



URANTIA FOUNDATION'S NEWS ONLINE

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WHY STUDY GROUPS MATTER TO THE FUTURE OF THE WORLD



By Mo Siegel, President, Urantia Foundation, Boulder, Colorado, USA

In a mere 56 years, the Urantia Revelation has spread from a handful of believers in Chicago to readers throughout the world. Fifth Epochal Revelatory light now glimmers in virtually every continent on this planet. We have come a long way from selling three books in 1958 to having more than 750,000 books in circulation today.

What happens from here is difficult to predict. Will the Urantia Revelation evolve in a slow and more institutionalized manner like Dalamatia, or will it capture the imagination of the world's people as the teachings of Jesus did during the reign of Constantine 1,700 years ago?

If you review what has happened in the past 56 years and project forward, a few courses of action seem wise. Readers need to love one another; the book needs translating and distributing; the organizations need funding; and educational activities must bring understanding to a book that contains sections written at a PhD educational equivalency level. The Urantia Book project needs teachers and leaders to help others understand this wonderful book, which at times can be difficult to comprehend. Thus, there is a need for study groups, of which there are 350-450 worldwide.

The majority of people in the world have rejected weekly attendance at religious institutions. In the United States, for example, 94% of people say they believe in God, although less than 40% regularly attend church. Yet there remains a need for the socialization of religionists.

"Religion is first an inner or personal adjustment, and then it becomes a matter of social service or group adjustment. The fact of man's gregariousness perforce determines that religious groups will come into existence. What happens in these religious groups depends very much on intelligent leadership." (1090.10) 99:5.1
"There is a real purpose in the socialization of religion. It

is the purpose of group religious activities to dramatize the loyalties of religion; to magnify the lures of truth, beauty, and goodness; to foster the attractions of supreme values; to enhance the service of unselfish fellowship; to glorify the potentials of family life; to promote religious education; to provide wise council and spiritual guidance; and to encourage group worship." (1092.2) 99:6.2

For the Urantia Revelation to take hold on modern society, we need a new setting free from formalized religious restraints of the past. If people in the 21st century are going to talk about God, they need a more intimate space to do it. The study group is the perfect place to interact with smaller group settings that allow people to personally share their religious lives, make friends, learn more, and even receive help as they grapple with problems.

One Size Doesn't Fit All; Let Diversity Flourish in Study Groups

In the section of *The Urantia Book* that explains the benefits of group religious association, its dangers are also discussed.

**One Size
Does Not
Fit All

Let Diversity
Flourish
in
Study Groups**

"As religion becomes institutionalized, its power for good is curtailed, while the possibilities for evil are greatly multiplied." (1092.3) 99:6.3

Most of the dangers described can be mitigated or eliminated when people meet in study groups, free from ecclesiastical authority and led by ordinary people dedicated to serving their fellow religionists. These local groups can use what works best for them depending on their culture and situation.

My thoughts about study groups are based on personal experience. On Tuesday nights, two Urantia Book study groups meet in our home in Boulder, Colorado. The adults meet in one room and the kids meet in another. Eighteen to twenty-eight adults and three to five kids attend the groups. Our adult meetings are emotionally uplifting, intellectually enlightening, spiritually illuminating, and always friendly. We read, talk, share, sometimes

have a Remembrance supper, and always pray. When the hour and a half study group ends, we fellowship and have something to eat. We make sure that no one talks too much, and that the meetings start and end on time.

Another group meets in Boulder, Colorado every Friday night where Chris Halvorsen, who has his PhD in Physics, lectures for two hours. Twenty-five to thirty adults attend his class each week. Chris teaches like a college professor, and his style is completely different from the



Chris Halvorsen



Jennifer Siegel

Tuesday night study group. Both groups are well attended and thriving, and we have learned a great lesson; one size doesn't fit all!

My wife, Jennifer Siegel, teaches the kids group, and their classes are a thing of beauty. From the deepest place in my soul I pray that you impart the teachings of *The Urantia Book* to your children. As the folk song goes, "teach your children well." If the United States government requires that our children and grandchildren study math, reading, and science, why shouldn't we

enlighten them with the teachings of the *The Urantia Book*? The kids who attend this class generally start at around age eight and graduate about age fifteen. When they leave they will have read and discussed a few hundred pages of the book. It's reassuring to know

that as the lures of computers, cell phones, instant messages, sports, dating, work, school and a hundred other distractions that occupy their time, they will forever have some knowledge of *The Urantia Book*. The future lies in the hands of the next generation and one of the greatest gifts we can give our children is to introduce them to the supernal teachings of *The Urantia Book*.

