Dear Society Representatives,

Let me thank Geoff and the Executive Committee for scheduling this meeting. Geoff asked for feedback, so are some thoughts from First Society.

I am writing both as a representative of the First Society for Readers of *The Urantia Book* and also as an individual who has been interested in societal affairs since the 1970s.

We are appreciative of what this meeting might accomplish, but we would like everyone to consider a few factors:

We have three hours at our meeting. I hope that we can all plan our six minutes for our societal summaries and stick to them so that we all get a chance to tell us about our societies and profit from the accomplishments and struggles of each other.

I was president of First Urantia Society when we created and hosted the first Society Conclave in 1981. There have been nearly 20 since then. I’ve always enjoyed the camaraderie of the Conclaves that I have attended since then because societies at Conclaves meet for the purpose of supporting each other, of learning from each other, of getting energy and enthusiasm: in short, Conclaves are not focused on each group’s part of the central organization nor of our portions of or contributions to the Fellowship, but rather on how each can be a local rendition of the objectives of the Fellowship. At our best we each are communities to share the teachings of *The Urantia Book.*

Consequently, as helpful as our meeting with the Executive Committee may be, we hope we can maintain the tradition of Society Conclaves that meet to support each other without consideration for how we relate to the central organization. A few years ago, the Executive Committee passed a resolution that the Society Conclaves would be held before each Summer Study Session that was not during a TDA year; we did this in 2019 and will do one in 2022. These have been under the various sponsorships of the Membership, Education, and Outreach Committees. We would propose that during that year of Society Conclaves, the Executive Committee does not hold a formal joint meeting with societies so that oversaturation does not do away with Society Conclaves. We would also suggest that the EC/Society meetings do not use the word “Conclave” in order to avoid confusion with the 40-year tradition of the Society Conclaves.

**First Society appreciates the suggestions of the Golden Gate Society.**

We agree with the suggestion of the focus on global outreach efforts. We believe that that includes the societies of the United States and that a healthy American Urantia community will help for this to happen.

We support the idea of distributing books, and we feel that strengthening the connections among people who have them is where our efforts must be. During our Fellowship history, making books available has been what we have done best; we have not focused on getting people who have books to read them and to connect with each other and become part of the Urantia communities. Again, this is where societies can be used effectively, especially with organizational support.

We are interested in hearing how we can support an expansion of family life in our community.

We support the productive use of technologies and the effort to support cultures that need support in these technologies. First Society has established a “sister study group relationship” with the Urantia groups in the Philippines and contributed to their acquiring of such technology. However, despite our appreciation for Zoom and how it has helped keep the study groups we support to flourish, we still feel that even the best technology will be better served with healthy local communities, and that without them, the Urantia community will founder.

We know of Golden Gate’s aversion to the idea of the establishment of a new headquarters. To be transparent, I was the author of both the “Rationale” document and of the resolution putting it in Chicago that was passed by the General Council, though it should be acknowledged that we are several steps from that happening and that it is not a certain thing. I hope that the members of the letter from Golden State can respect that other members of the ad hoc Location Committee and I did so with sincerity. Furthermore, when the EC voted to close the headquarters several years ago, many people in the Fellowship did not support that decision, and the readership and local groups were not consulted.

We support the proposal to “Commit to an ethical investment strategy, divesting shares in companies that create wealth to the detriment of the environment.”

We also support the idea to “Create a speaker’s bureau.” **However,** the Education Committee has already begun this project, though the committee does not use that title and visits groups with workshops, not speeches. Over the past few years, members of the Education Committee has presented nearly a dozen times at local conferences, society seminars, and study groups in several different states. The offer to visit groups has been publicized on SocAdmin, at summer study sessions, and in periodicals. Other such events were canceled because of the pandemic. A seminar to prepare and expand the number of people who can represent the committee has been planned and postponed until we can approach the time when personal visits will start again.

At First Society we look forward to learning from our society fellowship.

With respect,

David Kulieke,

President First Society for Readers of *The Urantia Book,*

In representation of leadership of First Society

Chair, Fellowship Education Committee