



March 2006

Dear friend of the fifth epochal revelation,

Jesus measured every human institution by the unvarying test: *What does it do for the human soul? does it bring God to man? does it bring man to God?* (1388:5). Urantia Foundation is a human institution. With Jesus' assessment in mind, and for the sake of measuring up to Jesus' test, the Board of Trustees a short while ago adopted a mission statement for Urantia Foundation. In the words of this solemn statement:

*The mission of Urantia Foundation is to bring God to man and man to God by disseminating and promoting The Urantia Book and its teachings.*

We are fully determined to be true to our mission statement, and we are convinced that you personally wish to partake in bringing God to man and man to God. Hence, we invite you to join hands with Urantia Foundation in our shared mission.

Along with this letter you have received Urantia Foundation's 2005 Annual Report. In this report you will read about our achievements of the past year. You will learn about our financial records for 2005 and about our need for financial and human resources as we implement our mission during the current year and in the years to come. You will glean from the report that the Board of Trustees have budgeted an income of \$958,000 for the year 2006 and are now launching a sober, but hopeful, fundraising campaign.

We are hoping that you will consider participating in this campaign. Your contribution may be a dollar a day or it may be a larger or smaller sum. You may help augment our general fund for day-to-day operational expenses, earmark your gift for a specific program, or contribute toward our endowment fund. Every contribution is equally welcome. Every contribution is equally needed. For every contribution we are equally appreciative and extend our sincere gratitude.

Cordially,

**The Trustees of Urantia Foundation**

**Gard Jameson   Seppo Kanerva   Richard Keeler  
Georges Michelson-Dupont   Mo Siegel**

URANTIA FOUNDATION

HEAD OFFICE: 533 W. DIVERSEY PARKWAY • CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60614 U.S.A.  
TELEPHONE: (773) 525-3319 • FAX: (773) 525-7739 • WEBSITE: <http://www.urantia.org>



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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

*As the human mind reckons backward into the past, it is evaluating past experience for the purpose of bringing it to bear on a present situation. As mind reaches out into the future, it is attempting to evaluate the future significance of possible action. And having thus reckoned with both experience and wisdom, the human will exercises judgment-decision in the present, and the plan of action thus born of the past and the future becomes existent. (1295:4)*

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2005:** *The Urantia Book* often reminds us that our current efforts can truly be seen in proper light when considered in conjunction with the past and the future. When we examine one slice of time in the progress of the fifth epochal revelation, we might be tempted to melancholy at the apparent infancy of the revelation, yet with timely perspective and planning we see the great progress that has been made. 2005 was the fiftieth anniversary of the first printing of *The Urantia Book*, and naturally many discussions have centered on the accomplishments of fifty years of work. When examining our progress on a time line, we see steady, incremental steps forward year after year, decade after decade, with the work of the last ten years nearly equal to that of the first forty. Through 1995, Urantia Foundation published *The Urantia Book* in four languages: English, French, Spanish and Finnish. In the last ten years, that number has more than doubled to include Russian, Dutch, Korean, Lithuanian, and German, with Portuguese and Romanian available in electronic form. In fifty years, over **500,000 copies of *The Urantia Book*** have been sold in all languages, and remarkably, more than half of these—some 285,000—have been published in the last ten years alone. The growth of the revelation has been healthy and visible. For Urantia Foundation, 2005 was a year of steady progress:

- In December, *Das Urantia Buch*, the ninth published translation, was delivered to the Chicago head office and is now available for purchase.
- A new **European Foundation** office has been established to assist distribution efforts on the continent.
- The **Italian translation** has undergone final editing and formatting processes and will be ready for publication in 2006.
- Steady progress on the **Swedish** and **Estonian** translations has continued. The same concerns the **Chinese** and **Japanese** translations. We hope to have the entire first draft of the Chinese translation ready for further refinements in mid-2007. The final editing of the draft will then begin and it will take at least two years.
- Numerous translation efforts continue, including Portuguese, Swedish, Romanian, Estonian, Farsi, Bulgarian, Indonesian, Polish, Greek and Czech.

**SHIFTS IN PERSONNEL:** Like most years, 2005 saw a shift in personnel working for Urantia Foundation. **Chris Bailey** spent one year of dedicated service at 533, for which we owe her a debt of gratitude. **Matthew Viglione** left the Chicago office after five years of important contribution. He now lives in San Francisco and we continue to use his services as a consultant for various Foundation projects. **Chris Wood** has been welcomed to the staff, filling roles in communication and book distribution. In 2006, we will add a permanent accountant and a book sales manager.

**NEW ASSOCIATE TRUSTEES:** In 2002, the Board of Trustees created a team of Associate Trustees to act as an advisory board in liaison with the readership. Up to five Associate Trustees are appointed for one calendar year and only two consecutive reappointments are possible. Year 2005 saw the departure from the Board of Associate Trustees of **Kathleen Swadling** and **Carolyn Kendall**, who had each served three one-year terms. Carolyn's historic perspective, wise counsel, and years of experience made a significant contribution at our meetings. Kathleen blazed the book distribution path in Australia while managing our international expansion via the branch offices and Foundation Representatives. We will miss their energy and devotion.

