presented by a designated leader, I expressed some strange new ideas, notions about Jesus not dying for our sins, about the afterlife being a time of continuing development, and other ideas that I'd discovered in *The Urantia Book*.

Helen asked me where I'd found these ideas. I told her that I'd discovered them in a book that was written by non-humans. That really got her



Members of the Starflight study group in Elizabethton include (from left) Debby Reece, Billie Anderson, and Dean White.



Readers from Memphis include (from left) Debbi Keeley, Mena Feichter, Debby York, Marsha Pauley, Leanne Gentry, Sonny Gentry and Bil Row.

attention and one thing led to another. Within a few months Bob French and I were meeting regularly with Helen on Friday mornings in her famous kitchen to read and discuss *The Urantia Book*. When others became interested, Helen began the Thursday night Knoxville Study Group meeting that still continues.

Helen soon came to love *The Urantia Book*; she delighted in reading it and was given to quoting it in conversation among friends. She was a mainstay in Knoxville's Urantia community for many years and the group met in her home until her death in 1989. There was deep sorrow in our group when Helen died, but we were all determined to carry on. Alvin and Helen Smith stepped forward and invited the group to meet in their home in West Knoxville with meeting time, as always, at 7:30 on Thursday nights.

Our group reads sequentially. Occasionally we have a meeting which includes a topical reading. Our meetings involve quite a bit of humor and a lot of discussion. We usually manage to read through a paper during the course of a meeting.

We have 20 members; about 10 are regular readers. Most of us are urban professionals, several are retirees, and many of us continue to be active in traditional Christian churches (Methodist, Baptist, and Episcopalian). Our regular members are: Alvin and Helen Smith and their lifelong friends Harry and Wanda Roberts,

Herman Sain, Terry Faulkner, Vance Page, Denise Flowers, Beth Bartley, Michael Gillespie, George Farnham, and Bruce McCoy.

Middle Tennessee

By Buddy Conley

The Middle Tennessee Study Group meets in the home of Helen, Andrew, and Buddy Conley in Murfreesboro at 7:30 p.m. on Monday. For several years, Helen, Andrew, and Buddy attended the Nashville Study Group, a drive of about 60 miles. When Buddy Stockard returned to Murfreesboro in the late 80s, he suggested that we start our own group. And we four, along with Brian Snowden, did just that. We have been meeting regularly for well over five years and are about halfway through our second consecutive reading. We encourage discussion and are blessed with lots of humor.

Our group now numbers about 10. Dr. David Schundt (*Dr. Dave* on URANTIAL) teaches at Vanderbilt University in the Psychology Department. David has a first edition of *The Urantia Book* that once belonged to his father. His father was one of more than 20 people who attended 'Dr. Sadler's Urantia Book school. The notations in the margins of the old book are fascinating.

Buddy Stockard is also a psychologist and works for the State of Tennessee with codependent adoles-

cents, along with having a private practice. He's a terrific songwriter and singer. Buddy's wife, Susan, was introduced to the book by her husband. Susan works for the Murfreesboro City School System with handicapped children. She, too, is a talented singer who sings professionally with Buddy. Susan is presently underlining the entire book. Her quiet devotion to the truth is inspiring to us all.

Steven Long is a computer graphics consultant. He adds much humor to our meetings. He is probably the most peaceful former Green Beret in the entire world. Connie, Steven's wife, is an interior designer and manages a fabric store. She keeps our group lively with her questions and good humor.

Andrew Conley (*Agape Andrew* on URANTIAL) sings and writes lyrics for Jack, a rock band. Andrew, who has been reading *The Urantia Book* for about 15 years, at one time attended the Boulder School. He helps us with some of the difficult passages.

Helen Conley is a financial analyst for the Nissan plant in nearby Smyrna. Helen makes our meetings even more joyful by her constant good cheer and her beautiful smile. And me, I'm Buddy Conley, Helen's husband and Andrew's father. I sell CAD software across the state. I've been studying *The Urantia Book* since 1978.

Memphis

By Nena Feichter

Readers of *The Urantia Book* are well represented in the Memphis area. Sixteen readers are active in study groups and another 10 to 15 are moderately active. Readers seem to crop up in the most unusual places.

