

USCC NEWSLETTER

Northeast Regional News

Published by URANTIA® Society of Central Connecticut

November 1988

Volume 14, Number 2

IMPRESSIONS OF THE CONFERENCE

LETTER FROM CHARLOTTESVILLE

DEAR USCC,

While it's still fresh in my mind I'd like to write my impressions of the Northeast Regional Conference at Simon's Rock of Bard College because I felt that significant events transpired there.

First of all, thank you. The location and setting were beautiful. The accommodations were fine and the food was excellent. Even the weather couldn't have been better. Your planning was carried out perfectly; from registration through to the conclusion on Sunday.

The six panel presentations were well done and set the tone for the workshops. It's difficult to get deeply into a topic in the hour allotted but the workshops are a good avenue for getting to know both the people who are leading the sessions and the people in the group on a more personal level. Also, in the workshop on the two discourses on true religion we were instructed to take several minutes to ourselves to meditate upon how we would personally react if Jesus were instructing us as he had the twenty-four on page 1726. This was an excellent way of personalizing this message.

The interfaith musical program was a great idea for bringing the local churches together with the URANTIA organization remaining in the background. And the evening social was a happy event. I enjoyed all of this. But, for me the significance began on Sunday.

The gathering on the lawn by the gazebo imported a sense of spiritual tuning in, particularly because of the emphasis on personal communion with Jesus and remembrance of him. The joining of hands in the circle in meditation and the inward calling out of feelings of brotherhood in the group—beautiful. Sending us off two by two to think of Jesus and to talk about him and how he's significant to us—in that lovely setting with the birds and the beauty of nature and the warm sun in the blue sky—what an inspiring, loving, joyous, and fulfilling occasion. The service in the chapel on the hill and the songs were again a spiritual high. Yet, perhaps the most uplifting of all these experiences came at the remembrance supper outside in the circle, with the silent communion in concert with the birds and the breeze through the pines; and then the words by members within the group, again recalling the events in Jesus' life that have touched us the most. And although we had difficulty with the words and the steps to the dance, the dance was significant. It and the singing got us physically involved with one another which amplified, for me, the feelings of brotherhood. And then the three concentric circles folk dance—an inspiration, unplanned but meant to be. The weekend was a blessing. I know I've added to my family of brothers and sisters and this is the main reason I attend these functions.

I'd like to suggest that your study group has found a theme, a location, a format that would be good to stay with. It could become the conference

See Impressions on Page 8

MEETING AT THE CROSSROADS

On Thursday, June 23, I left Bradley International Airport bound for O'Hare as the alternate representative from USCC to the Society Conclave and the Triennial Delegate Assembly of URANTIA Brotherhood. My thoughts were caught in recurring cycles of speculation along two different lines and a third concern which would spin my thoughts: concern for Marta Elders. Marta, who was the delegate from USCC had called to tell me that she would be unable to attend the Conclave on Friday because her father had taken seriously ill. If she could, she would fly out Friday night or Saturday morning to attend the TDA.

I wondered: what are the objectives of other societies? Are they clearly formulated? What programs and policies have they put in place to pursue them? What sort of efforts have they made to foster study groups? How are they organized? Do they have membership drives? Do any of the societies promote the teachings through organized society actions? What sort of programs do they provide for the intellectual and spiritual nourishment of their members? And then I would wonder about the TDA: How well would a group of relative strangers work together? What would be the responses of other participants to the resolutions submitted by USCC? How would the TDA go about choosing from a field of candidates?

The trip from O'Hare to the Days Inn on Diversey Parkway went by uneventfully. I checked into the hotel, unpacked, showered, and went out. I stopped in at 533 and then went for a fast bite and a walk around Gramercy Park.

Gramercy Park is at the end of Diversey Parkway and fronts upon Lake Michigan. It is a beautifully laid out park with bike paths everywhere, a large marina in the middle of the park, and trees covering the shoreline. However, it was painful to see because the drought had left the grass a scorched, brown mat and had withered many of the leaves on the trees. As I was leaving the park, I noticed a statue located in the corner of the park facing Diversey parkway, more or less across the street from the Veterans' Memorial.

It is a likeness of Goethe erected in honor of the many immigrants of Germanic descent who have come here in the last century. He does not strike one of those larger-than-life heroic poses one so often sees in public places. Instead he stands casually with an open book in his hand as he gazes down Diversey Parkway with a look of well-measured reflection.

The Conclave began precisely at 9:00 A.M. on Friday. The morning began with an introduction by the Domestic Extension Committee. Then the Charter Committee explained the criteria it uses to qualify a group for chartering as a society. In the afternoon the Domestic Extension Committee described to us in some detail the new Area Coordinator Program and how it related to societies and their geographic zones. Finally, there was a presentation on the contributions which societies can make to headquarters.

See Crossroads on Page 3

® Registered mark of URANTIA Foundation. Used pursuant to license.