The Board appointed **René Hagenaars** (The Netherlands) and **Sue Tennant** (Canada) as new Associate Trustees beginning in 2006. The Board also reappointed **Nancy Shaffer** and **Jane Ploetz** to serve their third terms.

**IN CONCLUSION:** Through their efforts and accomplishments, each individual nudges the fifth epochal revelation steadily forward. The work of Urantia Foundation, volunteers, donors, as well as the efforts of dedicated study groups, and every individual reader who is working toward the realization of the divine will contribute to the steady progress that the revelation is making on the world of the cross. This progress is the fruits of seeds sown in 1955; it is the gift we give to the next generation in 2055.

—Seppo Kanerva

## 2005 HIGHLIGHTS

### FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE

A record number of individual donors contributed to the efforts of Urantia Foundation in 2005. **863 donors** (excluding estates) contributed more than **\$670,000** to our programs. Continuing the pattern of the previous year, the number of smaller-amount donors has increased against the large-amount donations. This is a very healthy trend for public non-for-profit organizations. Urantia Foundation continues to encourage membership in the "Dollar-A-Day Club" to help ensure a steady month-to-month donation rate toward the Foundation's efforts. Our goal is to increase the total number of member-donors to 2,500. At this level of membership, all of our annual expenses would be met from a broad expanse of contributors.

The Matthew Project Committee, our long-term fundraising team, held a regional gathering in Dallas, Texas, providing for new friendships and contacts and old relationships revived. In 2005, The members of the Matthew Project Committee donated over **\$114,000** into Foundation coffers.

In addition to individual donations, in 2005 we received a sizable gift via our **Planned Giving** program. This program helps donors to plan their estates in order to benefit Urantia Foundation either during their lifetimes or after their passing. Planned Giving donations added over **\$475,000** toward the work of Urantia Foundation in 2005.

While the 2005 finances have not yet been audited, we can report the following: In sum, Urantia Foundation's 2005 income from all sources, including donations, net sales, and income from investments, was \$1,584,000 (rounded). Our total expenditures were \$884,000 (rounded). Our net gain was used to retire older debt.

Our 2006 budget proposes the continuation of our slimmed-down enterprise by maintaining a smaller staff, renting the third floor at 533, and a sober, but hopeful, fundraising campaign. We are planning for a total income of \$958,000 and expenses of \$817,000. Extra income, if any, will be prudently invested for the future. We will continue our reader service, gift book, library placement, and internet outreach programs, as well as the daily work of providing *The Urantia Book* to bookstores worldwide and opening new distribution channels in countries throughout the world.

### DISTRIBUTION

As the accompanying chart shows, in 2005 overall sales of *The Urantia Book* increased 15% from the previous year due primarily to sales of the new Lithuanian translation and the dramatic increase in demand for the Russian edition. Sales of other translations have continued apace throughout the world. The continued steady sale of *The Urantia Book* through an industry-wide sales slump demonstrates the long-term staying power of *The Urantia Book*.

Library Placement and Gift Book figures were down compared to the year before due to the completion of the Central and South American Library Placement Program and the Indian Gift Book Program. These two programs aside, library placement and gift book circulation continued at the pace set in 2004.



Steady progress is the watchword of the universe, and so is it the watchword of Urantia Foundation's distribution efforts. In the ebb and flow of an unpredictable book market, *The Urantia Book* stays a constant fixture on the shelves of major bookstores and distribution outlets.

Since the Spanish translation was published in 1993, the Foundation has participated in numerous book fairs and has engaged the services of numerous distributors in Spanish-speaking countries. Some readers have identified Argentina as a country where *El Libro* does not seem to be available in bookstores. Distribution in Argentina and many Latin American countries is difficult and complex. Because our invoices to the distributors have not been paid in full, the staff and the Trustees are trying to work out better methods to collecting money owed the Foundation by distributors in Argentina, and are looking for more responsible, dependable, and reliable distributors. We are open to your suggestions.

## TRANSLATIONS

In 1997 a team of devoted readers launched the Portuguese translation project with the Foundation's approval and sponsorship. In 2003 the Portuguese translation team informed the Foundation that the translation was in reasonably good shape and could be made public in electronic format. After Urantia Foundation staff obtained independent assessments that were encouraging, even laudatory, the Foundation made the Portuguese translation available on the Foundation's website and released it on CD. In 2005 the leader of the Portuguese translation team submitted the translation to the Foundation for publication; the staff and volunteers started formatting the text for publication. At about this time the staff began receiving emails from a group of three readers who had downloaded the Portuguese translation from the Foundation's website and had noted omissions and other mistakes in the translation. This group sent the Manager of Translations a detailed analysis of the translation of the Foreword, explaining the errors. Since it is the Trustees' policy to provide the best and most meticulously accurate translations humanly possible, the Trustees decided to stop the formatting of the translation and asked this group to continue their analysis. We will keep you informed of the progress of this effort.