One Final Thought

In many respects, the closest thing to experiencing a community of believers is through meeting at a weekly study group. Study groups are such a beautiful way to share the profound teachings of *The Urantia Book* and to get to learn more about our brothers and sisters. No man is an island; we need each other. *"Spiritual growth is mutually stimulated by intimate association with other religionists."* (1094.2) 100:0.2

NOTEWORTHY GOALS FROM THE APRIL 2011 BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

By Marilyn Kulieke, Secretary, Urantia Foundation, Lincolnshire, Illinois, USA

2011 Goals

Community Relations:

1. Increase goodwill and communications with readers and reader groups worldwide via quarterly newsletters, local reader gatherings, and the fostering of organizational cooperation.

Newsletters are sent quarterly, and members of the staff and Expanded Board attend many national and international gatherings of readers. If the readers are the human body of

the Urantia Revelation, then the body needs to be healthy so the Revelation can flourish.

2. Increase accessibility and use of the facilities at 533 W Diversey Parkway in Chicago for activities directly related to furthering the Foundation's mission, which is to seed *The Urantia Book* and its teachings throughout the world.

The doors at 533 are open to Urantia Book organizations in need of meeting facilities to do work directly related to *The Urantia Book*. For further information please contact Tamara Strumfeld at tamara@urantia.org.

3. Involve younger readers in



Tamara Strumfeld

the work of the Urantia Revelation.

The on-going search for young

leaders and volunteers continues.

Book Printing, Sales, and Distribution:

1. Increase book sales and distribution in 2011 by seven percent over the 20,000 books distributed in 2010.

Sales and distribution targeted improvements include e-books, audios, bookstore sales, and web downloads. Urantia Foundation's book sales for the first quarter of 2011 were up 21%.

2. Increase distribution in North America, Brazil, Italy, Russia,

Hungary, and Holland.

Book distribution continues to grow even though book stores have significant challenges. Thanks to the work of Henk and Claire Mylanus in Europe and the team at 533 in Chicago, the Urantia Revelation continues its slow and steady movement into the world.

After printing 25,000 books in 2010, including four new translations, the printing needs for 2011 include approximately 22,000 books: 12,000 copies of the Spanish, Portuguese, and Polish translations, which were just printed, and 10,000 copies of the English edition, which will be printed this fall.

3. Expand the audio version of The Urantia Book into all existing translations.

A plan to make available audio versions for all translations is in progress.

Translations:

1. Advance the translations of The Urantia Book and revisions now in progress.

This includes the Chinese and Japanese translations as well as the revisions of the current Spanish and French translations.

2. Finish developing and then implementing new software for translators.

The software, now in use, accommodates languages ranging from Balto-Slavic, Indo-European, and Altaic, to Sino-Tibetan. Fine-tuning continues as this tool becomes the standard for all translation and revision work. Special thanks to Rogerio da Silva for his enormous contributions in developing this software.



Rogerio da Silva

Education:

1. Support the goal of creating 1,000 study groups by 2025.

This will require the cooperation of readers and organizations by supporting a centralized study group referral portal, participating in the study group initiatives, and providing leadership training. Urantia Foundation has joined Urantia Association International and The Urantia Book Fellowship in launching a global, non-political, study group portal intended as the repository of all publicly listed Urantia Book study groups in the world. Readers around the world can find a study group where they live, or wherever they may be traveling. Special thanks go to Scott Brooks for all the work he has done developing this site. And another round of thanks goes to all the organizations that cooperated in this important project.

2. Support the efforts of the Urantia Book Internet School (UBIS) by doubling the number of classes offered, by offering courses in Spanish and Portuguese, and by providing the funding.



Scott Brooks

The Spanish UBIS website is being developed. There are plans to launch the Spanish UBIS in late 2011 or early 2012. Additional funds were added to the 2011 budget. Five courses were offered during the April 2011 trimester.

