

THE MESSENGER



URANTIA.

NEWS FOR STUDENTS OF THE URANTIA BOOK | FALL 2016

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MAKING YOUR STUDY GROUP FUN!

Rick Lyon, UAUS Vice President, Indiana, United States

Sometimes even with the exciting things revealed to us as we study *The Urantia Book*, we can fall into a rut with our study methods. It is good to occasionally introduce some variety into our study time.

The Internet has opened the doors both to access fun things to do in study groups and easy ways to present materials to the group in a fun way. We have a study group every Wednesday night. Actually it is three different groups that all meet on Wednesday. Some people attend all three every Wednesday. Some people attend only a particular one. Susan and I host the fifth Wednesday group using Zoom and we try to make it something fun and different.

We couldn't attend every Wednesday if not for the ability to attend using online video conferencing. The program we use is Zoom but there are several other good ones available. None of them are expensive or difficult to use. After a couple of meetings, even the most novice computer user can participate easily in an online group. The beauty of Zoom is that we can meet with friends from far away places just as if they are in the same room with us. Once a person figures out the microphone and video camera, the rest is easy-peasy. Nothing beats meeting in person but online video conferencing is the next best thing. We will be happy to teach anyone how to use Zoom. Just send us an email at ricklyon@tctc.com to set up a time. In 30 minutes you will be able to host your own meeting or join in like a pro. If you can email, you can Zoom.

Zoom and other online video conferencing tools allow the host or anyone in the group to "share their desktop." This means allowing everyone in the meeting to see what you see on your computer. They cannot get into your computer or see things you don't want to show them during the meeting but they see exactly what you see as if they were looking over your shoulder.

The ability to share your desktop in a meeting allows you to bring the world of the Internet to the group. Did you find a really great music video about God, Jesus, or *The Urantia Book*? With a couple of clicks you can share it with the group to set the tone for your

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meeting. The video can direct your study into a topic for the meeting.

We plan this as part of our Fifth Wednesday study group: opening prayer, music video, then our study topic.

Recently we used the Urantia Trivia game produced by Wally Ziglar. You can simply read the questions and offer the multiple choice answers as people try to answer the questions. Even our most seasoned student of the book found it fun and interesting while the newer readers were able to join in too because of the multiple choice format. We put it in the form of a Jeopardy game and shared it on our desktop with our Zoom group as each person took a turn. We had a great time with that.

Do you like crossword puzzles? Visit <http://truthbook.com/crosswords/> to find several online Urantia crossword puzzles that can also be played online during a video study group.

If you go on You Tube and search for “Urantia” you will find many video secondary works that are wonderful. Richard Jernigan videos are great study tools. They can bring the teachings to life through a video adventure in the holy lands.

Go to the UAI website and find the latest Journal. Open it up and use one of the articles as study material. We don't always have to study the book but we can also study the wonderful works we find published in the *UAI Journal* or *Tidings*, *UAUS Messenger*, Urantia Foundation newsletter, or the Fellowship's *Mighty Messenger*.

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Do a roll play the apostles at the last supper. Find some interesting way to demonstrate something from *The Urantia Book*. Don't be afraid to act like a kid again. Use all the forms of learning that people need – video (see it), audio (hear it), activities (do it).

Over the past few years we have seen an exciting trend from conferences of streaming live video from their presentations. These videos get saved on the Internet for viewing later on. Remember some presentation from the San Antonio conference you want to see again? Go to: <https://youtu.be/Ai5oePepNfk> to see the compelling presentation by Mo Siegel. By sharing it on your desktop in a Zoom meeting you can bring this moment alive again and share it with those who couldn't be there. There are several videos from that conference or our conference in Canada and other events. Go on You Tube and search for “Urantia Foundation Science Symposium 2016.” Remember some dynamic speaker from a Urantia conference? Search for them on the Internet to find their materials and videos.

It only takes your desire to find something and a few clicks on the keyboard to experience it. Here are some of my favorites:

[Part 1] <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ls9fkACcrKk> [Universe Frames]

[Part 2] <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-iA7xRTSS0> [the Personal Universe]

[Part 3] <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sxD2ztzDrT4> [a Family Affair]

JJ Johnson: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R6YpfclONQ0>

You can also use the UAI website to do online searches during your online video study group. Share your desktop, open your Internet browser, go to <http://urantia-association.org>; at the middle left side click on *The Urantia Book* then on “Explore *The Urantia Book*.” Click on “Search” and type in the word you are looking for. This will open up a list of quotes from the book containing your search. Since you are sharing your desktop everyone in the group will see this too. You can then explore these quotes to really dig deep into whatever topic is of interest to the group. Even when not sharing your desktop, you can have this open to refer to during the group. You can have two windows open at the same time – one with the Zoom meeting and one with the UAI search engine open. Doing this lets you look like a true UB scholar as you have the complete text available to you instantly to refer to.

The websites of UAI, Urantia Foundation, Truthbook, and Urantia Book Fellowship offer many great tools for exploring these teachings. You Tube and other online sources provide access to great secondary works in video, audio, or text. We suggest that you get signed up with Zoom, take a few moments to learn to use it, create your own online video study group, post your group information in the Urantia Study Group Directory, <http://urantiastudygroup.org>, explore the UAI website and the UAUS website <http://www.urantiausa.com> (especially the unique “UAUS study hall” and “UAUS Library” found on the media/resources page) and then search the Internet for exciting support material for your study of *The Urantia Book*.

And finally, find a project for your group to do together. This is a great time of the year for doing this - volunteer at homeless shelter; visit a nursing home; take toys to kids in the hospital; host a presentation about *The Urantia Book* at a local book store or library.

Get creative. Use your imagination. Have fun. Get online. Get involved. Do something with this gift you have been given. And it's a lot more fun when you do it as a group.

More on the following page....

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Check out Urantia Association International's Events Calendar at <http://urantia-association.org/events-list> for upcoming events. Urantia Book reader events provide opportunities for students to gain a deeper understanding of the ideas and concepts presented in *The Urantia Book* and help to facilitate a personal commitment to the ideals of spiritual living. We hope you can make it to some of these events and experience the joys of meeting and studying with fellow readers.

