



# ANNUAL REPORT 2003

## URANTIA FOUNDATION

*"The object for which this Foundation is created is the promotion, improvement, and expansion among the peoples of the world of the comprehension and understanding of Cosmology and the relation of the planet on which we live to the Universe ..."*

IN 1950 Urantia Foundation was charged with a far-reaching mission intended to last long into the future. We realize that alone, a handful of Trustees and Staff can have little impact on the peoples of our planet. Yet that is what we are called to do.

In these early years the Foundation has concentrated on attaining a professional standard of excellence in translating and publishing *The Urantia Book*, efficiently distributing these books around the world, and fostering the dissemination of the principles, teachings, and doctrines of *The Urantia Book*. Thanks to the support and activities of concerned readers around the world, great progress has been made in these tasks.

As 2003 draws to a close, we invite you to take a moment to review the progress made this year and to look forward with us at what we hope to accomplish in the coming year.

## OVERVIEW

AS time passes, new tools become available to carry out Urantia Foundation's ambitious objectives. Technology has had an enormous impact on Urantia Foundation's ability to fulfill its key functions in a cost-efficient manner. In past years, Urantia Foundation has come to rely upon the Internet for communications with readers and non-readers alike as well as to foster the in-depth study of *The Urantia Book*. For many years, we have relied on computer databases to provide a broad range of services to readers in various languages around the world.

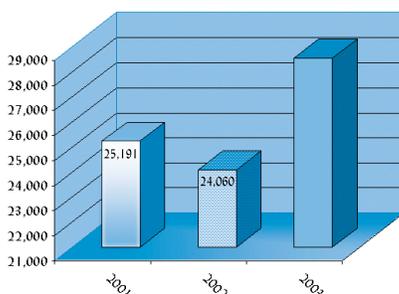
In 2003, we implemented several technology-related enhancements that have improved services and reduced costs. By converting information brochures to web-based documents, we are now able to respond to a larger number of reader inquiries by email. By publishing the new Portuguese translation on CD-ROM, we were able to make this work available sooner and at a much lower cost while support develops for publication in book form. The use of "on-demand" printing technology has permitted us to furnish a growing number of study aids without prohibitively high investments in production and inventory costs. This year we also began offering *The Urantia Book* E-Books in English and Spanish. In addition, our new e-commerce website now allows customers to purchase products on a secure server. These are but a few of the improvements made this year. Although our methods continually evolve, our mission remains the same.

The year was not without its disappointments. In August 2003, the U.S. Supreme Court denied Urantia Foundation's request to review the appellate court's decision in *Michael Foundation, Inc. v. Urantia Foundation*. We are still assessing the implications of this decision for other publishers and developing strategies to preserve the inviolate text in the future. Urantia Foundation holds international copyrights in the English text as well as copyrights in its many translations, audio recordings, and computer software. Readers can identify the authentic products and services of Urantia Foundation by the concentric-circles symbol.

We end this year with a note of gratitude, too, for the longstanding service of Tonia Baney. Tonia left her position as Executive Director in November but continues an active role with International Urantia Association and the Matthew Project, a program devoted to the long-term success of Urantia Foundation. International Office Director Mindy Williams has accepted the trustees' request to take on most of Tonia's former responsibilities.

## PUBLISHING AND DISTRIBUTION

Book Distribution by Year



### Book Distribution

Sales of *The Urantia Book* and its translations have fluctuated in recent years. After a high of nearly 40,000 books given and sold in 2000, sales trended downward in 2001 and 2002 before moving upward in 2003. This year we estimate 28,500 books will be given and sold before year-end, an increase of nearly 4,500 over 2002.

### Seminarians Receive *The Urantia Book* in India

This past summer, 8,800 copies of *The Urantia Book* were printed in India, one of the world's largest English-speaking nations. Books are now displayed in both Christian and secular bookstores at a price subsidized by Urantia Foundation. By year-end, 3,500 of the 6,000 books designated as gift books will have been distrib-

uted to theology students there, and we are looking for support to extend this program in 2004. A well-known Indian bookstore has also agreed to carry *The Urantia Book* on its website. These accomplishments were a culmination of Urantia Foundation's dissemination efforts over many years.

КНИГА УРАНТИИ —

## Nearly 10,000 Readers

The first printing of the Russian book was completed in 1997, the second in 2001, and we will soon need to make ready for a third printing. Our office in St. Petersburg recently received the last remaining shipment of books from the second printing, which means the number of books in the hands of Russian readers will soon reach 10,000. Donations to Urantia Foundation are used to subsidize the cost of books distributed in that region so that they are affordable to local readers. As a result of these low prices, additional funds must be raised for each new printing.

## Over 5,000 Books for Libraries in Latin America

An ambitious program to place copies of *El Libro de Urantia* in libraries throughout Latin America is well underway at the close of 2003. In Mexico, 700 libraries, universities, and seminaries received gift books from Urantia Foundation in 2003. Over 5,000 books have been shipped to Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Paraguay, Puerto Rico, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Placement of these books has begun in Argentina, and we will continue throughout South and Central America in 2004 provided sufficient financial support is received for this project.