Memphis study group activity is largely due to the considerable efforts of Steve Law, who now lives in nearby Jackson where he and his wife are raising three beautiful little Urantians in a small-town setting. Steve found *The Urantia Book* on August 31, 1973, the day he completed his service in the United States Navy. After living in Florida for a few years, he moved to Memphis in 1980 and began placing *Urantia Books* in bookstores and libraries around the state.

He also started an introductory

study group in the Creative Resource Center associated with a Memphis book store. There he met Cebrun Gaustad, a psychologist with the Veteran's Administration. Cebrun not only became a dedicated reader utilizing Jesusonian practices in his profession, but also introduced some of his clients and interns at the hospital to the book. Among the interns was Pitt Beam, Sonny Gentry, and later Leanne Gentry. Others who have found the book in Memphis include Debby York and Marsha Pauley. Paul Miller discovered the book while living in the hills in Arkansas working as a custom knife craftsman. Paul later moved to Memphis.

I was introduced to the book almost 13 years ago by Dr. Lawrence Schkade, while visiting my mother in Dallas, Texas. (My mother is also now a dedicated reader, active in study group and fellowship activities in the Dallas area.) The day I returned to Memphis, doubting anyone in the city would be aware of *The Urantia Book*, I wandered into a bookstore and was surprised to find the book in stock. I was even more surprised to find a card with Steve Law's telephone number and address inside the front cover.

Memphis area groups have met over the years in various homes, a downtown loft, a Unity Church, the Resource Center, and even in a beauty parlor for a brief time. Although there have been as many as three meetings in the area, right now there are two.

Steve Law and Dale Knieval meet regularly in Jackson, one hour from Memphis, and between five and 10 readers meet regularly on Saturday mornings in the home of Sonny and Leanne Gentry.

The Saturday morning group has met consistently for the past five years at 7 a.m. Recently, the time was moved to 8 a.m. Undoubtedly, this change will result in improved attendance. We socialize from 7:30 until 8 while waiting for the non-morning readers, mainly me, and then read sequentially from the front of the book, then the next Saturday we read from the Jesus Papers. We close the meeting with about 20 minutes of meditation and worship.

The Memphis study group is wonderful, with a lot of curiosity, dedication, and friendship.

Nashville

By Melissa Wells

The Nashville study group had its origins, appropriately enough, among gospel and country music artists from Music Row. Marijohn Wilkins, who wrote *One Day At A Time*, and Hal Bynum, co-writer of *You Picked A Fine Time To Leave Me*, *Lucille*, were among the first members of the Nashville Study Group. In the early 80s, Lee Rector, then publisher of *Music City News*, hosted the weekly meeting at his home.

The group attracted a mix of well-established songwriters, struggling artists, and folks who commuted from as far away as 90 miles. A favorite topic of conversation at meetings concerned the many recording artists to whom *The Urantia Book* had been introduced, such as Stevie Wonder and Willie Nelson.

In 1983 Rector organized a state-wide regional conference at Fall Creek Falls in southeast Tennessee that was attended by about 60 readers from throughout the southeastern United States. He began a trend that would continue over the next several years; a number of regional conferences

were held at Fall Creek Falls in the 80s.

When Rector and his wife, Mary Beth, moved to California in 1984 I began hosting the Nashville study group. Our meetings would average 15 people, with a core group who were ambitious about doing outreach projects.

Some of our accomplishments included organizing well-attended regional conferences at Fall Creek Falls (with the help of leaders from the other Tennessee study groups) in 1985 and 1986, gathering Christmas gifts from the community for Cambodian refugee children who had just moved to Nashville, and developing the first Scientific Symposium program, which was presented in 1988 at Nashville.

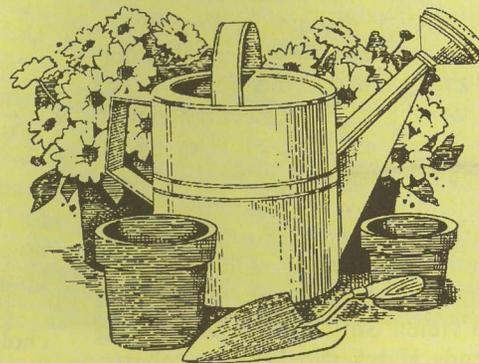
When Urantia Foundation and the then Brotherhood split, the majority of the members of this study group elected to side with the views of the Foundation. The Nashville study group still thrives and has been instrumental in organizing conferences for the International Urantia Association.

