**PETE THE FAITHFUL FRIEND**

written by Judy Froman

with illustrations by [Class [INSERT CLASS NAME] (20\_\_) [INSERT SCHOOL NAME]

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Now Pete the Parrot lives with his good friends Tami and Tom

But they have never known where Pete came from.

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It just happened one day that in he flew,

And asked: “Kids, may I come and live with you?”

Tom and Tami were so thrilled they squealed with delight,

And ever since then they’ve been together day and night.

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When Pete moved in, they said, “How do you do?

Tell us Pete, are you Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh, Christian, Muslim or Jew?”

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Pete said, “Why in the world should it matter to you

What I believe in or what I do?”

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“Oh,” answered Tom and Tami, “it matters to us

Because when people don’t know enough, they fight and fuss.

If we’re going to share our world, we need to know what to expect,

So that we behave correctly and treat you with respect.”

“Ah!” said Pete, “that may be true,

But I really don’t know what I should believe or do.

I have no religion; I don’t know how to pray.

What are the differences anyway?”

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“Oh,” said Tom and Tami, “let us explain to you

About a Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh, Christian, Muslim and Jew.

Religions teach people who they are.

They have different symbols - like a cross, a moon and a star.

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They try to explain how the world came about,

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And they teach you how to live your life throughout.

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They have different special books that teach us how to get along,

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How to treat each other; how to do things right, not wrong.

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Religions have different special places and different special stories too.

There are lots of clever things they have to say to us - and you.

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They all seem to tell us that we should love each other a lot,

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And try to share our things with those who have not got.

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We should listen to our parents and do what they say,

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And never take other children’s toys away.

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We should never tell fibs and try always to be kind,

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Because if we hurt someone, they really will mind.

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We should live a good life and make time to pray,

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And find time to rest, not just always work and play.

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We think, Pete, that’s what most religions say -

They try to teach us how to live our lives from day to day.

We really don’t know why people fight about the rest;

If they looked at all these common things, they would probably get on best.”

“Oh,” said Pete, “then they just teach people how to love!

I’m a parrot, but I could have been a sparrow or a dove.

We may look a little different and like to eat a different thing,

But we all like to fly and we all like to sing.

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We may have lots of differences, but in the end a bird’s a bird,

And to fight about our differences really is absurd.

People should just love each other and all be good friends,

And if they hurt each other, they must always make amends.

But you’re right, my dear friends, it’s simply respect,

That people of different religions are entitled to expect.”

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