## Translations Update

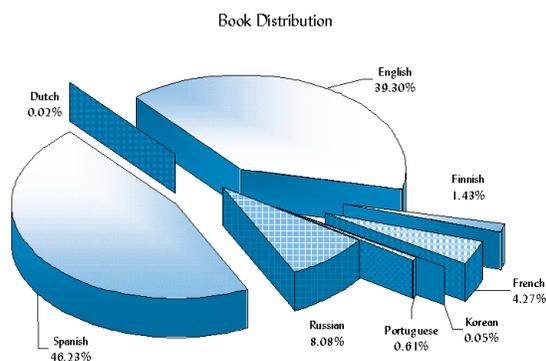
Year 2003 was once again a great year of translations. The toil of many translators and teams has yielded good fruits; their work is completed, or will be completed soon. The painstakingly translated texts, the products of incessant and exacting effort of so many years, can finally be made available.

Apart from the English book, Urantia Foundation keeps **six translations in print: Dutch, Finnish, French, Korean, Russian, and Spanish**. These languages are spoken as first or second languages by *nearly two billion Urantians*.

In July 2003, **Portuguese** became part of the expanding list of published translations when the Portuguese *O Livro de Urântia* was made available in HTML format on CD-ROM, including comparative study editions of the English and Spanish texts. We hope to publish the printed book in 2004 and bring it within the reach of some 186 million potential readers.

In early 2004 we will print the **German** *Das Urantia-Buch*. This will mean that some 130 million people in Germany, Austria, Switzerland and elsewhere will have access to these revealed teachings. They may then read the revelation not only in their own language but also compare it with the English text that they will find on the same pages, side-by-side with the German rendering, in this **first bilingual printing** of the book.

*Urantijos Knyga*, the **Lithuanian** translation, launched in 1994, is nearly ready to print. Plans for 2004 call for the **Italian, Estonian, and Romanian** teams to complete final editing of their work. The **Chinese** translation, begun in 2001, continues at a brisk pace with nearly two-thirds of the first draft completed. Work continues in **Bulgarian, Farsi, Greek, Swedish, Indonesian, Japanese, and Norwegian**, with additional translations in the planning stage.



## DISSEMINATION OF THE TEACHINGS

**I**N 2003 the **International Urantia Association** grew with the formation of associations of devoted readers in Brazil and the United Kingdom. This year also marked the beginning of a transition period operating under a new Provisional Charter. Upon ratification by its members and adoption by Urantia Foundation's Board of Trustees, the membership association will assume full legal responsibility under this new Charter for the umbrella organization that serves to integrate and coordinate the efforts of Urantia Associations worldwide.

A growing part of Urantia Foundation's dissemination program is the **reader services** provided in numerous languages by its offices and representatives. We respond to thousands of requests each year for information about *The Urantia Book* and its original publisher, and we provide referrals to connect readers with one another in order to foster study groups around the world. When someone desires to contact other readers, Urantia Foundation relies upon a database of over seven thousand individuals who have given us permission to give their contact information to others in their area.

At the head office where the bulk of these inquiries are received, we implemented a new system in 2003 to improve response time and reduce costs. We created electronic versions of all of Urantia Foundation's brochures which enables us in most cases to send "information packages" by email. Convenient links in these posts allow readers to access all the educational literature previously sent as brochures, along with the latest newsletters and other up-to-date informational pieces. This has both improved response time and reduced printing and mailing costs.

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... in order to increase and enhance the comfort, happiness, and well being of Man, as an individual and as a member of society, through the fostering of a religion, a philosophy, and a cosmology which are commensurate with Man's intellectual and cultural development.

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In Chicago, readers are welcomed to visit the **historic headquarters building at 533 Diversey Parkway** which houses Urantia Foundation's offices. A study group still meets in the original Forum room of this lovely three-story graystone in a city that is a crossroads where the diverse range of humanity meet. Support for the building program keeps this resource available for *Urantia Book* readers and as an attractive neighbor in this multi-cultural neighborhood.

Urantia Foundation maintains a popular **website**, <http://www.urantia.org>, which received an average of 65,000 visits a month during 2003. We also sponsor **The Urantia Book Internet School**, which offered over 30 structured classes this year in English, French, and Spanish in which over 200 students explored concepts in *The Urantia Book*. In addition, Urantia Foundation's **email discussion groups** for **online study** of *The Urantia Book* in English, Spanish, French, and Finnish generated over 500,000 messages this year.

As additional translations are published, and as interest spreads worldwide, the Foundation increasingly relies upon a network of devoted volunteers to help establish distribution channels and to serve as a contact for readers in their areas. In addition to six **branch offices**, the Foundation now has twenty-two **representatives worldwide** who assist in these efforts, including our newest addition in The Netherlands. These volunteers help to introduce *The Urantia Book* in their countries by placing books in libraries, attending book fairs, encouraging the formation of study groups, putting readers in touch with one another, responding to inquiries, and helping us establish business relations in the book trade.