Do you have an outreach project that needs a little seed money to get off the ground?

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Service (from page 10)

The service undertaken by people in our world today constitutes a focal point for spiritual power to be administered directly into people's lives. "Religion is only an exalted humanism until it is made divine by the discovery of the reality of the presence of God in personal experience." (page 2084)

Another view of service is to see it as a genetic mechanism by which divine goodness is replicated and propagated through the living organism of the Supreme.

Worship opens the channel between the individual and the Father, through which divine goodness flows out into the Supreme through the mechanism of loving service. The deepening of worship and expansion of service are the means by which we increase our capacity to experience living spiritual reality.

There are some profound implications in the statement, "The faith of Jesus pointed ... to the service-discovery of spiritual reality" *The Urantia Book* indicates that this process of serving others is the domain in which we are most likely to discover the presence of divinity and experience its power for healing and growth.

Service Further Defined

Let us reflect on the meaning of the personal nature of service. As an ideal presented by Jesus, service is a mode of personal conduct.

The most important domain of service we encounter is our immediate family, the persons with whom we live and interact on a daily basis. If we have children, this service takes on added significance.

Our families must be central to any consideration of progression or service in a personal universe. Close to this domain of the family are the personal relationships in which we participate as we live in our communities.

Spiritual service is meaningless apart from participation in human communities. It implies getting to

know people and entering into a sharing of the spiritual journey with them.

Consider the difference between saying that we want to "serve the Father's purposes" as contrasted with saying that we want to "serve the Father." The first is an idea; the second, a living person. A subtle distinction perhaps, but very important because devotion to an idea takes us farther and farther away from the living domain of service, away from the domain of relationships between personalities.

Not only does *The Urantia Book* present service as an ideal, it clearly states that an increased urge to service is an inevitable repercussion of genuine religious growth. Given the stimulus which this text provides to such growth, we can be certain that the urge to service on the part of the readership is going to be high.

And so we find ourselves on a world desperately in need of spiritual service, with an understanding of service as a means of making divine assistance available to that world, and a powerful revelation which itself creates a strong urge to serve.

Our current situation is similar to the moment when the booster rockets drop away from the space shuttle as it arcs into orbit, ready to begin its mission.

Will we be able to wisely provide coordination and education which will help empower, strengthen and encourage individuals to "release them for heightened activities as kingdom builders?"

Will our readership "... quickly supply the leadership and inspiration requisite for the social, moral, economic, and political reorganization of the world?"

The tasks of our organization with respect to book publication and distribution is fairly straightforward. But successfully managing the inevitable social, psychological and spiritual upheavals which will follow in the wake of any religious stimulus as powerful as *The Urantia Book* is an entirely different matter.

This is the single-greatest challenge looming on our horizon as an organization. Fostering a readership culture which consistently promotes and reinforces values of sincere worship and unselfish service is the only solution. It's the solution to the prob-

lem of religious fanaticism which Jesus himself gives us.

We must see our task as transformation through service.

Modes of Service

Think about the second garden when considering service. For generation after generation, the most capable individuals went out into the world on their mission of uplift.

These descendants of Adam and Eve literally carried the seeds of cultural civilization to remote regions of the planet instead of remaining in Mesopotamia and actualizing a high civilization of their own. Likewise, the Melchizedek missionaries appear to have followed a plan of dispersion rather than a coalescence of cultural power.

Jesus instructed his followers to carry the gospel of the kingdom to the uttermost parts of the world.

Clearly in each of these examples, the emphasis has been on maximizing distribution rather than creating infrastructure. It is essential that values rather than ideology, that worship and service rather than political and legal infrastructure, become the central matters with which our organization concerns itself.

It is our challenge to nurture an aggressive and dynamic force for responsible and creative spiritual service unencumbered with the burdens of restrictive ideology or the maintenance overhead of excessive organizational infrastructure.

Rising to this challenge demands that we continue the process of weaning ourselves from the preoccupation with the apocryphal assumptions and stories which have conditioned our movement for the past 40 years.

It demands that we abandon the paralyzing fear that if we try to spread the book, we might somehow be interfering with some secret timetable or mandate.

