



***“Incredibly sad day—
let us carry on his legacy.”***

**-Ju Hong, Social Activist & Founder, ASPIRE
Beerman Foundation Fellow for Peace and Justice**

The Leonard I. Beerman Foundation mourns the loss of our beloved teacher, friend, and Board member, the Rev. James Lawson Jr. Rev. Lawson was one of the giants of the social justice movement in the United States.

Already as a young man, Jim lived the ideals for which he would become an internationally recognized role model. In his freshman year of college, Jim refused to register for the draft for the U.S. military and was sentenced to thirteen months in prison. Shortly thereafter, he made his way as a missionary to India where he studied the Gandhian principle of satyagraha, or non-violent resistance. He brought this doctrine back to the United States, and soon thereafter began to teach it to the emerging leaders of the Civil Rights Movement.

Over the course of his brilliant and consequential career, Jim

Lawson was centrally involved in many major struggles for justice in the United States. From the time he moved to Los Angeles in 1974 to assume the pulpit of the Holman United Methodist Church, he became a dear friend of Rabbi Leonard Beerman z"l, with whom he shared a passion for the Hebrew prophets and the imperative to struggle for justice in the world. Jim, Leonard, and their dear friends Rev. George Regas and Drs. Maher and Hassan Hathout constituted a remarkable cohort of interfaith social justice giants who immeasurably enriched the community of which they were part.

The world was a much better place with Jim Lawson in it; and now it is more impoverished. He left such a remarkable legacy of dedication, service, and leadership to inspire us. Now it is our collective task to pick up the mantle of justice that James Lawson so boldly held. May his memory always be a blessing.



Watch Rev. Lawson dialogue with his former student, the late Representative John Lewis, in 2017.

The Leonard I. Beerman Foundation for Peace and Justice honors the memory of Rabbi Leonard I. Beerman (1921–2014), a courageous and compassionate religious leader, social activist, and champion of peace and human rights. The Foundation recognizes and supports organizations, programs, and activities similarly dedicated to improving the human condition.

Learn more at www.beermanfoundation.org