Event*	City	Country	Date
Urantia London Day Study Group Meetup	London	UK	January 28, 2017
Urantia Ghana 2017	Accra	Ghana	Feb 10, 2017 - Feb 12, 2017
IC'17 Fellowship International Conference	Denver	Colorado	July 19, 2017 - July 23, 2017
Scientific Symposium V	Kansas City	Kansas	Aug 18, 2017 - Aug 22, 2017
ANZURA Conference Victoria 2017	Hepburn Springs	Australia	Sep 29, 2017 - Oct 2, 2017
2018 Urantia Association International Conference	Noordwijkerhout	The Netherlands	Apr 12, 2018 - Apr 15, 2018

** For more information, click on the above event you're interested in.*

VIRGINIA-CAROLINA READERS MINI-CONFERENCE

Dr. James Perry, President, Virginia/Carolina Readers

The Virginia-Carolina Readers (VCR) association held their one-day annual mini-conference on Saturday, November 5, 2016. The theme was "Life in the Spirit." Dr. Patricia and Dave Pearce hosted a group of 12 participants in their home in Raleigh, NC.

The day-long event included a business meeting, various presentations on aspects of life in the spirit by conference participants, and musical interludes by flutist Dr. Pearce.

Marion Perry disseminated her paper entitled, "Service: The Hallmark of Life in the Spirit." She shared that service is the hallmark of life in the Kingdom of Heaven and noted the necessity of being born again in order to enjoy the values and meanings of this service. She chronicled her efforts to move from life in the flesh to life as it is lived in the spirit. Marion also made note of her service project, "Tokens of Love," a volunteer community program for young children that she has been involved with for many years.

Christopher Ross's presentation, "The Born-Again Experience," revealed his personal insights of what it means to be born again. Christopher shared the remarkable discovery that born-again experiences occur daily when living life in the spirit.

Lee Armstrong led a discussion on "Atheism: The Maximization of Ugliness." He outlined his defense against atheism, noting that only social values are forthcoming from non-believers. He noted that atheists' experiences were devoid of spiritual values, that the graft determined the nature of the fruit.

Sherry Layton chronicled her journey from the bonds of traditional religion to the liberating religion of the spirit in "A Fresh Start: The Born-Again Experience."

Dr. Patricia Pearce's presentation, "The Growth of Values and Meanings: The Construction of the Soul," showed how moral decisions made during progressive experiences are the raw material from which the soul is constructed.

The last presentation was given by Dr. James Perry: "Living the Heavenly Life While on Earth," which outlined the nature of the Kingdom of Heaven, how one enters it, and some difficulties encountered when entering the Kingdom. Dr. Perry also noted some attitudes and spiritual comforts that are a part of living life in the Kingdom.

There were several administrative matters that were considered and resolved. The VCR welcomed two new members: Will Sherwood and his lovely wife Margo Sherwood. Elections for the offices of Vice President and Treasurer were held. The new officers are Will Sherwood and Bobbie Norris, respectively.

Sherry Layton, who helped coordinate the educational program of the historic 2016 Urantia Association of the United States National Conference & Urantia Book Fellowship Summer Study Session, summarized the highlights of this conference. The event, held in San Antonio, Texas, has led to further discussions aimed at bringing the organizations into alignment with their common mission. Dr. Perry expressed the hope that the organizations would become unified and noted that it was somewhat of an embarrassment for organizations to sponsor a Revelation that is destined to transform the world when they themselves are at odds. He noted that a house divided against itself cannot stand.

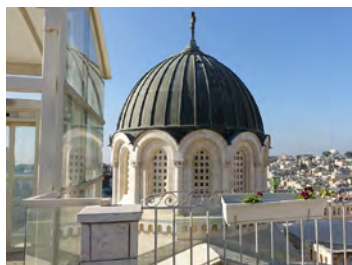


Participants in the 2016 Annual Virginia/Carolina Readers Mini-Conference: 1st row (l-r): Bobbie Norris, Margo Sherwood, Sherry Layton, Ozanne Armstrong, Lee Armstrong, Patty Pearce; 2nd row (l-r): Dave Pearce, Glenn Boyd, Dr. James Perry, Duane Therrien, Ed Zabler, Will Sherwood, Christopher Ross

TUUFF JESUS PILGRIMAGE TO ISRAEL

Marilyn Connor, Anchorage, Alaska

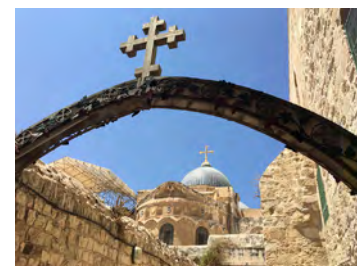
Editor's Note: This tour of the Holy Land was sponsored by The United Urantia Family Festivals and was led by Diane Labrecque.



TUESDAY August 9, 2016. Arrived at Tel Aviv-Yafo Ben Gurion Airport on El Al Airlines and checked in to Ecce Homo Convent in the Jewish Quarter of Old Town Jerusalem. Some had trouble getting into Lions Gate that is at the bottom of Via Dolorosa leading up to Ecce Homo; i.e., one of our first encounters with tensions relating to the geo-political situation here. Many pilgrims from around the world on various quests make Ecco Homo their destination. Going to be a very interesting place to stay.

WEDNESDAY 10 August, 2016. Getting used to Ecce Homo and the frequent Muslim chanting which is broadcast throughout Jerusalem Old City day and night. It is said there are over twenty levels in Ecco Homo Convent if all terraces and floors are counted and the ancient cisterns which lie below the convent are included. Lots of hallways, stairways, entry doors, round-and-about routes. Sometimes we get a bit lost just finding our rooms. As time and our energy permit, we are exploring around Ecce Homo on the ancient and narrow streets paved in cobble stones. On directions from Diane and guided by one of the Sisters, we found the money exchange (today, approximately four shekles to a dollar) just a few blocks away. Our group is assembling from far and near, happy to have reached our destination, rest up, and begin our excursions.

THURSDAY August 11, 2016. We were off early toward Bethlehem in our very modern, air conditioned and WiFi-equipped bus. We first went to the Church of the Nativity and immediately were approached to have a professional group photo taken. Saw the grotto where it's purported that Mary birthed Jesus and the church where Christmas is grandly celebrated every year. Then after lunch, to Shepherds' Field where we read the corresponding selections in our Urantia Book—rather an odd feeling as we are in Muslim territory here. We were “shepherded” into a souvenir shop, then we traveled on to the Tunnels of the Western Wall. A guide took us thru the Warren Passage, an ancient aquifer as evidenced by the smooth, water-polished walls. A big day. At least 30 degrees (86 F).



