

MOTION

Rev. James Lawson Jr. worked as a youth minister in Nagpur, India, where he studied the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi. Upon returning to the United States, he was recruited by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to spread the philosophy of nonviolence and to advance the movement for human and civil rights.

Rev. Lawson led the Nashville Sit-In Campaign in 1960, which successfully challenged “Jim Crow,” and trained a new generation of civil rights activists including Congressman John Lewis. The Nashville sit-in leaders went on to organize Freedom Rides, Freedom Schools, and a series of powerful nonviolent campaigns throughout the South.

Rev. Lawson was also the chair of the strike committee for the Memphis Sanitation Workers in 1968, that advanced the slogan, “I Am A Man.” The Memphis Sanitation Workers led the first successful organizing campaign of African American municipal workers in the South. Rev. King was assassinated while supporting the Memphis Sanitation workers.

Since moving to Los Angeles in 1974, Rev. Lawson has continued to have a profound impact on peace and social justice movements. He has taught the philosophy of nonviolence to hotel workers, janitors, and home care workers, to prepare them for historic organizing victories.

Rev. Lawson has inspired a new generation of labor and social justice leaders of Los Angeles. He was a founder of the Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice, and has been at the forefront of campaigns for a living wage. For over a decade, he has also taught a course on “Nonviolence and Social Movements” in partnership with the UCLA Labor Center, and together they published a book on Rev. Lawson’s teachings in 2016.

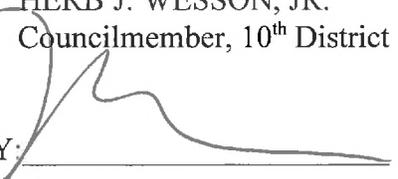
In recognition of the impact Rev. Lawson has had on social justice in Los Angeles, it is appropriate that the City designate the intersection of 4th Avenue and Adams Boulevard as “Reverend James Lawson Jr. Square.”

I THEREFORE MOVE that the intersection of 4th Avenue and Adams Boulevard be named as the “**Reverend James Lawson Jr. Square**” and that the Department of Transportation be directed to fabricate and install permanent ceremonial signs to this effect at this location, in consultation with Council District 10.

OCT 11 2017

cc

PRESENTED BY: 
HERB J. WESSON, JR.
Councilmember, 10th District

SECONDED BY: 



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