3. Study the implementation of study forums at 533 W Diversey Parkway.

This will include study group blogs and interactive study group webinars.

4. Cooperate with other individuals and organizations whose goal is educating others about The Urantia Book and its teachings.

This will include working with others in educational programs.

Budgets and Donations:

1. Stay within the approved 2011 operating budget which is less than the 2010 operating budget.

Although the budget was approved, five important projects have developed that will require \$80,000 in additional funds.

These projects are: a) the Spanish revision plan; b) the new computer software needed for the Korean, Japanese, and Chinese translations; c) the unforeseen book printing expenses; d) the Spanish UBIS website needs; and e) the new administrative tasks required to accomplish these projects. Donations are needed to cover these costs.

2. Increase donations and the number of donors by 10% from 2010.

Multiple fundraising activities for 2011 include the spring/ summer fundraiser, the winter fundraising match, and a new building renovation campaign. Since Urantia Foundation does not make money from book sales, the Foundation relies on the generosity of donors. As one reader stated, "What a blessing it is to support the most important spiritual project on the planet. When you get to the mansion worlds, you'll look back and be thankful for the amazing opportunity you had to support the Fifth Epochal Revelation." Thank you for your contributions.

3. Find people of means who will fund the seeding of The Urantia Book and its teachings throughout the world.

The Foundation will continue building a strong treasury that can withstand social and economic storms while securing its short and long term ability to serve.

The translation software, now in use, accommodates languages ranging from Balto-Slavic, Indo-European, and Altaic, to Sino-Tibetan.

Safeguarding the Text:

1. *Develop the best possible, user-friendly internet download center at www.urantia.org.*

This download center will offer readers the English edition of *The Urantia Book* and all the translations formatted in accordance with the standard reference system.

2. *Finalize a book electronic data base that synchronizes, coordinates, and safeguards - without redundancy - the processes necessary to create error free printed books, eBooks, online texts, translator tools, and all other forms of media.*

For many years Urantia Foundation has faced the rapidly growing challenge of the proliferation of digital languages used in publishing, eBooks, internet, and other forms of digital media.

In March, after months of preparation and consultation with experts, a group of computer specialists met in the home of Georges and Marlène Dupont to

finalize a solution. The group recommended the software language XML as the remedy. This may not sound like a big accomplishment, but it is one of the most important building blocks for the protection and dissemination of *The Urantia Book* in the digital age. For the first time the digital book files are completely safeguarded, yet agile and progressive for the many purposes needed in the foreseeable future. Special thanks go to Larry Watkins for his work on the HTML files and to Rob Reno, Rogerio da Silva, Georges Michelson-Dupont, and Jay Peregrine for their tenacity in solving this looming problem.

Organizational Development:

1. *Continue governance improvements.*

This includes putting most of the Foundation's vital documents on Google Docs.

The Foundation will provide education for the team at 533 W Diversey Parkway.

The Foundation also replaced three outdated computers.



Larry Watkins



Rob Reno



Georges Michelson-Dupont



Jay Peregrine

JAY PEREGRINE VISITS FINLAND



Kalevi Eklov and Jay Peregrine

By Jay Peregrine, Executive Director, Urantia Foundation, Chicago, Illinois, USA

Recently I spent a week in Finland where I visited Kalevi Eklov, the manager of Urantia Foundation's branch office in Finland, and his

wife, Marja. They live in Klaukkala, near Helsinki. Kalevi is the third office manager in Finland, following Seppo Kanerva (now a Trustee Emeritus of Urantia Foundation) and Kristina Siikala. While I was there, Kalevi and I examined and counted the Foundation's inventory including approximately 1,000 copies of the Finnish translation. The inventory is stored in a barn that was converted into a clean and secure storage area by the son of a farmer.

Kalevi, Marja and I had a delicious lunch with Joel Renstrom, the translator of *Urantiaboken*, the Swedish translation of *The Urantia Book*. Joel and his wife, Eeva, live on the coast southwest of Helsinki

in an area where there are many Swedish speaking people.

