



# Tidings

FROM ASSOCIATIONS AROUND URANTIA

URANTIA ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL | [HTTP://URANTIA-UAI.ORG](http://urantia-uai.org)

Nº 18 ■ NOVEMBER 2006

"Passengers" oil on window, painting by M. Caoile



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# President's Message

Dear Friends of UAI,

IT IS WITH MUCH hope and anticipation for the progress of our mission that I bring you this very important news. During the last weekend, some representatives of the International Service Board and Urantia Association International were invited to attend a meeting with the Trustees of Urantia Foundation in Chicago, Illinois, USA. Many people were present for this momentous occasion: regular Trustees, Seppo Kanerva, Georges Michelson Dupont, Richard Keeler, Mo Siegel and Gard Jamieson, Trustees Emeritus, Neal Waldrop and Associate Trustees Nancy Shaffer, Jane Ploetz, Sue Tennant, anonymous trustee and Jay Peregrine, Executive Director, Urantia Foundation. The UAI was represented by Gaetan Charland, President, UAI, Eddie King, Conference Chair, UAI and James Woodward, Executive Administrator, UAI, and from Spain, Olga Lopez, President of the Spanish Urantia Association.

The UAI representatives were warmly welcomed by the representatives of the Foundation and we were told by their president, Seppo Kanerva, that they were speaking from one mind, they have reached a consensus in their decision. In his first declaration he said, "to paraphrase the saying of one of our members, said plainly "The war is over," in reference to the conflict between the Foundation and the Fellowship. He went on to explain that one of the reasons for which UAI had been created, to support the Foundation in times of crisis, was no more. He then proceeded by acknowledging and giving thanks to UAI and all its members for their loyal support to the Foundation during its battle for the copyright. He clearly and plainly emphasized that the role of UAI as defender of the Foundation was no longer necessary. Urantia Foundation could now deal and solve its work of



licensing and copyright matters by itself.

After this momentous declaration, the other trustees were invited to share with us their view on this decision. We could clearly see that they were really all of one mind. They all urged us to move along on our mission to disseminate the teachings of *The Urantia Book*. They did not in any way ask us to engage in any activities that would promote organizational unity between us and the Fellowship but urged us to make peace like they did for the benefit of the Revelation. They understand very well that unity of purpose is very different from organizational unity.

We were then invited to make comments or ask questions. One of us, Eddie King from the USA, addressed the issues that were at the heart of the conflict between the Foundation and the Fellowship. We were told that those issues were the affair of the Foundation and that they should not in any way distract us from our mission. The Trustees realize that the ongoing conflict was endangering the mission of the Revelation and that it was time to lay those issues aside and move forward. A similar meeting happened between the Fellowship and the Foundation last August and many changes will come from those meetings.

Those actions do not in any way contradict or interfere with the resolution that was passed by the Representative Council concerning cooperation with other organizations. When we asked the Foundation about the referrals of new readers, we were told that it would stay as it is now. As for the licensing agreement, we were told that they have not yet finished its rewriting and we should not worry about it. The Trustees have promised to do everything they can to help us in our mission to train leaders and teachers and they have already made the intent to create a committee that will meet next

## TIDINGS

from associations around Urantia

Tidings is a monthly publication of Urantia Association International, whose mission is to foster study of *The Urantia Book* and to disseminate its teachings. UAI supports Urantia Foundation.

The Urantia Book online:

<http://www.urantia.org/papers/index.html>

You may submit articles about *The Urantia Book*, news about your association, stories, photos and poems to the editor. All articles are subject to revision.

**Submissions limited to 700 words (1 page) or 1000 words (1½ page) plus 1 or 2 photos. Deadline: By the 15th of every month**

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Tidings archives:

<http://urantia-uai.org/tidings/index.htm>

January in Chicago to start a project for training leaders and teachers.

I know that such a decision from the Foundation is necessary for the success of our mission and I urge all members to see it that way. I also know how some of our brothers and sisters from the USA might feel about this and I say to them, thank you for all you have done in the past, you have been steadfast in your loyalty to the Foundation and it will always be remembered as such. Now is the time for you to continue the battle to bring light to this darkened world, to fight and to win the great battle of truth, alongside your brothers and sister from the rest of the world.