Likewise, we must take responsibility for coordinating a course of creative action based upon our best understanding of the message derived from the text itself.

This challenge demands a wholehearted personal commitment to unending moral, spiritual and intellectual growth. It demands that we each

Service *(from previous page)*

develop a critically self-corrective philosophy of religion and service.

Most important of all, we must take advantage of this privilege of worship and learn to look "to the One for the inspiration of service to the many."

May we have the wisdom to foster a readership culture which can serve as a keel for that social ship currently steaming out of the harbor rather than as its anchor. Let us work hard to promote a readership culture which can serve as a community of mutual support and guidance, helping each of us to go out into the world and become more effective in the service-actualization of the kingdom of heaven.

David Kantor, San Francisco Bay area, has been a member of the General Council for two years. This paper is the basis of a presentation which Kantor made to the General Council at its mid-year meeting in January 1995.

Place Apart *(from page 8)*

reach the borderland of spirit-consciousness — contact with the divine presence."

God is existential; the essence of his infinite being is love. We are called to a personal relationship with God, simply to be with his loving presence. "The Father desires all his creatures to be in personal communion with him."

God created us for relationships. Relationship is not so much a function of the depths of our intellect, it is a function of our desire to be in personal communion with the Father, and through him, with each other. Teresa of Avila, who was fully alive in the spirit, has a beautiful image. She saw her life as two great rivers: One river coursing its way to God in prayer and the other moving into the world in service.

On page 1769 a midwayer tells us that Jesus saw the worship of God and the service of man as the sum and substance of his religion. The Father-

hood of God is merely words without sincere worship of God, without intimate personal communion on a regular basis. The Brotherhood of Man is merely words without closeness to God, without that spirit guidance which leads us ever to serve our fellows.

The revelation of God the Supreme as the God of achievement is sublime. The knowledge that angels constantly guide our footsteps is reassuring. The fact that the universe provides endless opportunity for us to learn and grow in perfection and that life is truly an exciting adventure that goes on eternally across the face of infinity is inspiring. But the revelation of God the Father as unconditional love totally eclipses all other teachings.

This revelation is our core experience. Our call is to allow ourselves to experience the fullness of God's being, that pure love, and then to manifest that indescribable affection toward all of his creation.

The earth cries out for God's divine love, not knowing that it is here already. In the name of service we should not let our personal anxieties and agendas distract us from the priority of personal communion with our Father. May we have the courage to dive deeply into our own souls and there partake of the divine relationship and from there share this personal revelation with every person we meet.

Gard Jameson is chairman of the Fraternal Relations committee and has served on the General Council since 1988. He and his wife, Florence, an obstetrician-gynecologist, and two children, Michael and Julia, live in Boulder City, Nevada.

Hales *(from page 12)*

time employee of the Fellowship and a former president of Urantia Brotherhood. Their daughter Lynn Jacob lives in Winnetka. Bill and Mary Lou have five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Hales's business career was spent at Hales and Hunter, an animal feed manufacturer. The company was founded by his father, and Hales held positions as secretary, treasurer, president and chief executive officer, retiring in 1969. Hales was a life trustee of Beloit College (from 1939), receiving an honorary degree of Doctor of Law in 1989.

Reaching *(from page 11)*

interact socially with other readers. Some simply may not intend to become involved. Nonetheless, *all* may be, each in his own way, facilitating the momentum of the Urantia movement.

The objective of outreach should be the dissemination of spiritual truth, integrated with scientific and evolutionary information, and always with the focus on catalyzing the spiritual relationship between the individual and God. This sacred mission must always be based on the premise of a voluntary expression of interest.

The purpose of an ad in the paper posing a thought-provoking question along with a telephone number is not to impose a viewpoint upon passersby, but to invite potential inquirers to familiarize themselves with the spiritual teachings found in *The Urantia Book*. The aim of such ads is to arouse the curiosity of those who have been divinely prepared, who through their own advances have become potentially receptive to the advanced truths of *The Urantia Book* so that they may go in search of it. Between human invitation and divine leading comes into being a synergistic contribution to the Urantia movement, the momentum of which is ours only to facilitate, not to control.