FRIDAY, 12 August, 2016. Leaving our front door at Ecce Homo we could walk to the entry gates to the Garden and Pool of



Bethesda where Anne, mother of Mary, grew up and Mary lived when young. Grottos and cisterns. Then we embarked on our walk through Via Dolorosa, 14 Stations of the Way of the Cross. Lime/lemon/mint smoothie at one of the stand-stalls. Delicious and welcome in the heat. Then Church of the Holy Sepulcher, purported site of Jesus's burial, a showy venue that Urantia students question. Next, on to Golgotha (the Biblical translation is skull), near a cliff showing skull-like natural indentations. Possibly, this is more authentically the place of Jesus's crucifixion; however, if so, the likely ground would lie under a bus terminal which now occupies the site. On to view the nearby wine press and Garden Tomb, to me, the more real-feeling site of Jesus's burial that well matches clues in the Urantia Papers, i.e., that Jesus was placed into a tomb on property belonging to a person of higher standing and wealth, Joseph of Arimathea. Then to return home

to Ecce Homo. In the afternoon, many of us went to view the Jews celebrating their Shabbat at the Wailing Wall, the Western Wall, only remaining aboveground part of Herod's temple. Afternoon for personal time. SATURDAY, August 13, 2016. Early start today, but only after a quick dash thru small streets to the stone grotto for a delicious espresso by the very accommodating Coffee Man.

Ahhhh . . . We met our bus driver at 9:00 am at the bottom of Via Dolorosa at Lions Gate and were off to the Church of the Ascension atop the Mt. of Olives. It is currently in Muslim-controlled territory and a holy spot for them, although it also has been for the Jews and the Christians for centuries; therein lies the rub; another place of ongoing tension. We all then walked downhill on a very narrow roadway from the Mount of Olives, ending at the Church of Pater Noster where the Lord's Prayer is written on plaques in over 100 languages, signifying that the sentiment here is not to any particular religion. Instead, honor is focused to Jesus, the Lord of all. Pio recited the Lord's Prayer in Korean; Eija in Finnish; Margo found hers in Hungarian; Brigitte's and David's was there in Tahitian, and of course, the Spanish version for our Columbians. Then on to the Garden of Gethsemane. Alongside the Garden, we ate a lunch of fruit and nuts as would have been done 2000 years ago. Next door to the Garden is the fantastically beautiful Basilica of the Agony. We then took our bus to Shepherd's Field where Jesus cried as he gazed over Jerusalem, knowing it soon would be lost and destroyed by the Romans (66 years later). Nearby, is the chapel, Dominus Flevit, aptly translated, Tears of Christ. Beautiful window overlooking Jerusalem. Under the trees we read our UB and expressed words of comfort to Gerry who has received word of his father's Graduation. Meditative and quiet. Very hot . . . 90's.



SUNDAY, August 14, 2016. Leaving after four days at the Ecce Homo Convent today and moving out of Old City to Maison d' Abraham, atop the Mount of Olives. Luggage down to the office at 8:30 am. Everywhere, there are demonstrations and tension is high as it is a Holy Day for both Jews and Muslims. Walking down our Via Dolorosa, we had to move through a bit of a ruckus —a crowd of young Jewish men, being 'directed elsewhere' by the Israeli police. We felt safe enough though Diane said, "Just keep moving!" We then bussed to Muslim-controlled Temple Mount, certainly one of the "Crown Jewels" of Jerusalem. Tremendously significant in both the Jewish and Muslim faiths; thus, the clashes we observed, on this Holy Day as Jews tried to observe their faith there. After Temple Mount, we walked into the City of David, anciently called Zion. Larry mentioned that this is the oldest part of Jerusalem and where Abraham likely knew Melchizedek 4000 years ago. Then we descended thru the dry route of Hezekiah's Tunnel, built to protect ancient Jerusalem's only source of fresh water, Gihon Spring, in times of threat or siege. We eventually emerged near the Pool of Siloam (also known as Shiloah) associated with Jesus healing the blind man.



After dinner, Diane took us to the roof top terrace here at Maison d'Abraham where we gazed over the twinkling lights of Jerusalem. We sang, and folks spoke of their experiences and perceptions of our journeys, so far. Very moving and a beautiful night following a strenuously active day.

MONDAY, August 15, 2016. This is one of the first days we actually were able to follow the original schedule: First, the Israel Museum for a way-too-brief audio tour of the 'History of Civilization' including explanation of the 50:1 exact scale replica of Jerusalem as it was in Jesus's time. Updated as new discoveries are made. Amazing. Then we were seated in the Shrine of the Book which houses the actual Dead Sea Scrolls. Our guide explained about the scrolls and how the Bedouin shepherds found them in wine jugs buried in caves. We saw the famous Nano Chip, the size of a grain of rice, onto which the world's tiniest version of the Hebrew Bible has been digitally entered — rather as a 'challenge,' but now accepted as a well-done example of the power of our technological age. Next, our bus dropped us at Yad Vashem Museum honoring the Jews and all others who were victims of the Arian-ization of Europe under Hitler. Very moving. Somber. Well done.

TUESDAY, August 16, 2016. First, to the fourteenth century renovation of the Upper Room or Cenacle (Coenaculum), site of the Passover Feast, the Last Supper. Was this really the place? ? The narrow passages leading to the Cenacle passed near King David's Tomb and along-side an impressive Statue of David showing the nose broken off so as not to be considered an idol, simply a sculpture. Next, was St. Peter in Gallicantu which had a rather sobering vibe, beautiful doors and beautiful interior. In a nice shady gravel place under trees, we read in our Urantia Book about Peter five times denying Jesus "before the cock crows." (Gallus is both the genus and the species name for chicken. Canto in Latin is to sing.) Then, we spent two aromatic and colorful hours at the huge, bustling Jewish Market —sampling, exploring, mingling.



Next, off to the Gethsemane Grotto where Jesus often met with and where the apostles often slept because it was cooler and "guardable" against the brigands who evidently roamed about. Now contemplate . . . Here or somewhere near here, Judas betrayed Jesus.



Back home to Maison d' Abraham and a free afternoon to read our accumulated cultural literature, consult the Urantia Papers associated with the locales we've visited, nap and think of packing up tonight. . . our last night in Jerusalem. Tonight, back up on the roof we went. David sounded his conch shell and we sang a long Shalooooooommmmm, wishing peace to Jerusalem. Beautiful. Oh, so windy, tho.

