



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Sanders Jr.

Faith-Based Leadership Was Focus of Senator Sanders' January Clergy Breakfast

JAMES SANDERS JR. January 25, 2019



State Senator James Sanders Jr. (D-Rochdale Village, Far Rockaway) today hosted his monthly Clergy Breakfast at Friendship Baptist Church in Jamaica, where the topic was “Faith-Based Leadership: Preparing Faith-Based Leaders for Spiritual, Social and Economic Empowerment.” Winnie Benjamin, CEO of Stewardship Masters International, Inc, was the guest speaker.

“Everything rises and falls based on leadership,” Sanders said. “Now, more than ever, faith-based leaders must unite for the common good.”

Faith-based leaders are united by God’s vision, which is to be prosperous, in good health and leave a sustainable legacy, Benjamin said. It is a vision, which is eternal and non-flexible. However, the world presents situations that are contrary to that vision. Under those conditions, leadership and teamwork must be structured to create solutions.

Not only must religious leaders work with their own congregations, they must also work with other houses of worship. Since no one institution can fix all of the problems we face, each house of worship can focus on one piece, whether that is health, finance, education or any variety of transferable skills.

Too often, Benjamin said, religious leaders believe that sharing resources will cause others to “steal their sheep” or lure away congregants from one ministry to another. That mentality is misguided, Benjamin said, since all roads should ultimately lead back to God’s vision.

Of course, the church also needs to have its own mission, which is specific to the needs of its community. The mission is not created by the leader, but by the team. A mission is different from a vision in that it is flexible, dynamic and will change. The mission must also be compelling, and allow all members of the house of worship to participate.

Once the faith-based leader has ensured that everyone understands the mission of the house of worship, it is his or her duty, to watch from the sidelines or the rear to see that it is being carried out effectively and can continue, even after the leader has retired or passed on. That is part of the legacy piece of God’s vision, Benjamin said.

We would like to thank Friendship Baptist Church for allowing us to use their space to host the event.

Senator Sanders' Community Clergy Breakfasts tentatively take place on the third Thursday of each month from 8:30 a.m. - 11 a.m. The next one is scheduled for February 21, 2019. More details will be announced as the date approaches.