LETTERS:

LAND NEEDED FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY

To The Editor:

Land is needed for a self-sufficient, spiritual community. There could be home-grown food, a bakery, a natural healing center, and other activities. Anyone who can help or would be interested in participating should contact me, Francis Marion, RT 3, Box 223, Livingston, Tennessee 38570.

I once worked for an oil company but am seeking a more fulfilling life. A native of Connecticut, I recently checked out land in Central New York. A group of URANTIA people could attempt to put advanced principles into practice. I publish a gardening catalog called "Wonder Crops" which specializes in extra-hardy plants. The URANTIA Book notes that it was the prime purpose of the Adamic Regime to influence hunters and herders to become gardeners." (593).

"An industrial civilization cannot survive," states The URANTIA Book, "if its leaders fail to recognize that even the highest social developments must ever rest upon a sound agricultural basis." (769) I am wondering if other readers of The URANTIA Book might have an interest in working together toward the establishment of some kind of spiritual center to help resolve modern problems.

Such a group may offer an alternative, for example, to someone in an unfulfilling job. Single or married people could find refuge from a confused and sometimes wayward society. A self-sufficient center could create full-time employment for its members, their children and others. It could market wholesome products. We plan an arts and crafts catalog and have an excellent solar food dryer.

See Spiritual Community in Right Column

SCIENTIFIC SYMPOSIUM I

13-15 MAY 1988

The supposed conflict between science and religion has gone on for centuries and will surely continue to be discussed for a long time to come. But careful consideration of this area leads to fresh insights and new understanding in both science and religion. It should be no surprise to readers of The URANTIA Book that such studies also tend to unify rather than separate the two. It was this area that was the focus of Scientific Symposium I.

We were treated to a fascinating range of ideas on a wide variety of subjects. There was direct confirmation of the day/date relationships found in Part IV of The URANTIA Book, and there was a philosophical consideration of points where science and The URANTIA Book are not (yet) in agreement. Scientific ideas on the physics of light were related to those in The URANTIA Book. Love, which plays such an important part in religion, was shown to possess the characteristics of a science. We considered anthropology, psychology, concepts of time and space, the nature of chromosomes, and the influence of morality on the development and growth of AIDS.

This is by no means a complete list of subjects, but it will suffice to give you an idea of the broad range of discussion. The presenters, experts in their fields, used language that could be understood by non-technical listeners. So it was a very stimulating and thought-provoking session that generated much enthusiasm among the participants. The full text of the papers presented will be made available by URANTIA Brotherhood. You will find them well worth reading.

The setting for the conference was Belmont College in Nashville, Tennessee. Belmont is a small school with a very attractive campus and facilities well-matched to the size of the group, about 250 of us. The weather was hot but otherwise kind. The companionship and congenial spirit of the group were noteworthy.

This was a highly successful meeting and The URANTIA Book readers who put it together obviously put much time and effort into it. Our compliments and thanks go to them all. Special note should be made of the contribution of Melissa Wells who was not only involved in starting the whole idea, but did not let a move to Florida interfere with her work on the Symposium.

I was delighted to learn that Scientific Symposium II is being planned. Be sure to get to that one. If it is anything like the first, you will be glad you did.

—Sidney Sprague, Farmington, Connecticut

Spiritual Community from Left Column

The URANTIA Book calls horticulture "...the highest blessing ... the most human of all human activities." (752:1) Other activities could also be pursued. What is your favorite URANTIA topic? Various interests can be kept in mind and information shared. Interested persons might help launch something new from their own homes or locality.

If anyone has an interest in working with others to help build a better life please get in touch with me. This is an opportunity for peace, freedom, and fulfillment.

—Francis Marion, Rt 3, Box 223, Livingston, Tennessee 38570

USCC NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

Lynn Kline, Chairperson
Martin Greenhut, Issue Editor
Sheryl Reed, USGNY Correspondent
Dan Massey, Typesetting
Marta Elders, Proofreading
Alison Gardner, Proofreading
Isaac Greenhut, Typing

Contributors to this issue:

Alison Gardner, Gustaaf Groefsema,
Lynn Kline, Charles Laurence Olivea,
George Park, Sidney Sprague, Larry Watkins.

USCC Newsletter is published by the
URANTIA Society of Central Connecticut.
Address all correspondence to USCC Newsletter,
P.O. Box 88, Farmington, CT 06034.

1988 NORTHEAST REGIONAL

LIST OF CREDITS

The Northeast Regional Conference of June, 1988, at Simon's Rock of Bard College turned out to be a really memorable weekend of fellowship, study, and worship.

"Religions of the World," the topic of the conference, set the tone for a gathering of spiritual unity and sharing of religious experience by the ninety-seven participants from fifteen states and Quebec.

Activities of the weekend conference included:

- a panel presentation of five of the world's religions and New Age religious movements,
- ten workshops on religion and religious experience,
- a special program of sacred music presented by a combined choir representing twelve southern Berkshire County church choirs, under USCC sponsorship,
- a worship service and remembrance supper,
- a children's program,
- other study, recreational, and social activities.

