

## Beacon UU Religious Exploration 2021-2022 Year in Review

**D'oh God (6th-10th grade):** We watched a Simpsons episode and discussed a topic, alternating between social justice and religion themes. Some of our lively discussions were about marriage equality, sexism, Buddhism, cults and climate change. We had two celebratory classes where the kids played remote games together. These were playful togetherness times that were masterfully envisioned by Steph. Here are some of the comments our six youth had to say about the year:

- I got to look at things from a different standpoint and look at things from a different perspective. It allowed me to think and talk more about the issues and what is problematic about them.
- I like that it involves the Simpsons and most of my friends would probably like this, too. I love the Simpsons!
- I like the discussions and we have some nice in-depth discussions and get to share our different opinions with each other respectfully. We get to discuss points and counterpoints. I like the debate.
- I like the Simpsons and it helped me learn more about religion in an entertaining way.
- It was a first-time experience, fun, entertaining, informative. It allowed for us to socialize and learn about new aspects of certain ideologies and social constructs.

During each of our **CartUUns** classes, we watched a Pixar short; discussed values, thoughts, and feelings about the themes presented; and completed some related crafts and activities. Some of the themes we covered this year were World Religions, Family Traditions, LGBTQIA & Personal Pride, Autism, Inclusion & Acceptance, Equality, Gender Discrimination, Growing Up, Peer Pressure, Parent & Sibling Dynamics, Caring for Animals, and Appreciating Differences.

Six kids in grades **2nd-5th grade** participated this year. Here's what some of them had to say about their experience:

- I really enjoyed the crafts. My favorite was when we got to make a wooden airplane.
- I really enjoyed talking about family traditions and making sock bunnies at Easter.
- My favorite short was the one about how the autistic girl communicated and I enjoyed making the boat. I also liked the short about the gay couple.
- I really enjoyed this class and a lot of the shorts. I support the LGBTQ community and I really liked seeing a short that showed a gay couple. It was fun to make our own pride flags that represented us. I also liked when we made a class chalice together and when we watched the short about workplace discrimination.
- I think some of my friends would like this class because they like watching cartoons and doing art.