WEDNESDAY, August 17, 2016. So, today was amazing. First, we bid farewell to Maison d' Abraham. We blessed a Urantia Book as a gift to the beautiful Sisters there who waved a tearful farewell as our bus pulled out. Then, off to the Dead Sea where most everyone stepped into the super-fine mud and some even floated in the truly dead-feeling, salty waters, eagerly showering off afterward. Next, off to Beit She'an National Park, the ruins of Scythopolis, a major city of the Graeco-Roman Decapolis. Very, very hot, strolling thru the grounds, but so captivating to envision its very long, tortuous past. Excavation reveals that settlement began in the 5th millennium BCE. Competitions such as the chariot races that would have been held on the Scythopolis hippodrome link to roots of the Olympics. Then to Yardenit on the Jordan River where Rev. Michael Perrie and Joy, performed baptism ceremonies for us and for our newly-met strangers, the young Chinese couple who also sincerely wanted to partake in this divine experience. Upon entering the waters, though, we quickly became aware of tiny fish nibbling at our legs and feet, causing more than a few yips and yipes. So after all, while exceedingly meaningful, it was not a totally solemn ceremony. :-)

A tired bunch, we checked into our third and most opulent accommodation, Mount of Beatitudes Guest House overlooking the Sea of Galilee. Several of us strolled the premises after dinner, enjoying each other's company, the stars and a nearly-full moon over the Sea of Galilee. Unforgettable times for us mortals on Urantia.



THURSDAY, August 18, 2016. It is essential to remember how very important this Mount of Beatitudes is. Here, Jesus performed the Ordination of his Disciples, commissioning them as his representatives, "...a class of men separate and distinct from all other men on earth." Basically, this was the start of what came to be the Christian religion. First thing this morning, we read the paper concerning the Ordination. Even in the shade of the trees where we sat, it was very hot. Afterward, there was time to explore the grounds and the Beatitudes Chapel. Everything is beautiful, and it is fitting that popes have visited here. Then, off to the ruins of Sepphoris-Zippori and the Citadel, the Fort of Herod where Joseph, Jesus's father, was injured and died while working on its construction. Afternoon concluded with a visit to the very modern Domus Galilaeae Catholic Monastery. It houses an extensive library, some very ancient and revered Catholic books, and many listening booths where audio of proceedings in different languages can be heard during meetings of religious leaders

from all parts of the world. Impressive. An expansive view of the Sea of Galilee from their outdoor terrace showcases an intricate bronze sculpture of Jesus with the disciples grouped around him.

And tonight, as the very-close-to-full moon rose, we learned that Michael proposed to Joy who said Yes! All are happy. All are thinking about what we will say tomorrow night for the Cosmic Citizen radio program.

FRIDAY, August 19, 2016. This was another great day . . . off to Gineshar Gift Store and Museum. Film about the amazing discovery and reclamation of the Jesus Boat (or Galilee Boat) discovered in 1986 here on the NW shore of the Sea of Galilee. It overwhelms the senses to read the informative plaques and stand near the displayed boat. Were Jesus's hands helping to build this? Next, we were off cruising on the Sea of Galilee in a replica of boats in Jesus's time. One of the boatmen led us in dancing to taped Gospel music. A joyful, sunny, spiritual time for all of us. Our host also demonstrated how fishing nets have always been thrown into the Galilee Sea. No, he caught no fish, but 'might have,' he joked. An amazingly moving and bonding time for our group. Back on shore, a beautiful buffet luncheon was served to us at a large restaurant. Within the afternoon, we visited three churches including the Church of Peter's Primacy (Mensa Christi which translates 'the knowing of Christ') where Peter took Jesus at his word, cast the nets into the Sea and pulled up a bountiful catch; secondly, a Greek Orthodox church; and lastly, an early synagogue. We also saw the remains of Peter's original living quarters, his early church, and a now, the new one, built right atop the old. Most had a free afternoon back at Beatitudes.



A group of four struck out in the hot afternoon, Unsure of our route, but ultimately successful in finding the way now known as the Jesus Trail (Jesus Road) leading from Beatitudes down to the shore of the Sea of Galilee. Eagerly, we made our way through the rocks and into the Sea for a most welcome swim in the clear, cool water. Many Jewish families also were spending their Shabbat Friday afternoon there jet skiing, swimming, picnicking. We traveled a different route back up the hill toward Maison 'd Abraham, passing by a cave — same as noted in the Urantia Papers? Awesome to think about. Finding the Beatitudes gates already closed for the evening, the jubilant-four, high on our adventure, ignominiously scrambled under them and fairly flew directly into the dining hall for a delicious dinner.

SATURDAY, August 20, 2016. So today... First to Cana where we saw lots of reference to the Miracle of the Wine at the Wedding. But, lacking the wine, we visited a sidewalk stand and treated ourselves to a most delicious pomegranate smoothie. Cooling! On to Nazareth, past Mary's Well, and to the Church of the Annunciation where mass was in session: incense, bells, very ornate procession of priests. Here is the commemoration of Mary, called by Gabriel to be Mother to the son of God. Diane arranged with the grounds-



keeper for a special opening of a grotto which is said to be the real, or...? at least, a faithful replica of living quarters as would have been used in the time of Jesus. A guide showed us oil lamps, column capitals etc. of the time. Next up was a walking tour thru a reconstruction of Old Nazareth Village, 'populated' by real people—a shepherd with his sheep, a weaver, and a carpenter. Then we had a true Jewish luncheon meal with each food and its significance explained to us by our host, Daniel, a Messianic Jew—"a Jew who believes Jesus is the Messiah, where most Jews do not believe in Jesus much at all, nor as a prophet, if indeed he even existed," said Daniel. Our bus driver, Elija, obligingly stopped at a wine store on the way back to Beatitudes for those wishing to take home a few bottles of real Cana wine.

At 7:00 pm tonight, we who wanted to, spoke for our Cosmic Citizen live radio broadcast from the library of Beatitudes Monastery. Diane had carefully arranged our real-time event to coincide with regular Saturday Cosmic Citizen morning Urantia Book broadcasts on radio in the USA and beamed around the world. The whole thing was deemed wildly successful! and was admittedly a big sigh of relief for most of us as our five-minute 'speech' was finished.