I ask every one of you to share this message with your friends from the Urantia movement and encourage them to keep supporting the Foundation in all its projects. This does not change our status with the Foundation; we still enjoy an interdependent relationship.

Continued on page 3

# Getting to Know the Trustees: Richard Keeler

Trustee, Urantia Foundation  
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**T**HE YEAR WAS 1959. Elvis was King. The guys wore blue-suede shoes and sported flattop haircuts or wore their hair in ducktails. The girls wore ponytails and poodle shirts, and after football and basketball games, we went to sock hops.

I was a freshman at the University of Kansas and had an odd, guitar-picking friend from western Kansas, who would ramble on about God, infinity, eternity, and time and space.

One night in the freshman dormitory (the room in which about 20 of us slept) my friend remarked that the way electrons orbit the nucleus of an atom is



similar to the way planets orbit the sun in the solar system. He said, "Doesn't that suggest that both were designed by the same cosmic mind?" I was intrigued. He said that he had a book I might be interested in.

I remember my sense of amazement and awe when I first opened *The Urantia Book*, a huge tome that was bigger than any of my college textbooks. My friend was present, and he showed me some of the topics the book explored. My fascination was immediate. I soon thereafter bought my own copy and read it from beginning to end, sometimes for as long as six or seven hours at a sitting. This began for me a scientific, philosophic, and spiritual journey that still thrills me today as much as it did 47 years ago.

To this day, I still have my original book with its multitudinous notes and polychromatic markings. My book exudes the fragrance of a thousand study groups and conferences. Recently I came into possession of a pristine copy of a 1955, first-printing book, and my emotions were stirred as they were in 1959. There is no greater adventure for a truth seeker than finding truth.

Reflecting on those days is like going home. When I go back to my home town

of Bartlesville, Oklahoma, when I drive down those old familiar streets, when I pull up in front of the house in which I grew up -- the house that my grandmother built and the house to which I returned for so many years, and at which I was greeted at the front door by the shining presence of my mother until she died in 1992 -- the memories that flood over me are like my thoughts when I open my old, original, first-edition *Urantia Book*.

I feel a similar nostalgia when I visit Tennessee Street at Kansas University and remember discovering *The Urantia Book* and buying my first copy. It was the book that I had in my hand when in 1962 I first walked into, and met the folks at, 533 Diversey Parkway in Chicago. *The Urantia Book* will ever be my most valued and precious material possession. Needless to say, the book is not to be worshiped but studied. It is not an end in itself but a means to an end, which is the worship of God and the love of mankind.

*The Urantia Book* is a knothole in the fence through which we get a glimpse at the playing field of eternity.

You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink. But you can make him really thirsty. You can feed him salty oats. The book is like salty oats. It can make people thirsty -- thirsty for a personal, private, and powerful relationship with God.

*The Urantia Book* is the greatest book ever written. □

## President's message

*continued from page 2*

As for other news, the resolution for the Public UAI Forum (internet discussion list) is in front of the Representative Council right now. The resolution for Associate Member-at-large should find its conclusion this month. The budget will also be presented along with a request to approve the Charter and By-laws under our new registration as UAI, replacing UBA. The RC will be quite busy in November.

As for the International Service Board, the end of October is the time to meet for our second meeting concerning the Strategic Plan. As I am writing this article, I am preparing to leave for Chicago tomorrow for this eventful meeting

Good reading. □

Gaëtan Charland  
President UAI

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### EDITOR'S NOTE:

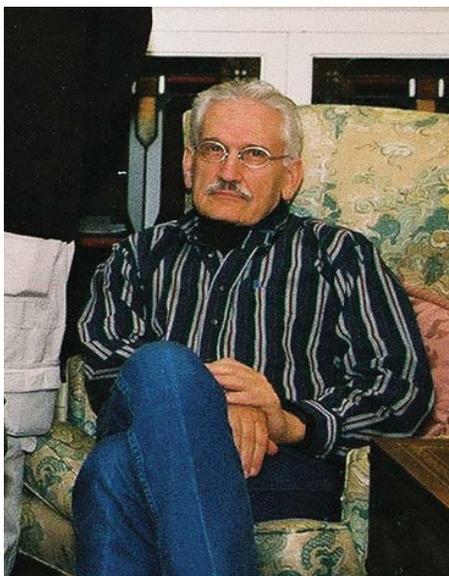
*This is second in the five-part series, "Getting to Know the Trustees." The December issue of Tidings will feature President Seppo Kanerva. —Cathy Jones*

