**CNY Inspirations: Love Is the Answer - 7th World Interfaith Harmony Assembly**

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Betty Lamb*InterFaith Works of Central New York*

I am still in awe of last year's World Interfaith Harmony Assembly where we welcomed more than 600 guests to the newly formed faith community at the Mosque of Jesus, Son of Mary.  They graciously opened their doors, hearts and prayer time to us all. Now they will pass the light of peace to this year's host community, University United Methodist Church, and many different faith communities will share how "Love Is the Answer" at the 7th World Interfaith Harmony Assembly on Monday, Feb. 6 from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Seven is the number of times we will have gathered together in the Syracuse area for the World Interfaith Harmony Assembly.  Seven is a lucky number, a blessed number and a Biblical number. There are seven colors in the rainbow, which have order and continuity throughout time.  God has used the rainbow many times to remind His children of His presence and comforting love, and continues to do so today. There were seven Biblical men called "Men of God": Moses, David, Samuel, Shemaiah, Elijah, Elisha and Igdaliah.  Each brought God's gift to humanity.  Moses brought us the Torah, which included the Book of Leviticus. We have seven festivals bringing people together for a Divine Purpose.

As the year 2017 unfolds, it becomes increasingly clear that to share our traditions and faith communities with each other is more important than ever.  On Nov. 17, 2016, Syracuse and Onondaga County were declared "A Compassionate Community."  We are all different, and yet we share the commonality of our humanity. We seek and offer compassion. I have attended the previous six assemblies and each has been unique and amazing. I have great expectation that the 7th assembly is going to be awesome, because "Love Is the Answer." Please join us.

*Betty Lamb is the 2016-2017 President of Women Transcending Boundaries. She is a mother, grandmother and is retired from careers in education and retail management. Her background includes the Christian and Jewish faiths*