SUNDAY, August 21, 2016. What an experience! Anyone who is not a reader of *The Urantia Book* won't understand the significance of what transpired for us today. Riding the ski area chair lift, we went to the top Mt. Herman, highest place in all Israel at 10,000 ft. What a view, but we were not there for that — we were celebrating the August 21st Birthday of Jesus. Diane and Gabriel had it beautifully planned to the n-th degree... lunch of fruit, bread, dips, nuts; our UB banner of three concentric circles on a fence in the shade; our signatures on a UB flag which we left, planted on the rocky slopes; Jesus's picture banner; a beautifully decorated cake that Gabriel had arranged with a friend to make for us; Andrea Bocelli singing The Lord's Prayer, so moving that people watching were asking, "What are you doing?" "You're having Christmas?!" Another opportunity to explain something about, or from, our Big Blue Book —on Mt. Herman, Jesus spent six weeks talking with God and Melchizedek and anguishing over the divine, huge and difficult plan which of course, would end in his death, but also, if successful, would forever secure his Universe sovereignty. This was 26 AD and Jesus was 32 years of mortal age. Jesus had hired Tiglath, a young shepherd boy, to bring food and water every two weeks, then gave him his donkey in payment. And the bottom line significance of Mt. Herman is that here Jesus... in material form!... confronted his archenemies, including Caligastia, and took control, forever ending the power of Satan.



Some of us walked on the road, approaching the UN zone dividing Israel and Syria, and overlooking the Golan Heights. There was a group of people queued at the gates, presumably waiting to enter. Who were they? Would the soldiers there admit them or not? A rather benign scene, but truly it is not. Nearby, there was a memorial to those fallen in all the wars of the region, of which there have been waaaaay too many. After dinner back at Beatitudes, an impromptu gathering in the library ensued, and many spoke about what this trip has meant to each of us — heartfelt, and a great climax to our pilgrimage, much less to this special day, Jesus's two thousand and twenty second birthday. And again, we have the big, orange full moon rising over our Sea of Galilee. How grateful we are to be here, now! Mortals traveling in Jesus's foot steps.

MONDAY, August 22, 2016. We awoke to an unforgettable sunrise across the Sea of Galilee waters! Then, off we drove, away from Beatitudes for the last time. Such a meaningful, beautiful and comfortable place. Our goal today was to bus quite a distance to Haifa which, along with the city of Acre is the spiritual heart of the Baha'i Faith, and the Baha'i World Center (also a World Heritage Site). Our guide ushered us down the 700 steps of the Terraces of the Bab (the Baha'i's second-most-holy prophet) explaining all the significances along the way. Unfortunately, the actual shrine was not open. At various vistas, we got our first glimpse of the Mediterranean Sea. On we went to Caesarea, the grand palace, city and port built by Herod the Great. Caesarea had a very turbulent history under many ruling factions, but eventually was destroyed by earthquake.



Next, we are into the big city of Tel Aviv. Bidding good-bye to our fine driver, Elija, we checked in at our last accommodation, Crown Sea Apartments... and Golden Beach Hotel. Some had a quick dip in the Mediterranean before our last full-group dinner at Landwers Restaurant on the Promenade overlooking the beach. As the giant, golden sun dipped into the sea, David and Brigitte sang their Far Away Song several times in farewell to those who are leaving tonight or tomorrow. So moving and beautiful a time it was that we had regular folks who were eating their dinner near by, wondering who we were and crying with us at the sincere love issuing from our now-bonded group.

TUESDAY August 23, 2016. A great day to wake up in Tel Aviv. Some walked the shoreline and road to Jaffa; some went into the Mediterranean Sea (again with tiny and not-so-tiny fish nipping at our legs) for another dip. Then, by tonight, most everyone had flown on toward home with memories a-plenty. All in all, our TUFF Israel Pilgrimage 2016 has been a most life-altering trip. We gained deepened spiritual understanding and friendships that will last through eternity. Many trips unfold toward preconceived notions, but hearing from my fellow pilgrims and speaking for myself, it's safe to say, this one far exceeded any expectations.



FAREWELL TO CATHY JONES

Reprinted from "Tidings" Newsletter



Cathy Jones graduated from this world on September 17, 2016 at the age of 91. Cathy was loved and respected by many students of *The Urantia Book* all over the world. She played a prominent role in helping to build Urantia Association International and worked tirelessly for the revelation. She served as the Association's first Executive Administrator and established this newsletter, *Tidings* to keep us in touch with news and events of Urantia associations across the globe.

The memorial ceremony was held October 10. On behalf of Urantia Association and in honor of Cathy's dedication to the revelation, Rick Jones presented Cathy's granddaughter and grandson with the Amadon Award.

In the words of Cathy's granddaughter Casey:

My grandmother and I shared a very special relationship. More than anything she was my best friend. She taught me many things throughout my life but most importantly how to love unconditionally. I would like everyone to know that she truly believed we were all created equally and that no man should judge another,

yet embrace and love each other. In her very last journal entry she wrote . . . "you are born and then you die and all you should do in-between is love."

The following testimonies show what an inspiration Cathy was to so many students of *The Urantia Book*; starting with Patricia Snyder who was a close personal friend — one who championed her during the trying times of her illness in her final months and helped to raise the funds needed to bring Cathy home from China so she could pass peacefully with her family by her side.

Patricia Snyder, Marina del Rey, California, USA

My heart sings and cries to inform you that Cathy passed last weekend. Casey, her granddaughter was with her, holding her hand. Casey said, it was a beautiful transition. With a singing and crying heart, I said, how could it have been any different with our Cathy. Thank you all for your support, prayers and good vibes throughout our Cathy's intense trials to get home. Her real journey has started. Let's hear it for Agondonters!!

Gaetan Charland, Quebec, Canada

I met Cathy Jones for the first time in the fall of 1999 during a celebration meeting for my local association in Quebec, Canada. Since that time, Cathy has been part of my life, as a friend and as a mentor. Cathy was always the first one to volunteer when a task had to be done, no matter how big, small or important it was. This for me was the mark of a true leader and servant. As the first President of Urantia Association International, Cathy was my mentor during many years. She then served as the Executive Administrator and she was ever the generous contributor of her time and experience as co-founder of the Association.

What I remember of Cathy's personality is her good nature, patience, generosity and stalwart integrity to the mission of *The Urantia Book* and its teachings. There is no doubt in my mind that her spirit of service will continue to be an example to many of us as we journey onward in our life.

I look forward to the time when I will meet and work with her again in the next world of our new life.