# How *The Urantia Book* Found Me —The Greatest Birthday Present Ever

BY TRAVIS BINION

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Founding member of Southern  
Kindred Spirits Association



I HAVE TO GO BACK a few years to set the stage for this saga. I attended the Christian church fairly regularly until I was about 16 and began to think for myself. It was a great place to socialize particularly with the opposite sex. As I approached adulthood, however, I began to become more aware of the behavior of the adults in the congregations I attended. Their behavior was far from the teachings of the church. I know now that they were after all merely being human. Nevertheless, the hypocrisy and self-serving behavior I saw at that idealistic stage of my life caused me to reject religion. I don't think I actually rejected God, per se, only associating with his believers in a formal church setting.

Fast forward until I was in my early 40s. By that time, I had seen the world, or at least most of the northern half of it, graduated from college, twice, established a family, and was well on my way to establishing a pretty good career doing applied research in fluid dynamics. My life was good, or so I thought.

I know now that my beloved Thought Adjuster was orchestrating a modification to my plan. I began to develop an empty feeling in my gut. A feeling that kept gnawing and gnawing so persistently that I had severe stomach cramps, usually about 3 am, that would last an hour or more. I diagnosed the cause as stress and learned Transcendental Meditation. After about six months of practice the cramps went away, but the empty feeling persisted. Something was wrong with my life. I was fairly sure that the something was the lack of religious practice. But,

what kind of practice? So, I began a quest – an exploration of most of the world's major religions and many of the so-called “new age” beliefs. I was almost initiated into the Church of Latter Day Saints (Mormons) but backed out at the last minute. While I found many bits and pieces that seemed to speak to me, nothing was completely satisfying. I toyed with the idea of combining the “best” (to me) of each belief system into a composite religion, but had neither the time nor energy to actually start.

My youngest son was aware of my quest. He attended a meeting in Nashville that was initiated by a songwriter named Hal Bynum (His most famous song is Lucile). Hal had invited Meredith Sprunger to his house to give a presentation to a small group of people on *The Urantia Book*. My son thought this might be something I would find interesting. He bought the book and gave it to me for my 50th birthday.

At the time I was very busy with my work and somewhat intimidated by its size, so it lay on the coffee table in the living room for a couple of months before I picked it up and began to read from the forward. Reading it became an obsession. About a third of the way through the thought came to me that

no human could have written this book. Fortunately, I had a couple of long trips scheduled so I could read on the airplane. I finished the book six weeks later at 3 am in Cesme', Turkey completely in awe. As luck would have it the next day, several of us visited Ephesus and the ruins

of the temple Constantine's mother, Helen, had built over the traditional site of the Apostle John's grave. I sat on the Apostle's grave and gave thanks to our Father for leading me to the end of my seven-year mid-life crisis. A fitting end to my quest I thought.

Now, armed with all of this knowledge, I had to talk to someone about it who would understand. Through Hal, I learned of a study group in Nashville hosted by a fellow named Lee Rector that met every week on Sunday evening. The first time I attended the group, in late October 1982, Lee and I talked till 2 am. I was euphoric and simultaneous at that state of peace that passes all understanding and have been ever since. While the host and members of the study group have changed over the years, I still attend most Sundays. They have become my spiritual family.

Don't get me wrong. There are many things in the book that I don't understand. The things I do understand have led me to a feeling of awe for our Creator and his Son and a life of love of and service to my fellow sojourners on this planet. That is enough for now. I so look forward to continuing the adventure on Mansonia 1. To all who read this, may you find peace also. □

# How *The Urantia Book* Found Me

BY CLAUDE FLIBOTTE  
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 L'Association Urantia du Québec

**T**HIS EVENT GOES back to 1969. I was then eighteen years old. In consequence of a very long research undertaken while I was very young, on the great existential questions, I had joined a religious sect. At that time, I had a guru in India, I was a vegetarian and I practiced every day, at five o'clock in the morning, one hour of transcendental meditation.