The conference program was a year in preparation and represented the cooperative efforts of more than thirty people from all around New York and New England and some from beyond this region.

Hosting and coordinating the conference was the study group of Great Barrington, Massachusetts, including Marty and Gloria Greenhut, who acted as site coordinators, Donny MacLean, the program chairman, and Art Gregory, coordinator. Karen Culbreth of Pine Plains, New York, provided the children's program, Lynn Kline of Ashfield, Massachusetts, was the conference registrar, and Joan Battson of Arlington, Massachusetts, led the worship service.

Helena Sprague of Farmington, Connecticut, a trustee of URANTIA Foundation, and Peter Laurence, chairman of the Fraternal Relations Committee of the URANTIA Brotherhood, greeted the conference for the URANTIA Foundation and the Brotherhood.

Panelists and workshop leaders included: Rick Hart, Chatham, New York; Marty Greenhut, Great Barrington, Massachusetts; Stephen Hecht, Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts; Father Robert Schuer of New Lexington, Ohio; Reverend Paul Whitmoyer, Landisburg, Pennsylvania; Nick Scalzo, Clinton, Connecticut; Peter Laurence, Armonk, New York; Dan Massey, Sherborn, Massachusetts; Jack Schmedes, North Harwich, Massachusetts; and Alison Gardner, Sherborn, Massachusetts.

The worship service was assisted by Greg and Sue Welch of Andover, Massachusetts; Eric Johnson of Newton, Massachusetts; Marvin Gawryn, Berkeley, California; and Father Robert Schuer.

The Interfaith choir presentation, a public event under the auspices of this conference for readers of *The URANTIA Book*, was organized by Johann Pearson, choir director and organist of Old Parish Church, Sheffield, Massachusetts, and was directed by Marjory Crawford, choir director of Saint Peter's Roman Catholic Church of Great Barrington, Massachusetts. *Solo on Vibraphone was Craig Peyton of New York.*

Steve Bartley of Schenectady, New York, recorded the panel presentation and Beth Bartley transcribed the session.

The Saturday night social was put together by members of the URANTIA Society of Greater New York.

See List of Credits in Right Column

Crossroads from Page 1

Although there was a great deal of useful information delivered in this tightly controlled format, it was hardly what I had expected. Instead of learning what other societies were thinking and feeling and doing, the Conclave was essentially focused on the organizational relationships existing between the societies and headquarters. Engaging a new situation with unfounded expectations is often disappointing.

On Saturday morning when I walked into the conference room at 533 for the beginning of the TDA I was more than pleased to see Marta sitting there! With great effort she had managed to break away for a short time from her family situation. Despite the unresolved status of her father's condition and the strain of the previous day and the late night flight, she was her usual, cheerful self, composed and congenial. An admirable spirit, I thought.

Dave Elders opened the TDA and introduced Paul Snider, the keynote speaker. This was the first time I have heard Paul speak and I hope it is not the last. His address was inspirational without being bombastic or sentimental. His is that subtle but pervasive inspiration which emanates from a sincere penetration deep into the domain of truth. I remember thinking to myself that here is a man who is moved by the muse of philosophy. He elevated the perspective of our thinking by bringing to our attention the higher purposes for which we were gathered. By the time he finished, I believe most of us felt as though we were standing upon a mountain.

The TDA is the most remarkable business meeting I have ever attended because of the spirit which seemed to animate the group. Here we were, a group of relative strangers thrown together to perform unfamiliar tasks encompassing a massive amount of work with very little time to accomplish our objectives. We had thirty-six candidates to review and two dozen resolutions to consider, which left about ten minutes for us to address each item. However, the spirit of cooperation and integrity in the group was so strong that we completed all of this business within the allotted time of a day and a half without once straining this spirit. Almost without exception, every comment made about each of the candidates was a positive one. If people knew of weaknesses with any of the candidates, they never mentioned it. We focused on their strengths instead of their weaknesses.

Several individuals who have witnessed previous TDAs remarked that they had never seen a TDA function in so harmonious, congenial, and effective a manner. I honestly do not believe that they were flattering us. The spirit of harmony in group function is still clear in my memory. Perhaps it was the commonality of our shared values, or the work of our seraphim, or the lasting effects of the keynote address. Certainly, the moderators displayed exceptional skill and tact in moving the meeting along at certain points.

As I piled into the back of a station wagon bound for Lake Forest and the Intensive Summer Seminars to be held there, my thoughts were moving ahead already in expectation of tomorrow. As we passed Gramercy Park, I spotted Goethe in the distance with his book in hand gazing intently down Diversey Parkway. And I wondered: What would he have given in his lifetime to gaze upon the book which I carried with me.

—George Park, Hampton, Connecticut

List of Credits from Left Column

Saturday afternoon refreshments were provided by the Darien, Connecticut, study group.

The organization and administration of the conference was a gratifying experience and seemed effortless to those participating.

