

Barbara's Wastepaper Record

Question: What is the religion of most people in Indonesia?

- a. Buddhist
- b. Christian
- c. Muslim
- d. Hindu

Can you answer that question? It is one of 32 questions on the recent Pew Research survey on religion. The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life surveyed 3,400 Americans and asked them 32 questions about the Bible, Christianity, and other world religions as well as our Constitutional principles that pertain to religion in civic life.

The findings are really interesting. Those people self identifying as atheist or agnostic scored the highest, follows by those identifying as Jewish and then Mormon. It seems to me that UU's should do well on such surveys. But- even among those who did well, the average grade would have been 67 out of 100.

What was interesting to me is that more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of those replying answered "no" when asked, can a public school teacher "read from the Bible as an example of literature". The correct answer is "yes". Teaching comparative religion in public school is also not prohibited. It seems that it is more necessary than ever.

We all can do better. Not just in our knowledge of our own faith history and values, but other faiths, even in the broadest terms and our capacity or live with those of other faiths. I love the UU RE program, Neighboring Faiths. In that 7th graders learn about and then visit other faith communities. I remember when it was Church across the Street. This nation is so diverse. Unitarian Universalist values call us to learn about world religions and live our shared civic and mutual responsibilities.

I wonder how UU's would do if we took a quiz about Unitarian Universalism? Our Principles and Purposes? Can you name more than one? How many are there? This Sunday, take the Order of Service home, think about one a day this next week and talk about them with your family at dinnertime.

And...Take a look at the survey. Take the survey and see the answer!

In good faith,

Barbara

PS - October 12, 13 & 14 at 9:00 p.m. there will be an important PBS series on World Religions. We can order the DVD and use it for a series of conversations. Interested? e-mail me.