After spending two days in the "lake country" with Associate Trustee Irmeli Ivalo-Sjölie, I attended the annual Summer Day Conference of the Finnish Urantia Association where I gave a talk about Urantia Foundation's origin, history, current efforts, and future plans. Seppo Kanerva translated and added his own perspective from time to time. I attended a study group in English, and on Saturday evening at a dance, I toasted Joel

and thanked him for his work on the Swedish translation and for all his efforts since 1966 to spread the teachings of *The Urantia Book* in Finland.



Finnish book storage

THE SPANISH REVISION PROJECT



By Marilyn Kulieke,
Secretary, Urantia
Foundation, Lincolnshire,
Illinois, USA

Victor Garcia-Bory, Associate Trustee who resides in New York City, USA, proposed a plan to produce a single, high quality Spanish translation of *The Urantia Book*, which will be a beautiful, in depth revision and will synthesize Urantia Foundation's two existing texts. It is intended to appeal to the majority of the

Spanish speaking readers worldwide.

The proposal was accepted by the Board of Trustees, and the revision work will start this year. Victor hopes "to capitalize on the knowledge and experience of individuals from around the world who have participated in the various translation and revision efforts over the years." The estimated completion date for the Spanish revision is 2018.



Victor Garcia-Bory

THE URANTIA BOOK INTERNET SCHOOL – MY LIFELINE TO THE URANTIA BOOK COMMUNITY



By Pam Maunakea,
San Dimas, California, USA

Thirty years passed between my introduction to *The Urantia Book* in 1970 and the day I discovered the Urantia Book Internet School (UBIS) online in 2000. During that time, I read the book three times from front to back. Family and friends were not interested. Study groups were too far away, and raising two young children made it difficult to begin one at my home. I felt isolated and alone studying *The Urantia Book* by myself.

UBIS became my lifeline to other Urantia Book readers, other like-minded truth seekers. I took a course almost every semester. Then in 2006, I was invited to take the Teacher Training course to become a Teacher/ Facilitator. I was in shock, and waves of doubt swept over me. I was still a learner; this was such a huge responsibility. Was I ready for it? It was a leap of faith that got me over this short period of indecision and awe.

After the five-week teacher training period, I was asked to teach/ facilitate a course the following semester in April 2007. I thought that taking a 10-week course as a student deepened my understanding of the teachings of *The Urantia Book*, but developing a course did so ten times over! I was assigned a mentor, an experienced teacher/ facilitator, who guided me every step of the way. It was one-on-one for weeks of delving into a thematic topic of my choice. It was intense and enlightening to have a mentor.

My experience as a teacher/ facilitator was great! The "pre-course" week was fun and amazing. I met, over "cyberspace," readers from all over the world. There was a reader from Africa who had to walk to an internet cafe to participate. A reader from the Middle East had to be discreet for fear of causing problems for family members. I've met readers from Russia, Cyprus, Brazil, New Zealand and, of course, from the United States.

Shortly after facilitating my first course, I was invited to serve as a member on the UBIS board of directors. I participated in their meetings and was assigned various tasks. I was able to experience the workings of UBIS from the other side of the "classroom." Knowing all the work that had to be accomplished before these courses could be offered online, I became a better student. I was beginning to realize that participating in various aspects of UBIS was deepening my understanding of the papers.

As a board member of UBIS, I was also asked to serve on the Course Review Committee (CRC). This task requires a short and intense study into two to three different courses that are being prepared by other teacher/ facilitators. Three members review these courses and make revisions if necessary. Time is required to sit and reread two to three papers in order to provide informed critiques. The interaction with the other reviewers was educational in itself.

UBIS has provided me a lifeline to other readers. Being involved as a student, as a teacher/ facilitator, as a staff member, and as a CRC member, has provided me multiple perspectives of this program dedicated to enlightening the people of this planet. What an honor and adventure it is to be involved with UBIS!

THE DEBUT OF *THE URANTIA BOOK* AT THE 2011 BUDAPEST BOOK FAIR

By Gábor Cseh, Hungary

The 2011 spring book fair was a most important event because it was the first opportunity to publicly present the Hungarian translation of *The Urantia Book* to the Hungarian people.

Visitors to our booth were not only able to page through the Hungarian translation, which was printed in the second half of 2010, but they were also able to peruse the pages of the English, Finnish, French, Italian, and Spanish translations. Naturally, the Hungarian version drew the biggest consumer interest. During the four day fair, more than one hundred inquiring individuals were given information about the contents and nature of the book. In addition to the short descriptive informational flyer and a collection of quotations, inquirers were also given a translated version of *The Gift of Revelation* and *The Birth of a Revelation*.