CONFERENCE IDEAS

During the conference at Simon's Rock, I heard a comment that seemed to open a floodgate for me from which poured forth many thoughts and ideas that must have been swirling around inside for some time. I would like to offer them for consideration and comment. While attending one of the workshops someone mentioned that he wished that there could be a conference without workshops at all. He didn't have any complaint about the workshops, just a desire to socialize with both old friends and new. This is a wish that I have heard often.

Before I continue, I would like to say that I thought the conference was wonderful. Even with the responsibility of registration (thank you to all who helped me at the desk) and room accommodations. I never felt rushed. The music on Saturday night was great and the worship service was both fun and moving.

Back to the wish. With this caught in the back of my mind came thoughts about the children and teens. They were separated from the adults so that they could play while the adults attended the serious matter of study and discussion. But play to a child is a serious matter. It is their work—they just have fun doing it. This is something that adults have forgotten, like a form of intellectual amnesia. The wish, the children, play all seemed to combine together in my mind and the floodgates opened.

Why couldn't we have a conference in which both children and adults experienced the thoughts and ideas of a particular subject through play? What made the worship so special were the very elements that children use all the time in their play (work). We shared a special time with someone else, we meditated (children do it all the time but we call it daydreaming or imagination), we sang, we danced, we laughed, we shared our special thoughts with the group. We played! Enough activities along this theme came to my mind to fill an entire weekend. I won't go into the details because the possibilities are endless—it is the idea itself that is important.

A few weeks later I was able to see these ideas put into action. My son Matthew (age 7) and I attended a Cursillo family weekend at the Passionist Retreat House in West Springfield. About 50 people attended, 1/3 children from babies to teens. Except for about twenty minutes when the adults separated for a talk, we all spent the weekend together, (you guessed it) playing. The theme of colors was used to teach us of the Father's love for each individual and our part in giving and receiving that love.

We had stories read to us, we created a pots and pans band, acted out skits, sang, played volleyball, had a kickball game on a slippery slide, painted each others faces, made banners and sang some more. All this was done in and around periods of worship and free time. It didn't take long before I realized that we were no longer adults and children spending time together, but were just ourselves communing with the Father in a very special way.

So why not? I would appreciate your comments and ideas on this subject. Please send them to me in care of USCC Newsletter, P.O. Box 88, Farmington, CT 06034.

—Lynn Kline, Ashfield, Massachusetts

Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations are from *The URANTIA Book*, Copyright © 1955 by URANTIA Foundation, 533 Diversey Parkway, Chicago, Illinois 60614, and are used by permission.

PANEL ON WORLD'S RELIGIONS

SPEAKERS' DISCUSSIONS RECORDED TRANSCRIPT TO BE MADE AVAILABLE

The Saturday afternoon plenary session of the 1988 Northeast Regional Conference consisted of a panel presentation and discussion of five of the world's religions and the New Age religious movement. "Religions of the World; Diversity and Unity" was the theme inviting the panelists to present their points of view.

Reverend Sogen R. Hart of the Clear Mountain Zen Center of Chatham, New York, presented his ideas from the point of view of his Buddhist thinking. He addressed the subject of "Form and Formlessness" in religious experience.

Marty Greenhut of the Great Barrington, Massachusetts, study group presented his thoughts as a Jewish student of *The URANTIA Book*.

Steven Hecht from Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, of the Newton study group, presented a talk on the Islamic religion.

Reverend Paul Whitmoyer, a Lutheran Minister in Landisburg, Pennsylvania, discussed his experience as a reader of *The URANTIA Book*—"Search For the Frontiers of Reality."

Father Robert Schuer, a Catholic priest from New Lexington, Ohio, told of his experience as a Catholic priest who is also a student of *The URANTIA Book* and an active participant in the URANTIA movement.

Nick Scalzo, a founding member of USCC from Clinton, Connecticut, and one who keeps abreast of new spiritual movements, presented the New Age religious movements.

A transcript of these presentations were taken from tape recordings made at Simon's Rock of Bard College on June 11, 1988, and were made by Steve and Beth Bartley of Schenectady, New York. These were sent to the panelists for editing and are being prepared for publication. This work is expected to be available in mid-winter, 1988-89.

If you wish to receive a copy of this transcript write:
TRANSCRIPT, USCC, P.O. Box 88, Farmington, CT 06034.

EXCERPTS FROM PANEL PRESENTATIONS

"In Buddhism they talk about the foolishness of a fish in the ocean looking for water... It is as foolish for human beings to be searching for God. Fish in the ocean looking for water—a human being completely embraced by the absolute and looking for the absolute. It is like that fish. 'Hey! Have you seen God...?'"

—Rev. Sogen R. Hart

"And this is really what Judaism is all about—and what it is; finding truth, finding spirituality, finding goodness, finding beauty, living in God's will, and serving with a whole heart. And I think it's every religion. I don't think there is really any religion that has a different purpose than that..."