One day when I was visiting the person responsible for the movement of this "Master," I noticed in his library *The Urantia Book*. At once, I started to shuffle through its pages and was very impressed by the contents of its remarks.

My host then said to me that it was a very astonishing and captivating book and that he often referred to it in his every day life.

Intrigued and conquered by the contents of what I had been able to read in a few minutes, I promised myself to get this book when I feel ready to read it.

A short time after, I underwent the customary initiation required in the group, in an ashram located in the mountains and the greenery of Vermont, in the United States. One month later, I left the group, having understood by myself that my spirituality was a personal business between me and God. Nobody, not even a "holy man," could stand between us.

*The Urantia Book* then surfaced in my memory, but I concluded that I was not ready to read it yet. A whole year went by during which time I experimented with drugs to check precisely if this means could bring some new awareness in me.

After this experiment and a period of time, my decision was made. I thus went to a bookstore and made the purchase

of *The Urantia Book*, which at that time was sold in three volumes, this was the French translation of Jacques Weiss, and was entitled "The Cosmology of Urantia." I thus spent the eighty necessary dollars and returned home, by bus, very excited and proud.

As soon as the evening meal was done with, I withdrew to my room and I devoted myself to its reading. Fascinated by what I was discovering there, I devoured the pages, one after the other. I had started with the first page and at many places I did not understand what I had read. I did not let myself be discouraged by the difficult contents of the text. I constantly told myself that further down, I was going to understand better. Finally, the hours passed, and it is only in the early morning that I allowed myself a few hours of sleep.

Since then, I have read and reread this book many times and I am not yet wearied of it. I often told myself that one day I would find something better and bigger, but to date and after almost thirty years now -- I did not discover anything better. Each time I believed I have understood everything, new meanings of this text comes to nourish me again. What I had not seized the day before comes to light today and increased my field of perception and conscience. New concepts and new truths emerge suddenly in my mind and gives me more joy, better understanding, amazement, recognition and love towards this universe of beings and things which surround me. My Father's creation is large, beautiful, good and attractive.



Claude at a retreat in Lafontaine, Québec

I personally found in the reading of this book a guide for living, instructions, an incomparable philosophy, an incomparable hope, a perpetual search of discovery and richness of spirit, a clear conscience of the love which supports this colossal creation. I found an abundant number of answers to my innumerable existential questions. I discovered a direction for my life on this planet and especially a compass to guide my steps. I even penetrated the fascinating mystery of my eternal evolution which, in the long run, will grant me a perfect personality to resemble more and more the infinitely perfect Father. I realize that I have come a long way in the realization of belonging to something bigger and more profound in relation to the fact of my own existence. And, when I think that I am only at the beginning of this existence, that I have all of eternity to learn unceasingly new things of discovering new worlds and new people. When I think that my current conscience, as a very limited man, will take a tremendous expansion with each acquisition of a new body, equipped with new senses. It is really marvellous and fascinating to become conscious of all that.

Thus, I am addressing myself to you, future readers. If your curiosity and your thirst for knowledge are as large as mine, I cordially invite you to study this book. And remember that this constitutes only the first step which will lead you directly to Paradise, the source of all things and the eternal residence of our Father, the Father of all. Good journey! □

## Report of UAUS CLP Meeting

BY BENET RUTENBERG

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President, Urantia Association of the  
United States



UAUS officers: Chris Wood (secretary), Marian Hughes (vice-president), Benet Rutenberg (president) and David Linthicum (treasurer)

**T**HE ANNUAL MEETING of the United States Urantia Association (UAUS) was held in Chicago on September 23, 2006 at Urantia Foundation. We extend our heartfelt appreciation to Jay, Tamara and Chris at Urantia Foundation for their kindness and generous hospitality during the weekend. Several of our members were able to stay at 533 and we are equally thankful for the privilege. On behalf of the UAUS Council of Local Presidents and Vice-Presidents (CLP) we also extend warm thanks to members of GLMUA who acted as our hospitality committee providing refreshments and housekeeping throughout the meeting.