Chris Wood, President of Urantia Association International

Cathy Jones put you to work. In the Ordination of the Twelve we are told: *The carpenter's son never taught character building; he taught character growth.* . . . [Paper 140:8.27, page 1583.1]

Cathy urged you to grow, she put you in the position where you could choose positive action, and she defended you in your mistakes as grand moments for learning and personal evolution.

The first time I met Cathy, she put me to work identifying regional leaders and building a local community in my home city. The second time we met she sat me down for a few hours of folding letters, addressing envelopes, and taking them to the post. 18 years later, just a few months ago, I spoke with her for the last time and she laid out plans for synchronizing local and regional conferences throughout the United States. She was always leading.

Study *The Urantia Book*, Love One Another, Get to Work. I am one of many people throughout the world who Cathy guided into leadership. She changed my life. It was an honor to serve with Cathy Jones.



Rick Lyon, Vice President, UAUS, Indiana, USA

Cathy was one of the driving forces in the creation of Urantia Association International. She spent many hours on the phone and many days traveling to help students of *The Urantia Book* set up most of our local associations. We have several file cabinets of correspondence that she wrote in her efforts to create and lead the Association. She spent many days away from home living in Chicago at 533 working tirelessly for this revelation and this organization. She was a great teacher and leader of this revelation and her love for people encompassed everyone she met. She not only believed these teachings but she lived them. She had great faith in and hope for our Association and for all of us.

Carlos Runinsky, Buenos Aires, Argentina

I can say that Cathy Jones is my sister for ever. I have her in my soul. Since I first met her I felt we were family. Since that day, around 15 years ago, I keep a place in my heart that belongs to her. She showed me her love and her irrevocable belief in *The Urantia Book*, as well as her commitment to building an organization of readers and students of the Revelation. She came to South America not knowing the language nor the readers, but with the mission of helping to create a Urantia Association. This happened at the first Conference of readers taking place in Santiago de Chile, where I flew from Buenos Aires. And the task was accomplished; the Urantia Association of the Southern Cone was born. But although this chapter of the Association didn't last long, it provided the foundations for the creation of different Associations in those countries whose readers tried to work together. On that day she designated the officers of the first board, and I became its Vice President. She chose me as a leader for no reason, but by doing so I felt I was obliged to act according to her expectations, and I've been involved with the Urantia movement since that day, mainly because of her. She has always been an inspiration for all who had the lucky chance of meeting her.

I've been trying to recall some of our conversations and I remember asking and receiving her wise advice many times. The most vivid impression is the loving feeling that comes to my conscious when I think of Cathy. She is a big loving soul that shows us the way of how to be a child of God...

Hope to see you again soon dear Cathy, (not too soon though :-)) Enjoy your new residence. Many of us will miss your physical presence, the special sound of your voice, but you remain in our minds and in our hearts. I love you always dear Sister!! Thanks for everything!!

Marian Hughes, Hawaii, USA

I had the privilege of calling Cathy a friend, mentor and sister. This morning I felt that her angels raised up their wings to transport her beautiful soul to Mansion World number one. Cathy worked tirelessly with her Rolodex in her office at the Foundation to build the new readership organization. She single handily called us and gathered the scattered flock together to form Urantia Association International. She then started to travel the USA and the world, licensing many different associations and fostering leaders and teachers to carry on the mission. What a service minded trooper she was and so beloved by so many of us.

So let us all rejoice in the fact that she will soon have her new beautiful morontia form and we will someday be reunited with our dear sister. Let us rejoice that thanks to her friends and family she will have her earthly grave stone close to her home that was so important to her. Let us all keep on with what she so gallantly started and continue to make Urantia Association International the wonderful worldwide organization it has developed into.

In memory of Cathy I will be making donations to both Urantia Association of the United States (UAUS) and Urantia Association International (UAI) and hope many of you will also join me in doing that, for that is truly what she would like us to do as we think of the work she has done.



David Linthicum, Tulsa, Oklahoma, USA

I first met Cathy at the chartering ceremony for Spirit of Oklahoma in 1997. Over the years she was my mentor and friend, always willing to offer sage advice, support and, above all, words of encouragement that helped me to weather storms along the way. Once, when I was feeling rather down, she told me, in that way she had, to perk up, be patient, keep a long view in mind, do the work, build the basics today and have faith that those that follow will take it from there. I have carried that message with me ever since, and it has served me well. Cathy was the embodiment of loving service and unselfish devotion to the Revelation. She is much loved and will be sorely missed.

Caio Mario Caffé Nascimento, Brazil

Cathy left to us a legacy of successful achievements that certainly help to foster the spiritual progress of humanity. To mention just two: the Urantia Association International, and the Urantia Associations that she founded in several countries of the world. She

was endowed with a brilliant personality, a steady character, a determined mind, and a pleasant friendly smile. Charismatic, yes, with a hard and beautiful task to fulfill. And she did it. How elated we Brazilian students of *The Urantia Book* were in June 2003, when she handed us the Licensing Agreement between the Urantia Foundation and the Urantia Association of Brazil together with the President book and the flag with three azure blue concentric circles on a white background. . . . The Brazilian Association took its roots and flourished. Cathy was one of those magnificent women who carry the torch of the spiritual progress of humanity — a faithful server, a planetary heroine. God bless your soul and thanks for your accomplished mission and thanks also for the memories.

Gary Rawlings, Wales, UK

I would like to pay my respects and tributes to Catherine Jones who has now departed from Urantia and graduated to the Mansion Worlds. She was my mentor and under her guidance I was able to serve two terms having taken over from her in the position of Membership Chair from 2005 to 2015 for and on behalf of the Association to whom she was a founding member of the organization. With her visionary ability and exceptional personality, Catherine shone in so many ways, and I, like many others, will miss her dearly. Thank you for going all those many extra miles.

With Catherine in mind, let us all try to remember that: *The weak indulge in resolutions, but the strong act. Life is but a day's work — do it well. The act is ours; the consequences God's.* [Paper, 48:7.13 11, page 556.13]

Carl Ramm, Alaska, USA



While I'd met Cathy briefly at conferences and had exchanged a few emails and phone calls with her, I really didn't get to know her until she stayed a while with me and my wife Susan. At the time Cathy was in Alaska as part of an effort to help get a state chapter started. Susan and I were living in a tiny, funky old cabin near the end of a back street in a rather questionable part of Anchorage. Cathy never gave the slightest hint of being bothered by any of this. At a time in her life when many people would never consider such a thing, Cathy couch-surfed with near-strangers as casually and simply as if she was twenty three. . . . She was the soul of graciousness — a delight to be around.