—Martin Greenhut

"The faithful were called upon to practice virtues such as charity, humility, patience, continence, and sincerity as a means of reforming one's moral character. The beliefs, the rites, and the moral reformation were deemed

See Panel Presentation Excerpts on Page 5

PLANS BEGUN FOR SPRING 1989 NORTHEAST REGIONAL CONFERENCE

Reserve the weekend of June, 10-11, 1989, to attend the next northeast regional conference of readers of *The URANTIA Book* to be held in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, on the campus of Simon's Rock of Bard College once again.

In the wake of the exhilarating experience of the spring, 1988 conference at this site, volunteers are coming forth

with ideas and committing their energies to planning and organizing the spring, '89 conference.

The URANTIA Society of Central Connecticut and the URANTIA Society of Greater New York are working together to insure the success of this conference and much has been said about taking up where we left off in June, 1988. We will have had another year to grow in love, to gain in wisdom and in the experience of God. Our world will be presenting us with another year's development on all fronts. We will have another opportunity to share these things, to enjoy renewed fellowship, and to commune with Him.

If you wish to participate in the preparation, planning, or organization of the Spring '89 conference call Sandy Rogers or Jack Schmedes, North Harwich, Massachusetts, (508) 432-4999.

Program details and registration material will be included in the March, 1989, edition of this newsletter.

Panel Presentation Excerpts from Page 4

to purify the soul of man and lead to salvation and at the hour of death to entrance into Paradise."

—Steven Hecht

"...I'm loose and loyal and Lutheran aiming to express my faith that by directly experiencing my search for reality I grow most and best. It is my purpose to avoid letting loyalty to historic roots get in my way of direct experiencing..."

—Rev. Paul Whitmoyer

"When I was half way through the book, as things will happen, I just happened to have an appointment with my bishop. So I took the book with me. The big blue book. I took it right into his plush office. When he came in for the appointment I held it up like this and I said, 'Bishop Herman, have you ever seen or read this book?'"

"No, Robert," he said, "What is it?"

"Well," I said, "It proves to be a statement of truth—a restatement of truth about 2,000 years after Christ."

"He took it and said, 'Well, what does Urantia mean?'..."

—Fr. Robert Schuer

"Each time that it (a new revelation) came along, those who who studied it said, 'This is the last word, He's never going to speak again.' You pick up the Bible and that's the last word, He's never going to speak again, at least for a couple of thousand years. But that's not really the case. He never shuts up! He's constantly revealing himself, through all of us in different ways..."

—Nick Scalzo

REINTERPRETING TRADITIONAL HOLIDAYS IN LIGHT OF *The URANTIA Book*

FROM A WORKSHOP AT THE 1988 CONFERENCE

Holidays, like other events in human experience, put on display each person's spiritual self, as rich or as underdeveloped as it may be. Regardless of content, any shared event stands as a spiritual litmus test, capturing for that moment in time indisputable evidence of each person's distinctive set of religious values.

Family life, as well as other human associations, guarantees light will fall on a person's spiritual self. Questions and challenges arise, both explicitly, from other people and the natural flow of human events, and implicitly, from one's inherently progressive consciousness of God. God the Supreme literally depends on us to live our spiritual ideals, to interpret and reinterpret reality through our shared experiences, "as we pass by," from one event to another. In this context, holidays, weddings, the deaths of friends or family members, etc., become the perfect lenses through which our spiritual natures can shine.

Religionists are captivated by everyone's heightened receptivity to the consciousness of God at holiday times like Christmas, or at an event like a wedding or a funeral, when they might chance to participate in the manifestation of spiritual reality through another reinterpretation of the symbols presented. Religionists capitalize on events of enhanced receptivity for the edification of themselves, their fellows, and God. Men and women, parents, brothers, sisters find courage in each passing moment to reinforce "that which is old and TRUE ..." and to reject "that which is new but false," and to faith-embrace "that which is new and also true." (1656:1) Mortal man's searching out and highlighting of new meanings and values constitutes the realization of God the Supreme. Rather than pre-knowledge or specific planning for an impending event, it is our sincere readiness at any moment in time to seek and do the Father's will that will satisfy man's and God's need for able, dynamic interpreters who will be present to shape and express the new, expanded definitions so needed for the spiritual advancement of all.

Said a Catholic, "Christmas is wonderful because it is the one day of the year when the greatest number of people are conscious of God, and it is that very global, shared consciousness, the true 'gift of Christmas,' which feels so nurturing, healing, and spiritually satisfying to me." Said a Jew, "When you think of it, Hanukkah is really a celebration of religious and political freedom for all people, rather than the aggrandizement of one religion." These are examples of ideas that everyone can embrace.

During a funeral for her husband, a woman brought a friend of her husband to a wholly new consciousness of God, and a keen interest in *The URANTIA Book*, simply by her spontaneous reactions during the day. Her spiritual habits naturally expressed hope, joy, fulfillment, serenity, kindness, and generosity, and triumphed over the materialistic perceptions of sadness all around her. This man could not help but be drawn to her fragrant religion of a personal God who abides through all.

