

## We Are the Future! ~ Coexist Lock In 2013: A Summary

February 8-10, 2013

Unity North Atlanta Church

4255 Sandy Plains Rd

Marietta, GA 30066, USA

This event focused on bringing teens from the Metro Atlanta area together to discuss religious beliefs and the future of the interfaith movement in this community.

Friday night brought the arrival of the teens and the promise of a different future. As they came together to discuss what interfaith means to them, in the large group and in smaller, 'family' groups, connections grew and respect resulted. Through games like a religion scavenger hunt and themed Jeopardy, the teens became familiar with the basic beliefs of the religions not represented at the event. The evening ended with creating t-shirts and a workshop on meditations of different religions. The workshop covered the Buddhist Om Mane Padme Hum chant, a guided meditation, and a whirling dervish meditation.

Saturday had more times of discussions in family groups as well as a large group planning session for a one-day interfaith event to be held during the summer. The afternoon provided time for the teens to participate in an enlightenment walk, a time of silence in which to meditate in any way. The enlightenment walk also involved a prayer vigil focusing on peace among religions. These were both well received by the teens. Saturday ended with dances of peace, using songs and dance from various cultures to connect to each other through eye contact and creating sacred space.

Sunday began with discussion in family groups on the future of interfaith in the community as well as how the teens could build the movement in their schools. They then traced their body outlines on paper, then filled those paper outlines with qualities that they felt were important. This showed that everyone held qualities like integrity, acceptance, love, and peace as important, regardless of their religion. Sunday was the last day of the event and the teens all agreed that they had learned a lot about religions and respect of religions other than their own.