Ramon Barbosa is a member of the First Society of Los Angeles. He also serves on the Southern California Outreach Committee, which places ads in publications inviting inquirers to reply to prerecorded phone messages with personal interpretations of teachings from The Urantia Book.

"The community of readers is a broad collection of individuals with unique ideas," says Farrington. "We welcome the diversity and depend upon your presentation of new thinking to the community. We will strive for balance. Consider this your invitation."

Anyone interested in facilitating an afternoon session is invited to submit a brief proposal to The Fellowship (see end of article for contact information).

Evenings will be devoted to worship experiences followed by the ever-popular Club UB. "Club UB will feature a house band and our best talent," Farrington says.

Special events planned at IC 96 are:

- ♦ A pre-conference retreat for artists, musicians and writers
- ♦ A pre-conference acclimatizing retreat for those challenged by high mountain air (at an altitude of 7,000 feet)
- ♦ An International Readers' Lounge, with a computer lab where individuals can 'Surf the Net.'
- ♦ Art Gallery and Publications Room
- ♦ A Secondary Works Store
- ♦ A 24-hour Worship Room

The children's program, for youth to age 12, will feature an interactive environment exploring the home life of Jesus, the planet's earliest inhabitants and the stars.

Teenagers can look forward to the challenge of a Ropes Course, an overnight campout and personal quest, and their own Teen Lounge. "One of the most exciting additions to this International Conference is the expansion of the program for teens," says Farrington.

The conference will conclude in the down-home spirit of the West with a country fair. "We'll have music, dancing, treats, booths, clowns, balloons and a host of interesting people to talk with," Farrington says.

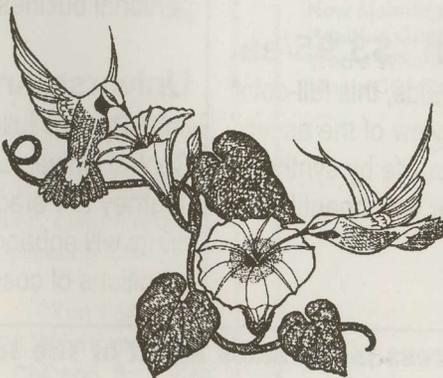
If you would like to receive more information about IC 96, please contact The Fellowship, 529 Wrightwood Ave., Chicago, IL 60614, (312) 327-0424 or fax (312) 327-6159.

his home on the north side of Chicago, a group has continued to meet for this purpose. That study group became the Forum, and Dr. Sadler's home at 533 Diversey Parkway became the headquarters for the Urantia movement. It remains the headquarters for Urantia Foundation. When Urantia Brotherhood was formed in 1956, the Forum became First Urantia Society, which then became First Society in 1989, when the Brotherhood became the Fellowship.

At that time, the celebrations of Jesus' birthday moved from 533 Diversey to 529 Wrightwood. This year was the first to move outside of headquarters and outside the city of Chicago, to the site of First Society's seminars and local conferences. Nevertheless, the group can claim an unbroken tradition of 60 years of celebrations of the birth of Jesus.

This year's event was organized by Carolyn Kendall. It included a potluck supper and a rendition of Henry van Dyke's "The Other Wise Man," by Lynne Kulieke. The main program featured dramatized readings from events throughout Jesus' life, involving the participation of many of the nearly 30 attendees. Wind music and a candlelit atmosphere helped create the tone for this event, which ended, naturally, with a birthday cake.

The gathering kicked off First Society's year-long observance of "A Year of Jesus," with several special events in tribute to the Master's arrival on Urantia.



Divine Nature

By Janet Farrington

Wooden fence and winding water
rustic house and barn
animals with young first walking
peaceful country farm.

Horses run and birds fly bursting
from the alder trees.
bales of hay and grass rolled neatly
bulge from under eaves.

Highland fields rise smooth and
gentle
merging into woods,
bordered by majestic mountains
formed before man stood.

Landscape colors painted freely
blend with morning light,
traveling through a quiet valley
beauty stirs delight.

Vistas banish any trouble
mind before did hold,
surrounded by inspiring scenes
endless dreams unfold.

Beauty transcends normal vision
human finds divine
flowing free between dimensions
blurring nature's line.

Perfection paints amazing grace
brushing rocks with truth
upon the canvas nature wears
beauty offers proof.

