

A Personal Tribute to Dr. Meredith Sprunger by Dick Bain

There are people who touch our lives and we are the better for it. Dr. Meredith Sprunger was just such a person who touched my life by introducing me to the Urantia Book. Little did I know that I would still be mining that book for inspiration and spiritual enlightenment after more than 40 years. Since Meredith graduated to the mansion worlds on April 17, 2012, many people have written tributes to him and many of them have listed the qualities they admired in him.



Meredith was impressive in many ways. He had a PhD in psychology, was chair of the liberal arts department at Indiana Institute of Technology (IIT) in Fort Wayne, Indiana when I was working on my BSEE degree there. He was president of Urantia Brotherhood for a time. He was also an ordained United Church of Christ minister and served a church in Plumtree, IN. He had a comprehensive understanding of the Urantia Book and was a very enthusiastic promoter of the book. But despite such impressive credentials, he was a humble person. I can't ever remember his ego getting in the way of his various ways of ministering and relating to people. And in one crisis within our Urantian community, he was an island of stability in a sea of confusion.

I first encountered Meredith in his role as a professor at IIT. I had three classes with him; it was in his philosophy class that I encountered the Urantia Book. In the section about the philosophy of religion, he made a reading assignment in the book and there just happened to be a number of these books in the university library. Imagine that! As a lover of science fiction, I was soon hooked on the Urantia Book. But I soon realized that this wasn't science fiction; the authors were describing reality! I read the book all summer, and in the fall I told Meredith of my interest in the book. He invited me to the weekly study group that met at his home. For five years, I was privileged to be a part of that group that he and his wife Irene graciously hosted each week. I attended the group until a job change took me to Florida.

After I left Ft. Wayne, IN, Meredith, Irene, and I had contact with each other mainly at conferences and through writing. Meredith began the Spiritual Fellowship Journal in 2000. I began writing articles for the Journal and Meredith was kind enough to publish them in the Journal. In 2001, Meredith and Sherilyn Henry formed The Spiritual Fellowship. At a meeting in Boulder, CO in 2002, I was invited by Meredith to join the TSF Board of Directors as treasurer, which I gladly did. We had annual meetings to discuss TSF business and plan for the future. Unfortunately, TSF never grew into the organization that Meredith envisioned, but his was a worthy vision.

How much poorer our lives would be without people like Meredith in them. I feel so grateful that Meredith was both a friend and a mentor for so many years. I look forward to communing again with Meredith and Irene when I reach their level. As soon as I graduate, that is.