The meeting was convened just after 11:00AM CDT with spoken and silent prayer. Music from a CD recorded by Lee Farmer was played adding a wonderful presence to the moment. We recognized our former President, Lee Armstrong, for his service and sent our prayers in support of his family at this trying time.

We are pleased to announce that we had a quorum and thank all those who made the journey from as far away as Hawaii. Attending the meeting were: CLP: Benet Rutenberg; Rick Lyon; Marian Hughes; Judy Van Cleave; Jan Bernard; Ralph Zehr; Betty Zehr; Daryl Berry; Susan Owen; David Linthicum; Nick Scalzo; Chris Wood; Cathy Jones; Cassandra Discher; Ellen Gaynor and James Woodward.

Our Esteemed Guests were: Gaétan Charland; Mark Kurtz; Tamara Wood.

We appreciate and thank Gaétan and Mark for making the journey and participating with us to gain a greater understanding of where we are in UAI as a whole.

We received reports from all the officers and committee chairs attending. We discussed the merits of adding an electronic business meeting provision to our by laws so as to enhance ongoing activities throughout the year. This provision is not meant to take the place of our annual meeting which will continue. We look forward to a time when all of our CLP members will be able to attend.

David Linthicum and I gave reports on our Judicial Appeal to UAI JC and the current status of reconstituting the Urantia Association of Florida. We will continue in that endeavor until we have fully reestablished a functioning organization committed to the Charter and Bylaws of UAI with full support for Urantia Foundation.

UAUS 2007 Conference was officially awarded to Washington State Urantia Association. It will be held in the Seattle area in July of 2007. Please look forward to upcoming announcements for dates and exact location. With the new three year cycle in UAI Conferences beginning in 2009, there was discussion of having conference in 2008. There were mixed feelings on this while I am pleased to report that Southern Kindred Spirits has offered to make a proposal should the GB decide to sponsor a conference in 2008. We congratulate WSUA and their

President, Cassandra Discher and their Conference Committee Chair, Janiece Hoggat, for stepping up to host this conference in a wonderful location.

As both UAUS and UAI are having elections this coming year, the open positions and timetable of the respective elections was presented in brief. As we speak some nominations have already been made for the ISB while UAUS process will begin in December of 2006.

Under the leadership of one of our special guests, Gaétan Charland, UAI President, we discussed the current status of UAI licensing of its own associations and considered what possible changes might be made to the licensing agreements between UAI and Urantia Foundation. The answers to some of these questions must await the completion of the reincorporation of UAI as an independent organization, a process which is ongoing. We also pondered the current movement within the Fellowship to move closer with UAI. This is causing some important debate within the Fellowship, much of it a welcome sight in their evolutionary process. We believe that this process should be allowed to run its course before serious discussions can take place. We also believe that the competition with UF of Fellowship books and other medium must cease. As Gaétan pointed out quite clearly we must be about our business as defined in our charter and bylaws while we elaborate that business

*Continued on page 7*

# Urantia in Colombia

BY TAMILA RAGIMOVA

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President, Association Urantia Medellin

COLOMBIA IS A country in South America. The Capital of Colombia is Bogota and the larger cities are Medellín, Cali, Barranquilla, Ucaramanga and Cartagena.

The studies of *The Urantia Book* in Colombia began in the 1970's in Bogota, where a group of Urantians were translating the book from English into Spanish, in parts. The first Urantians in Bogota were: Douglas Fraser, Carlos Zapata, Ramon Ortiz, Pedro Baquero and others.

In Bogota the Urantia Association was founded in 1994 and in Medellin Local Association was founded in 1999. At the present time there are four Local Associations in Colombia - Bogota, Medellin, Barranquilla and El Eje Cafetero. Sadly, over the last two years there have

been personal problems between members in the Bogota Association which has affected other Associations. At this moment the problems have been solved and we hope to continue with the studies and creative discussions over Urantia documents only.