Divinity embraces all
world and mind converge,
every tree and peak and eagle
help a soul emerge.

An atmosphere of partnership,
loving soul and land,
beauty speaks a living language
all can understand.

Rolling hills and rising mountains,
nature reaches deep,
within the soul perfection knows
beauty shared will keep.

Calendar

- Feb. 2-4, 1996, Mid-year General Council Meeting, Chicago, IL. All members welcome. Contact: John Hales at The Fellowship (312) 327-0424.
- March 1-3, Whole Life Expo, Pittsburgh, PA. Contact: Paula Thompson or Mary Ebben (800) 767-5683.
- March 22-24, Whole Life Expo, Seattle, WA. Contact: Paula Thompson or Mary Ebben (800) 767-5683.
- April 12-14, Southern California Gathering, San Gabriel Mountains, near San Bernardino, CA. Contact: Andrea French (619) 486-0125.
- April 20, School of Meanings and Values, Leadership Seminar, Mercy Centre, Burlingame, CA. Contact: Chrissy P. Smith (408) 462-4823.
- May 25-26, Whole Life Expo, Boulder, CO. Contact: Paula Thompson or Mary Ebben (800) 767-5683.
- Aug. 3-8, International Conference 1996, Flagstaff, AZ. Theme: "Living Faith." Contact: The Fellowship (312) 327-0424.

"... choosing to do the will of God joins spiritual faith to material decisions in personality action and thus supplies a divine and spiritual fulcrum for the more effective functioning of the human and material leverage of God-hunger." (page 1211)

The Decision

By W. H. Murray (from The Scottish Himalayan Expedition)

Until one is committed
there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back,
always ineffectiveness.

Concerning all acts of initiative (and creation),
there is one elementary truth,
the ignorance of which kills countless ideas
and splendid plans:

That the moment one definitely commits oneself,
then Providence moves, too.

All sorts of things occur to help one
that would never otherwise have occurred.
A whole stream of events issues from the decision,
raising in one's favor all manner
of unforeseen incidents and meetings and material assistance,
which no man could have dreamt would have come his way.

I have learned a deep respect for one of Goethe's couplets:
"Whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it.
Boldness has genius, power, and magic in it."

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by Clyde Bedell

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John Byron's full-color depiction of the Master Universe, Central Universe, Local System Headquarters, and the *Journey to Paradise*. These full-size, frameable art prints will enhance your home with beautiful artistic renditions of cosmic concepts from *The Urantia Book*.

The Good Cheer Press is the sales agent of The Jesusonian Foundation, a non-profit organization devoted to furthering the teachings of *The Urantia Book*. Call 1-800-767-LOVE to place your order or to request a free catalog.

Non-Breathers *(from page 24)*

the moon are absorbed by the surface.⁹ Scientists, however, are standing by for more detailed pictures from the next spacecraft to reach the Jupiter system because, despite this model, Europa is still an enigma to them.

Given the sum of the information available concerning our solar system, if the non-breathers are here, the most likely location is Europa. The answer to this proposition may be in our near future, as NASA's next space-exploring craft, Galileo, arrives to reconnoiter the Jovian atmosphere and the inner moons December 7, 1995.

The first duty of the spacecraft is to monitor the descent of a probe into the cloud-covered giant planet. Once that is accomplished, it will spend the next two years taking pictures and scientific measurements of the planet's moons. NASA has had to reduce the number of pictures planned from 50,000 to 1,000, because the main transmitting antenna has never

opened completely.¹⁰ The closest fly-by to Europa will be 600 kilometers (372.84 miles).¹¹

Sometimes seeing is not believing; many times one needs to believe to see. If Galileo sends back spectacular pictures of Europa, the mindset of most scientists will be to explain its many unique features without resort to alien civilization, unless the proverbial hubcap from space is incontrovertible.

This is perfectly natural and follows the course of change through history whenever that change requires great shifts in reality perceptions. I doubt that the authors of *The Urantia Book* would have given us such detailed information about the nonbreathers unless they knew we would stumble into each other someday. The question is, have they already found us? But that is another story.

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This valuable listing of secondary works inspired by *The Urantia Book* is being compiled for the third time. The Special Projects Committee plans to release this updated edition at the 1996 International Conference in Flagstaff.

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