Our task is allow this form of intensely personal, spirit-to-spirit contact to thrive. Recognize that anyone's expanded spiritual insight is coupled inexorably to a responsibility to interpret human events in terms of this new spiritual insight. It is each religionist's duty to share their growing God-consciousness, and to similarly encourage others. The essence of the Supreme is our interpretations and reinterpretations of spiritual reality in human

See *Reinterpreting the Holidays* on Page 8

OFFERINGS

THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE POWER OF GOD

Our training in universe administration is lengthy and thorough. Its completion is reputed to take our entire ascension career and it includes every detail of personal, social, material, (mortal), and spiritual living.

"Be you perfect in your sphere even as I am perfect," says the Father, and he proceeds to put us through this experiential, on the job training. He provides our universe of space-time which yields up planets for our habitation. He furnishes us with mortal bodies and indwells our minds with his divine monitor of potential union. He gives us, who are but a step out of our animal origin, free will; a real chance to mess things up (like the kid who comes into the kindergarten class and breaks everybody's project). Here on planet Earth we begin to make relationships with the other "kids in the class;" relationships that will be perfected in eternity but which must begin in this humble estate.

The gift of free will choice provides the dynamic. Every moment of our lives demands decision and the very first arena of administrative training is in the administration of our own self-consciousness; the focus of our awareness, the conceptions of our minds, the reactions of our emotions, the building of our self-image...the ego.

We are taught that the purpose of all universe education is to learn to relate to larger and larger reality. And so it is that we must initially relate to ourselves, then to another, then to others. Once the first choices are made we enter into relationships which call forth loyalty, devotion, even dedication. Patience and forbearance become our strengths. Thus we step into his reality which is awesome and wonderful. Once we care about something or someone other than ourselves, we are in the business of the administration of the power of God.

This is what is going on here in our lives on this earth at this moment and at each and every moment. We are in a dynamic process of creation in which each of us individually and all of us together are engaged in the creation of a perfect universe of perfected beings.

Free will is our creative license. We have access to his power (we are of his power, and are encircled in his power). Our job consists of learning the nature of this power and deciding how to use it.

Since God knows our every need and we are taught that the spiritualized human declares, "Not my will but your's be done," one might ask, "Why not let him make the decisions...let him solve the problems?" This kind of passive, one-sided relationship, however, does not build an active partnership with God. It leaves us out of the business of creation altogether as though we were some kind of celestial basket case. (See parable of the pounds, on page 1876).

The fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man comprise a family in which relationships of parent to child, child to parent, and sibling to sibling are in dynamic and progressive growth in perfection. We have perfect parents. The growth process is a long step by step attainment of spiritual reality. In this nursery program called life on earth we are given reality playthings and educational materials that are breakable. This life in mortal flesh is our introduction as members of the family of God.

We are in constant need of food, shelter, etc. We are always seeking some comfort or gratification. We carry in our biological mechanism both ani-

ON THE ROLE OF THOUGHT ADJUSTERS

I believe that human culture in this world is destined to be rescued and uplifted by the sublime concept of the Thought Adjuster. This was hinted at by a Melchizedek of Nebadon, who stated that the "Thought Adjuster is the cosmic window through which the finite creature may faith-glimpse the certainties and divinities of limitless Deity, the Universal Father." (1129:1)

Indeed, the story of the Mystery Monitors is one of the greatest treasures given in *The URANTIA Book*. This revelation presents new possibilities for human spiritual growth. It helps us to trace a direct line from time to space to eternity and infinity. Awareness of the Thought Adjusters will give people a dramatically new idea about how much God is interested in us and in providing for our future welfare.

I expect that knowledge of the Mystery Monitors will eventually revitalize organized religion (along with personal religious experience). It will give new and enduring substance to the great ideal of the brotherhood of man. The fact that all human beings with normal minds have indwelling spirit fragments offers new insight about equality and fairness in the universe. This gift from God to the human race demonstrates that he has no favorites...we are all equally cherished by our beloved Father. It also suggests, regardless of worldly condition or status, we all have the same chance to ascend in the universe.

Without diminishing in the least the majestic infinity and eternity of God the Father, Thought Adjusters establish a linkage between our minds and the mind of God. What the world needs to know, and organized religion needs to teach, is that a living spirit of God resides literally in our higher mind for the purpose of providing guidance with a definite potential to form an everlasting partnership. This is the good news concerning the providence of God.

Knowledge of the Thought Adjusters should have a leavening effect on our theology, philosophy, and, sooner or later, on our social norms. It may be at first a rude shock for people to fully realize that even their enemies are indwelt by God's priceless gift. I would imagine that the value placed by one human mortal toward another will rise proportionally as the acceptance spreads from individual to individual, from culture to culture, of a new and greater version of God's relationship to his children.