In Medellin the Directive Council of the association has been reelected in October and now is represented by: Tamila Ragimova, President – [profenixmedellin@une.net.co](mailto:profenixmedellin@une.net.co)



Medellin Urantia Association, Colombia  
Seated from left to right : Tamila Ragimova - President, Guillermo Arias - Vice President, Amanda Perez – Secretary and Margarita Fajardo - Treasurer

Guillermo Arias, Vice President –

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Margarita Fajardo, Treasurer -

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We are looking forward to achieving the organization of workshops, congresses and scientific seminars related to *The Urantia Book* in Colombia and South America. □

## Report of UAUS CLP Meeting

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in the developing strategic plan. The second meeting of the ISB Strategic Planning Committee and invited guests is due to take place the last weekend in October at Urantia Foundation. I have been invited to participate in that meeting and will do so. The principle topics under consideration have to do with Study Groups, the development of Teachers and Leaders, Conference cycles and Financing/Fund Raising.

Mark Kurtz, CFO of UAI, gave a full report of the financial status of UAI and discussion ensued which proved informative to all in attendance. It is the responsibility of all of our members at all levels to grow the finances necessary to support a more functional and expanding organization. This is a material reality

which creates the base for the spiritual mission to develop in order to receive the many thousands of readers who have and will discover the book in the next several years.

The meeting was adjourned to a social hour which brought us to a wonderful Italian dinner in a local Chicago favorite. It is with humility and gratitude that I offer thanks to our still anonymous benefactors who covered all the food expenses for the meal. It proved to be a fitting end to a full days work.

Many of our attendees left on Sunday morning so as to get home or the next stop on their journey. Just over half of us stayed for a three hour study session covering the papers: Fleeing Through Northern Galilee and the Last Temple

Discourse. These proved to be powerful in their message and stimulative of moving discussions and insights. With smiles and affection we parted company with resolve to continue our service in the year to come.

I want to personally thank all who made the trip and invite all of our CLP members who were unable to attend to make plans to participate next year in Seattle.

May the many Blessings of Our Father inspire our living and our work in the coming year. □

*With warmest regards,  
Benet Rutenberg, UAUS President*

## Meeting new readers in Rouyn-Noranda

BY MAURICE MIGNEAULT  
Secretary of AUQ  
[MauriceMigneault@aol.com](mailto:MauriceMigneault@aol.com)



We were more than welcome  
from our new friends in Abitibi

**L**AST SEPTEMBER 17, four representatives of the Quebec Urantia Association went to Rouyn-Noranda in Abitibi, more than 600 Km from Montreal (North West of the province), to meet new Urantia Book readers. Twelve people took part in this happy event.

It is always moving to attend the scene of the first meeting of an isolated reader. At first, it starts with

a timid handshake and ends up with warm hugs and tears.

The bonds born in the faith are good and durable, nevertheless, they need to be nourished in order to grow. Such events will therefore be renewed in the future. □

## Mexico fourth annual meeting

**O**N SEPTEMBER 2, 2006 the board presided by myself of the Urantia Association of Mexico, was released and the new board presided by Edgar Ibararán, Santiago Kneeland as vice president, Lizzi Cenicerros as treasurer and Jesus San Pablo as Secretary was instituted.

Edgar Ibararán –  
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The board change was during the **FOURTH NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF URANTIA BOOK READERS**. It was a very moving ceremony, in which we had moments of joy and fraternity. □

*Santiago Kneeland*  
Vice President, UAM

Father,  
You, the Father of all fathers:  
I thank you! I salute you!  
You, the origin of every thing and being,  
I worship you!  
You, the breath-giver, the life-giver,  
The giver of every good gift,  
I embrace you! I bow to you! I kneel at your feet!

The knower of all things,  
The seer of the end from the beginning,  
The hearer of every plea and prayer, you are!

You know all my secrets, my secret sins,  
You know my every weakness,  
You are my strength, my sight!  
I lean on you! You hold me up!  
Lead me! Mould me! Make me in your image!  
Show me the next step to take!  
I will go where you send me!  
I will do your bidding!  
I commend myself to your care, to your plans, your purposes!  
I pledge my will and soul to you now and forever!  
You are my destiny!  
Your precious Will be done!

–Meredith Van Woert