Benet Rutenberg, USA

Cathy has been and remains an inspiration to me. She caused many of us to up our game in service to the revelation. She was both gracious and full of grace. Her smile brought peace and joy to all who were blessed by her company. It is soothing to know that she passed in and up beautifully yet as she lived. We will all miss her but only for a time. It should bring calm and hope to all of us that we will sometime be welcomed by so many of our friends and family on the shores of that not so distant tomorrow.

Alain Cyr, Quebec, Canada

Dear Cathy, if you have risen on the third day, which is my belief, hopefully you will be made aware of my thoughts and appreciation in regard to you even before I pass on to the Morontia worlds and this hope gives me the thrill and enthusiasm of seeing you again in a time where maybe we can jointly participate in some adventure. Thank you for your great work with us in Canada and for the ensemble of the Urantia community. I wish you a superb continuity, a rejuvenated retreat with ongoing projects on the morontia spheres.

Nathen Jansen, President, Urantia Association of Canada (UAC)

On behalf of UAC, we have so many wonderful thoughts of Cathy Jones:

It was back in the 1990s that we became associated with Cathy when she was extensively traveling the world establishing Urantia Associations. In the latter part of that decade, the first Canadian local Urantia Association was formed, Urantia Association of Quebec, followed shortly thereafter with Urantia Association of The Cascades, British Columbia/Alberta. This event took place on the west coast of Canada at a retreat on Bowen Island where many of the Vancouver and area study group members were gathered for the signing of the Urantia Association of The Cascades. They enjoyed meeting and getting to know Cathy's caring and likable personality as she was easy to communicate with and we enjoyed being in her presence.

Cathy was also seriously committed to establishing the National Urantia Association of Canada, subsequently inaugurated at the Silver Springs Retreat Centre in Ontario, in attendance with the local Northern Light Urantia Association of Ontario. At this memorable gathering and along with her untiring passion for the Association, we all had a lovely time furthering our friendship with Cathy at Silver Springs.



We also have many treasured and fond memories of the times when Cathy was visiting us again on the West Coast of Canada and while helping the local Urantia Association of The Cascades with their joint participation in the IC99 Fellowship Conference in

Vancouver, BC. She was a great inspiration for the membership of the local Urantia Association at this conference. She always was found to be working for the greater good of group cooperation where the sincere truth mattered.

Our prayers are with Cathy as she continues the never-ending journey underway for her in Christ Michael's many mansions.

Enrique Traver, Brazil

I never met Cathy Jones, but I am convinced from all I've heard about her, that she made a major difference by assisting our brothers and sisters in setting up the Urantia Associations around the world. According to Rogeriro Silva, the second President of the Urantia Association in Brazil, she was there with Gaetan and others to initiate our Association in Brazil in 2004. Rogério told us that he remembers her very well. Her sympathy and dedication to Urantia Book readers was contagious and she played a significant role in helping us to overcome the unknown. Rogério said that her presence on that occasion made all difference to his performance as Director and later as President of the Association in Brazil, much more marked on that day by her presence than all others. We will miss her, but she is certainly one more friend to meet again in our next journey.

James Woodward, California, USA

I first met Cathy Jones in the early nineties when she'd visit the Ploetz home, a center of Urantia Book activities in Southern California. Those memories are vivid, meeting new friends who were active in Urantia service. Cathy stood out—a dynamic person—and very determined to expand the fraternal group she had helped create.

Cathy was charismatic and it has varied roots, including her Texas heritage; she was independent and loyal to her values. She was also gifted with formidable courage and loads of faith. Later, as a colleague, I would discover that her work ethic was established and strong. Most people do not know that she was also a yogi. For many years she practiced Kundalini yoga, an apex practice of spiritual meditation and breathing. These disciplines and loyalties produced in Cathy what we acknowledge as true leadership. Plus, it was always tethered to graciousness—that ready smile, a hearty laugh, and the warmth of a love-saturated soul.

Cathy and I began working closely at Urantia Foundation in the year 2000. She would spend months living at 533 in Chicago, leading and organizing from her small office. We worked together on many projects, some local and some stretching all over the world. As one of the few who knew her actual age, it always amazed me when she energetically planned another working trip to South America or Russia, or anywhere else where readers were organizing for service. She was always on fire with the truth of *The Urantia Book*, with the selfless motive to share its story of how much we are loved by God and guided by all the spirit ministries in our friendly universe.

Early in 2005, Cathy told me that we needed an informative and inspiring newsletter. She believed in the effectiveness of personal communication but said we had to expand our efforts and share the "good tidings from Associations around Urantia." After prayer and reflection she said it was going to be called "Tidings" and she asked for my help. Along with a team of talented volunteers we produced the first issue of *Tidings* in June of that year. It remains an honor to contribute to Cathy's legacy publication.



The best leaders always mentor those who are ready and willing to serve. Cathy was a mentor to so many of us, and she was much more: a loving friend. It was a momentous day when she called and said she had decided to retire. Such news I had been expecting but not her next words. She asked me to consider taking the job, that I was her first choice to be the next Executive Administrator of Urantia Association. That was classic Cathy: point to an important task, offer her full confidence, and then charmingly imply that declining wasn't really an option! It was effective (and very humbling) and led me to new levels of service in this great organization. I am indebted to Cathy Jones in many ways and continue to be inspired by her. Those of you who share the same sentiments should seize every opportunity to grow in servant leadership. We honor Catherine by acting on our moral duty of cosmic citizenship.



DALLAS, TEXAS JESUS BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

Katrina Glavan-Heise, President Lone Star Urantia Association, San Antonio, Texas, United States

Another Lone Star study group met for a Jesus Birthday Celebration. Richard Jernigan reports, "We met Sunday afternoon of August 21, 2016 at Bobby Lane's Performance Center, a space he graciously provides for our monthly "Second Sunday" services. Nancy Christopher led a remembrance supper with a reading of David Glass's poem "The Master's Call," readings about Jesus' heavenly pre-existence, and his birth. The readings inspired much sharing and lively discussion around Jesus' effect in our personal lives. We followed our meeting with a meal at a nearby restaurant with more fellowshiping. Lisa Lane supplied a Jesus birthday cake with a creamy concentric circles frosting."