We have much to be grateful for. Let us rejoice in the knowledge that the living God has bestowed upon us an absolutely perfect spirit. God trusts and loves us. He freely gives us a part of his grace and power. Let us hold on to our faith and appreciate his love. Consider the statement of a Solitary Messenger of Orvonton: "As far as I am conversant with the affairs of a universe, I regard the love of a Thought Adjuster as the most truly divine affection in all creation." (1203:2)

—Charles Laurence Olivea, Watertown, Connecticut

mal instincts and the apparatus for the reception of spiritual truth. The short-sighted view of life on earth is simply an obsession with material phenomena and material things. The transcendent view of life on earth relegates material things to the scaffolding of the spiritual realities that we are attaining in partnership with our divine parents and in our mortal fellow-

See *Power of God* on Page 8

A SHORT HISTORY OF URANTIA SOCIETY OF GREATER NEW YORK

By the time the Urantia Society of Greater New York became chartered there were twenty-three members. That means twenty-three individuals who each had their own particular road in living with *The URANTIA Book*.

One who was not part of these twenty-three but who was present in spirit is Mark Szejnberg. He graduated to the mansion worlds in 1982. Coming from Moscow to the United States in the late 1960s, Mark met the book during a party where a friend showed it to him. If ever angels were active it was here. Mark subsequently bought the book and read it in its entirety in three months. Over the years he found a receptive base for the book in his newly wed wife, Dale, his cousin, Lila Dogim, and Lila's husband, Avi Dogim.

By the year 1976 this band of four had already contacted the Connecticut Society as well as Steve Dreier who had his regular study group in New Jersey. In that year a foundation was made to form a stable Queens/Brooklyn study group. A firm commitment was made when the four joined the Connecticut Society. Because of this membership and thanks to the position of Steve Dreier who formed, as it were, a liaison between Chicago and the scattered readers in the New York metropolitan area, it soon became apparent that readers could be contacted anywhere from New Jersey to Long Island.

The situation by the late 1970s was that there existed quite a few study groups in the area not all of them of the same stability as the Queens/Brooklyn group. Some of the readers were actively involved in the Connecticut Society, most of them were not. There even was a valiant reader like Rick Brinkman, who without contact with any others, was very active attracting new readers and forming his own study group. Rick had gotten the book in 1971 and over a period of nine years, completely by his own efforts and means, he was able to introduce the book and make a difference in the lives of many people. By the year 1980, when he did get in touch with fellow readers, he brought with him valuable experiences in spreading the news.

Meanwhile, Manhattan, Bronx, and Long Island were not without their share of activity. Here, again, it was Steve Dreier who brought readers of *The URANTIA Book* in touch with each other. The importance of the presence of the Connecticut Society at that time cannot be underestimated, yet the distance began to be a factor.

The first stirrings of a desire to form a New York Society must have dated from the mid-eighties. Manhattan, that had its share of successful and unsuccessful study groups, made a giant step forward when Robin Jorgensen in late 1983 made a momentous decision to make his apartment available for a weekly Tuesday evening study group where the book would be read from cover to cover. This group, still existing, thriving, and by far, in numbers, the biggest study group in the area, began soon to form the backbone, together with the Queens/Brooklyn group, of what was soon to become USGNY.

Late 1986 gave clear indications that a New York Society was desirable. "Compared to other areas," remarks Bart Ice, now president of USGNY, and reflecting on the present situation, "we have a small number of study groups but a strong core of dedicated, longtime readers." On January 10, 1987, a formal meeting was held at Robin's apartment to assess a show of interest and to get the ball rolling. The general feelings of wanting to form a New York Society were probably not different from those of other societies; the society would be able to facilitate communication between

See USGNY History in Right Column

URANTIA BROTHERHOOD 1990 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

In the summer of 1990, amidst the grandeur of the Rocky Mountains, The international conference of the URANTIA Brotherhood will take place. Materials will be available within the next year. However, mark your calendars now, July 21 - July 26, and begin making your plans to attend this conference at Snow Mountain Ranch, YMCA of the Rockies, to share and experience the selected theme of "Walking With God."

N.Y. METRO AREA STUDY GROUPS

BROOKLYN/QUEENS

Mondays, 8:30—10:00 P.M.; Varied location
Contact: Lila and Avi Dogim, (718) 251-9483

MANHATTAN

Tuesdays, 7:30—10:00 P.M.; 41 Crosby Street, N.Y.C.
Contact: Helene Douglas/Robin Jorgenson, (212) 226-6349

SELDON, LONG ISLAND

Weekly; Varied time and location
Contact John and Toby Speed, (516) 736-4547

STATEN ISLAND

Thursdays, 8:30—10:30 P.M. (Call first); 36 Northport Lane, S.I.
Contact: Rhonda Shapiro, (718) 698-7011

HEMPSTEAD, LONG ISLAND

1st and 3rd Wednesdays, 4:00 P.M.—dinner; Varied location
Contact: Betty Towner, (516) 735-6489

USGNY History from Left Column

the several study groups, it would give more potential to individual members to do something they could not do otherwise, and the society would be able to participate in a world-wide network by its contacts with URANTIA Brotherhood in Chicago. The consideration that a New York Society would be able to send delegates to the Triennial Delegate Assembly in 1988 formed one of the (lesser) reasons to formalize the founding of what was to become USGNY.