## READER SERVICES

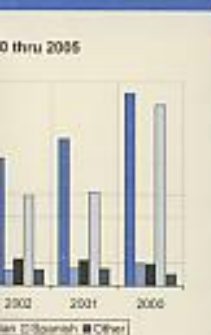
Urantia Foundation serves as an initial contact source for many readers. Our Reader Services Department provides opportunities for social networking and encourages the formation of study groups throughout the world. Our staff continues to provide services that promote both study of the teachings and social networking among readers. Scores of volunteers assist in this service and for that receive our hearty thanks. We hope our network of volunteers around the world continues to grow in order to promote *The Urantia Book* in every country and community that is open to the teachings. We encourage anyone interested in assisting us to contact Urantia Foundation.

*The Urantia Book Internet School* Board of Directors worked hard behind the scenes to develop a new web-enabled database platform for UBIS courses to run on, replacing the email-centered method. In the new format students browse to a webpage, login, view class assignments, submit their classwork, and chat with students and teachers all on a dedicated website. The Winter 2006 semester began in January using the new website, and Spring courses will begin in April 2006.

## OUR WEBSITE

Unique visits to [www.urantia.org](http://www.urantia.org) peaked at 150,000 per month (5,000/day) in March 2005, dropped to 100,000 in July, and again averaged 150,000 in November through January 2006. It may be that peak visits to our website correspond to the times when more people are thinking or hearing about Jesus – Christmas and Easter. Our Spanish pages are as popular as our English pages, and Portuguese and French follow closely on that.

*Urantian News* was published in an on-line edition to save the cost of printing and mailing hard-copy editions to our mailing list (about \$30,000). Previous year's *Urantian News* editions are also available on-line. We will publish on-line versions of *Urantian News* in 2006 as well. See [http://www.urantia.org/urantian\\_news.html](http://www.urantia.org/urantian_news.html). In 2006 we will take a serious look at updating the look and feel of the site, and adding some new services.



## CONCLUSION

Imagine a gifted professor of theology, history, science, and comparative religion putting together, after years of teaching, reading, and research, a compendium of his best insights, and publishing it as a textbook for use by his students and others. This textbook, written at a post-graduate level of comprehension, ends up being 2,000 pages long – a masterpiece indeed, but challenging and heavy both physically and intellectually.

What would the students of the professor's post-grad class expect to pay for their new textbook? How many copies of the textbook would the professor and his publisher expect to sell over the usable lifetime of the text?

University bookstores in the USA today would charge \$150 to \$200 for this text. If the book sold 15,000 copies over its lifetime, it would be considered a best-seller.

Yet our precious *Urantia Book*, which the reader certainly recognizes as analogous with the description above, sells for under \$20.00 and is available in mainstream bookstores across North America and Europe. Urantia Foundation alone sells more than 15,000 books per year on average and has sold over 500,000 copies since the book was first published – more than half of that in the past 10 years!

Looking back on those 10 years, the sales of *The Urantia Book* seem more and more like the real "miracle" of the decade to me. According to conventional wisdom our difficult and thick book shouldn't sell much at all. And yet it's doing extremely well compared to the average book published today. The total sales numbers put our book in with extraordinary company – less than 1% of books published reach the total sales *The Urantia Book* has achieved. Regardless of what else the casual browser might think about the book, it certainly must be a good read or it wouldn't be selling like it is!

I think that often *Urantia Book* readers grow impatient with its growth curve. Why hasn't the book sold more? Why hasn't the whole world picked up on this miraculous story? As I've learned the "nuts and bolts" of the business I've come to see the problem from a different vantage point: what if a major distributor calls and we can't respond on a timely basis because we don't have books in stock, or we don't have the people, or we don't have money to pay our bills, or we can't keep up with all the paperwork? Lacking a timely response, the major distributor would soon enough take us off their list and mark *The Urantia Book* "out of print". This is more of an immanent danger to the dissemination of the book than any "outside" challenge today: our own failure to prepare for the realities of the market place. And the solution; we must be stocked, organized, accessible, and ready to do business.

Maintaining our current book distribution levels, and working to incrementally grow our operation in tandem with expected growth in the sales is the most difficult and challenging task that Urantia Foundation has ahead of it. If we don't protect and maintain our considerable investment in the book business, *The Urantia Book's* worldwide availability could drop suddenly. Recovering our market position would take much more effort than maintaining a steady presence.

What can you do to help? Support our general fund, where most of the money for day-to-day operations comes from. Volunteer to help on a local level, or call us to learn about more opportunities to serve. And pray for our continued success and for the patience to endure the pains of quiet, sustained growth.

– Jay Peregrine

### The Trustees and Staff of Urantia Foundation (January 2006)

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