Dallas Texas Jesus birthday celebration: *Top left to right:* Kaye and Bill Cooper; Ken Ingle, Bobby Lane (kinda bidden), Nancy Christopher; Rod Holland. **Bottom:** Lisa Lane, Sarah Maxwell, Suzanne Atkinson, Richard Jernigan.

JARRELL, TEXAS JESUS BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

Katrina Glavan-Heise, President Lone Star Urantia Association, San Antonio, Texas, United States

Mary Huggins' hosted her annual Jesus Birthday Celebration in Jarrell TX. They had a fabulous pot luck celebration of our Local Universe Father and Mother. Attendees not only brought a side dish or dessert, but some contributed to the celebration through music, poetry and prose. The day was completed with readings about the birth of Jesus. It was a great gathering of the Austin area Urantia Book students



Jarrell, Texas Jesus birthday celebration: *Top left to right:* Michael Dentler, Bruce Brown, Joe Atkinson, Ted Lanier, Nickla Heudier, Mike Clark, Sean Yglesias, Patrick Yglesias, **Bottom:** Sharon Lanier, Eileen Haisler, Pamala Cardinale, Mary Huggins, Jean-Pierre Heudier.

JESUS BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

Katrina Glavan-Heise, President Lone Star Urantia Association, San Antonio, Texas, United States

The San Antonio Study Group held a pot luck luncheon in celebration of Jesus' birthday. Readings were taken from Paper 122, Birth and Infancy of Jesus, with lively discussions all afternoon. In attendance were Pat Long and her daughter, Cindy; Jim Barry; Michelle Varela and her boyfriend Michael; Alfonso Garcia and his wife Consuela; and Katrina Heise and her husband Keith. It was a blessing and a great opportunity for friends to come together, celebrate and worship our Father Christ Michael.



UAUS AND FELLOWSHIP MEETING UPDATE

Rick Lyon, Vice President UAUS, Indiana, United States



On October 3-5, 2016, representatives from the Association and the Fellowship met in Chicago to consider organizational unity. An atmosphere of goodwill prevailed throughout our time together. All of us wholeheartedly agreed that we desire unity. A unity proposal was drafted and will shortly be submitted to both organizations. Further information will be shared as available.

We thank Urantia Foundation for hosting our unity meeting. As always we felt so welcome, well fed, and looked after in mind, body and spirit. And finally, our heartfelt appreciation goes to all for your prayers and support.

Here is a video that we used in our unity meeting. We not only discussed unity among our organizations but also the future of our organization(s). We all have noticed that the world is changing and changing fast. The Internet is a disruptive event much like the printing press was in its day. How can we position ourselves to serve the spiritual needs of this world in the future when we are not even sure of what that future will look like? We tried to address this question in our meeting. May I suggest that you watch this video and see what your reaction is and ask how does it relate to the our future activities? This was presented to the group by Chris Wood.

The Ted Talk we watched is on the following page:



Institutions vs. Collaboration: In this prescient 2005 talk, Clay Shirky shows how closed groups and companies will give way to looser networks where small contributors have big roles and fluid cooperation replaces rigid planning.

May I also say that I am relying upon you to share all this information with the members and friends of your local association. UAUS has no tool to reach all our members from the national board. ***So, it is up to you to inform your members*** about what is going on. Please keep them informed so that as we progress through this process - wherever it may lead - everyone will be included in the conversation and decision making.

If you have any leadership or organizational videos or material you think will help up plan for the future, plan for unity, or find ways to serve more efficiently and effectively in the future please share them using this group email.

HELPFUL LINKS:

Urantia Association of the United States (UAUS) website. There are photos, UB inspired music, art reviews, and other info germane to UAI members and students of the Book in the United States of America: <http://urantiausa.com/>

Urantia Association USA's Facebook page. If you "Like" the page, news postings will show up in your Facebook news feed: <http://facebook.com/urantiausa/>

Membership information for Urantia Association of the United States: <http://bit.ly/1J3hvhV>

Urantia Association International's website. Here you will find the Charter and Bylaws, also UAI projects involving study and dissemination, event information, membership requirements, applications, and many, many other items of interest to members: <http://urantia-association.org/>

Membership in Urantia Association International. The application and instructions: <http://bit.ly/1Is0cAe>

The Urantia Foundation website: <http://urantia.org/>

The Urantia Book online. Visit Urantia Foundation's News Online: <http://bit.ly/1luKtyN>

The Journal, Urantia Association's "scholarly" publication, is available electronically free of charge at <http://urantia-association.org/publications/uai-journal/journal-archives/>.

To receive hard copies of The Journal, you may subscribe to *The Journal* at these rates: Annual \$20 US, \$28 Australian, \$28 Canadian, or 18 (Euros). Single Copies \$5 US, \$7 Australian, \$7 Canadian, or 4.50 (Euros). Other foreign language edition rates will be equal to \$20 US for subscription or \$5 US for a single issue in local currency according to international exchange rates at the time of subscription. Funds should be sent to Urantia Association International (USA) and must be in US dollars.

Tidings newsletter, from Associations around Urantia, is a semi-monthly newsletter published by: Urantia Association International. New and seasoned readers are encouraged to send material for publication on any of the following topics: 1. How *The Urantia Book* Found Me, 2. Special projects such as Book Fairs, Library Placement, and Outreach, 3. New or established study groups — How you got started — What keeps you going? 4. Your annual meeting, picnic or just getting together. You can read current and back issues here: <http://urantia-association.org/publications/tidings-newsletter/tidings-archives/>

QUOTE OF THE QUARTER:

We incline to the belief that the eternal future will witness phenomena of universe evolution which will far transcend all that the eternal past has experienced. And we anticipate such tremendous adventures, even as you should, with keen relish and ever-beightening expectation. <https://goo.gl/SpOCTv>

ABOUT THE MESSENGER

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Please send articles and submissions to Will Sherwood: owsherwood@gmail.com

If you would like to receive The Messenger by email, click on this link: <http://bit.ly/1hF4tj3>



THE URANTIA BOOK FELLOWSHIP'S INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2017

'SPREADING OUR WINGS' PROGRESSING TOWARDS LIGHT AND LIFE

The University of Denver, July 19 – 23, 2017

Join us for a 5-day Urantia Conference that includes all the things you've come to love about the Fellowship's International Conferences, as well as special events that showcase Interfaith and the good works happening globally in businesses, education and the Emergent spiritual community. The conference will also offer two privately produced public speaking and music events on Friday and Saturday nights that are sold separately. (Conference attendees get a 50% discount!)