Whereas this first meeting was only attended by ten people, a second meeting on March 1, 1987, brought about eighteen people together with the awareness that quite a few others were willing to participate. From that meeting on, the inevitable and sometimes tedious process came into being. A constitution, working committees, and the election of officers were put into place. Close to ten meetings were held before the day of birth when the Urantia Society of Greater New York became officially chartered on April 17, 1988. Bart Ice from Manhattan became president, Dale Szejnberg from Queens, secretary, and John Speed from Long Island, treasurer, thereby creating a harmonious geographical sharing of responsibilities. During the process of forming USGNY it became necessary for some Connecticut members to jump over to the new society. The New York Society can, indeed, feel a sense of gratitude towards the Connecticut Society who helped with their expertise and who made it possible that a smooth transition was effected.

Still in its infant stage, it remains to be seen how USGNY will develop and grow. Says Bart Ice, "We have to do right what we do at present. When we're ready for something else, the angels will provide the opportunity."

—Gustaaf Groefsema, Long Island City, New York

Power of God from Page 6

ship. In this dynamic process of living and growing in partnership with God and in spiritual unity with our fellow mortals every event, every effort is a valuable growth experience. Each of us gains with the gains of our brothers and sisters. The unlimited power of the love of God is everywhere available. It awaits our readiness to employ it in creation, and we always get as much of it as we can handle.

In the actual dynamics of everyday living we work in partnership with the Father by serving his divine will and cosmic purpose. These unendingly relate to the ultimate well being of all of his children. Thus is our station in life cosmic duty; our dedication is loyalty to the Father, and our destiny is service in divine perfection.

And now the station of our cosmic duty is this backward and confused world of ignorance and spiritual blindness. We are indeed challenged and blessed with a great task.

Let us, administrators of the power of God, in each and every moment of our lives bring his light and his love to bear on every situation in which we find ourselves. Let us not leave out any dark corner of our lives or concern of our world. Let us take example from the life of our elder brother, Jesus of Nazareth. As we pass by we can bring living truth, living goodness, and living beauty into actuality in the brotherhood and sisterhood of life on earth.

—Martin Greenhut, Great Barrington, Massachusetts

Impressions from Page 1

that people anticipate long in advance, looking forward to its scheduled time to be a participant in its spiritual consciousness boost. Stay with the theme of how the URANTIA revelation can augment the organized religions of the world and continue to exemplify it through participating with local churches.

Give us the personal experience of being with our brothers and sisters and with Jesus, and help us experience how we can inspire each other and can receive inspiration through remembrance of Jesus' life. Get us involved in inspirational dance and song and play. How can we help but go away and spread more love through our daily lives after such an uplifting and fulfilling experience? I, for one, would like to see you stay with this theme and build upon those events which were most successful in exemplifying "...the restatement of the religion of Jesus must develop a new and appropriate symbolism." (966). Your conference did that for me this time and now I want more.

—Larry Watkins, Charlottesville, Virginia

Reinterpreting the Holidays from Page 5

terms. The founder of a successful commune in the United States, The Farm, who is known only as Steven, sums it up, "Life is God having one long conversation with himself."

—Alison B. Gardner, Sherborn, Massachusetts

MASSACHUSETTS BAY GROUP CALENDAR

Meets Sunday afternoon, at six-week intervals, in North Harwich (H) or Sherborn (S). Last meeting this year is December 11 (S). Dates for 1989 are—January 22 (H), March 12 (S), April 9 (H), May 20 (at USCC annual meeting), July 16 (S), August 27 (S), October 15 (H), and December 3 (S).

A one-day mini-conference will be held on a Spring Saturday (to be announced). For information on meetings call Jack Schmedes and Sandy Rogers at (508) 432-4999 in North Harwich or Dan Massey and Alison Gardner at (508) 653-8850 in Sherborn.

USCC CALENDAR

Regular meetings of USCC in the Glen House, Farmington, Connecticut:
November 12, 1988
January 14, 1989
March 18, 1989
May 20, 1989 (annual business meeting)

February 1, 1989 last date to submit articles for March edition of USCC Newsletter.

June 10-11, 1989 Regional conference, Simon's Rock of Bard College, Great Barrington, Massachusetts

USGNY CALENDAR

December 4, 1988: Social gathering.

January 15, 1989: Peter Laurence; "The difference between URANTIA Brotherhood and organized religion."

March 5, 1989: Gustaaf Groefsema; "Outward view. USGNY's relationship to URANTIA Brotherhood and the world-wide movement."

April 16, 1989: (Abbreviated program due to the annual Society business meeting on this date) USGNY's relationship to its members and to individuals and groups in our local community.

June 4: Jaques Tetraut; "How URANTIA groups function in the Montreal area and how they have chosen to interact with the URANTIA Brotherhood and the world-wide movement."

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage

PAID

Permit No. 20
Farmington, CT
06034

USCC
PO Box 88
Farmington, CT 06034

Preston Thomas
Rt. 1, Box 31
Earlsville, VA 22936