This event was made even more memorable by the meeting of new readers with older ones, individuals who have been diligently studying and disseminating the truths revealed in *The Urantia Book*.

The setting of this event - books containing truths, partial truths, and erroneous beliefs, amidst a book containing the truths of the Fifth Epochal Revelation - reminded me of the days of the Urmia lectures, when and where, amidst the various teachings of truths, partial truths, and erroneous ideas, there was heard the truth filled words of the Fourth Epochal Revelation proclaimed by the incarnate Son of God and the Son of Man in the likeness of mortal flesh.

Our impromptu meetings with book sellers and agents of book distributors will undoubtedly enhance our efforts to distribute the Hungarian translation in Hungary.

The presentation of the book at this fair would not have been possible without the help and support of the Finnish, Canadian, and Hungarian readers.



The setting of this event...
reminded me of the days of
the Urmia lectures.

COMMENTS FROM READERS

Inspiring Words from a Reader of *The Urantia Book*

By Jim Watkins, Cape Coral,
Florida, USA

When I was 16, I begged God to show me the truth. I told Him I wasn't afraid to know it if He would only show me the way. At the age of 19, I discovered *The Urantia Book*, and I have been discovering it ever

since. Thirty years later, I have come to realize that I am the luckiest person on earth. Our Father, through the tireless efforts of his spirit children, our unseen friends, has entrusted me with this latest revelation of religious truth.

Ponder for a moment what we have been given: a glimpse into the heavens, a peek through the keyhole of the door to a living and vibrant universe, filled with spirit

beings who so lovingly watch and care over us in the name of our heavenly Father who has made all of this possible. These are the truths contained within the pages of *The Urantia Book*.

I thank our spirit cousins bringing this revelation into my life and for making it possible for me to know and love God and to learn something of His entire spiritual family of which I am

a proud and dedicated member.

To be so very fortunate as to live at this time, and to be among the first human beings to have been given this revelation - it is as if I have won the spiritual lottery.

I only hope *The Urantia Book* will be as transformative in your life as it has been in mine.

Forty-some
years
later,
I am
still
a student.

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The Story of a Long Time Urantia Book Reader

By Bill Martin, Niles, Michigan,
USA.

Spending my formative years as a teen in a study group composed almost entirely of Forum members and second-generation students was a fertile greenhouse for the cultivation of my embryonic soul. Answers to my questions were in-depth and often far above my understanding, but perseverance furthered my capacity to comprehend and now, forty-some years later, I am still a student, in that same room, answering sincere questions from other truth-hungry souls. The relationships forged over the years in this study group will always be a part of me. They are some of what my Thought Controller and Guardian will use in my reassembly on Mansonia One.

Over time, I have learned that conceptual knowledge is no substitute for spiritual fruit in living life. We must “*learn to water the garden of [our] hearts as well as seek for the dry sands of knowledge.*” (554.6) 48:6.32 We must refresh our souls with the water of life and forgive our debtors, as we have been forgiven. Every soul, however humble, has their story to tell. Our Father loves all His children equally and unconditionally, and Divine Love reveals the nature of God and makes us real and more replete.

A personal and living revelation, above and beyond the pages of a book, has made real to me the teachings that a soul of immortal and well-nigh unlimited potential is being forged out in my Mind Arena

of Choice. “*The acts of today are the destiny of tomorrow.*” (557.10) 48:7.26 The Father of Lights has entered my mind to elevate, transform and transfigure it with a fragment of the purest spirit reality in the universe who will eternalize my temporal identity that I may “*strike step*” with the progressive procession of eternity.

One thing has become crystal clear: unselfish and unselfconscious labor for your fellows, particularly beings in need and distress, is the *real* measure of planetary greatness. “*One must do something as well as be something.*” (1260.1) 115:0.1

“*Service is the goal of time and the destination of space.*” (316:4) 28:6.19



"When you once
begin to find God
in your soul,
presently you will
begin to discover
him in other
men's souls and
eventually in all
the creatures and
creations of a
mighty universe."

Jesus,
The Urantia Book,
(1733.1) 155:6.13