## FINANCIAL & ADMINISTRATION

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URANTIA Foundation depends almost entirely upon contributions to fund its many programs. Net income from book and product sales typically cover less than 10% of Urantia Foundation's annual budget. The following 2002 and 2003 figures are unaudited and rounded off to the nearest 1,000. We present them to promote a better understanding of Urantia Foundation's financial position. Urantia Foundation's audited financial statements are always available upon request. The 2002 draft audit has been submitted to our Board of Trustees for review and should be available to the public in January. Please contact us for further details.

**2002** - For the year ending December 31, 2002, Urantia Foundation had total revenue from contributions and book sales of just over \$1.5 million. Funds were expended on various programs, including book distribution, translations, and dissemination programs. During 2002, both the Spanish hardcover and Spanish soft cover books were printed, as well as the English Classic, at a cost of over \$170,000. An additional inventory of audiotapes was produced, and the translation program funded nine different teams at a cost of over \$155,000. The dissemination program spent \$40,000 for IUA and its various activities, as well as providing additional funding for newsletter printings and mailings, reader services, youth services, and dissemination efforts by offices and representatives worldwide.

### THE MATTHEW PROJECT

The Matthew Project had its beginnings in a 1997 Strategic Planning initiative which brought together key Urantia Foundation supporters from various backgrounds to help the Trustees and Staff develop a plan to secure the Foundation's future. Over the past seven years, the Matthew Project members have raised amongst themselves over \$5,000,000 that has supported Urantia Foundation's ongoing programs. In 2003 Matthew Project members gave over \$475,000 to help Urantia Foundation achieve its long-term goals, and they have designed a comprehensive funding plan to ensure that Urantia Foundation's programs can continue long into the future.

In July, several of the individuals involved in the Matthew Project held a successful gathering for donors and friends of Urantia Foundation in Midtown Manhattan. The organization and plan of the Matthew Project was presented and questions were answered. In the coming months, supporters will host similar gatherings in key regions around the U.S. in order to introduce a wider circle of supporters to the Matthew Project's vision and goal of ensuring a stable and secure Foundation for the future.

**2003** - Our budget for 2003 was based upon revenue of approximately \$1.3 million from contributions and book sales, but it appears we will have a shortfall. Funds continue to be expended on a variety of programs. During 2003, the English book was printed in India, the Portuguese translation was published on CD-ROM, and eight separate workbook volumes were produced. Through October 2003, we spent over \$80,000 on six different translations, with more than half of that amount for work on the Chinese translation. Our dissemination program funded the IUA for \$20,000, and spent over \$150,000 to print and mail newsletters, respond to reader inquiries, and sponsor websites, an Internet school, international representatives, and the youth program. We continue to place large numbers of gift books for libraries, educational institutions, and those in need, and we heavily subsidize the price of books sold in many parts of the world to make it more affordable. The cost of building upkeep for the historic headquarters at 533 Diversey averages \$70,000 per year.

**2004** - Our 2004 budget is in process as this 2003 annual report goes to press. We expect to be working with lower income levels from both book sales and contributions. We will need contributions of approximately \$1 million in 2004 in order to continue programs at their current levels. We are scrutinizing every expenditure and looking for the most cost-effective ways to carry out our increasing workload as interest in *The Urantia Book* spreads around the world. Approximately 90% of our expenses are incurred for program-related costs.

We are grateful for the efforts of The Northern Trust Company in their ability to invest our funds for the greatest rates of return in conservative **investments**. Our accounts out-perform benchmarks on a regular basis.

We continue to be grateful to all of our **donors** for their ongoing support. You can be assured we do our best to keep our expenses conservative and program-oriented. If you have any questions regarding our financial position, please contact our office.

*The concordant objects for which the Foundation is created are to perpetually preserve inviolate the text of The Urantia Book and to disseminate the principles, teachings, and doctrines of The Urantia Book."  
(from Declaration of Trust Creating Urantia Foundation)*

## CONCLUSION

THE Foundation's work in the areas of publishing, distribution, translations, and text preservation for future generations is tangible and therefore easily envisioned. The social-spiritual work that the *Declaration of Trust* calls us to foster is not so easy to envision. The differing personalities, temperaments, backgrounds, and minds must combine to encompass and coordinate diversity. It is a multi-faceted effort which, in order to succeed, needs to cultivate teachers, leaders, linguists, planners, parents, families, and individuals in a context that provides progressive comprehension of the text, soul growth, spiritual attainment, and service opportunities.

The spiritual, and thereupon the social, moral, economic and political transformation of the world will happen and is happening through people, through the activities of people, people who are serving within the existing and future human institutions, people who are spirit-born, who have a personal religion and trusting relationship with God. A living personal religion generates the desire to serve one's fellow men. To transform the world is to serve.

These objectives can only be accomplished through teamwork and cooperation. We thank all of you who have worked with us and supported our efforts. We invite all reader-believers to join in this journey towards the realization and appreciation by the peoples of the world of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man.

Sincerely,  
The Trustees and Staff of Urantia Foundation

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