

January 8th, 2021

Kairos Palestine and Global Kairos for Justice Coalition

A Tribute to Dr. Clint le Bruyns

Dr. Clint Le Bruyns, a much loved and respected South African theologian, intellectual and activist passed away at the age of 48 years on 7 January 2021 due to complications after contracting Covid-19. We offer our heartfelt condolences to his daughter, his mother, the rest of his family and all his friends, colleagues, students and fellow activists who suffer from this tragic and enormous loss of a human being who stood in service of humanity.

While Clint's identity and work were firmly rooted in his own country's ongoing struggles for justice, equality and human dignity, his vision and his scholar-activism transcended the barriers of religion, culture, continents and nationalities. Known for his optimistic, inspiring, warm and life-embracing energy, Clint passionately and creatively initiated scholarly and social media projects to sensitise theology students, clergy and others to the Palestinian reality, Kairos theology and the need for Boycott Divestment and Sanctions. He served on the leadership team of Kairos South Africa, contributed actively to Global Kairos for Justice, and in 2015 he joined the Freedom Flotilla attempting to break the blockade on Gaza.

As a lecturer in theology at Stellenbosch University and later at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), South Africa Clint had a formative influence on how young people who trained as theologians understand contextual prophetic theology. Rev. Dr. Allan Boesak remarked that Clint understood that the real ecumenical movement for justice in Palestine and beyond is not conceived in the halls of church structures, but in the oikos and in the lives of those who have come to understand what the world is in need of. People like Clint, Dr. Boesak added, understand that Palestine has become the litmus test for the integrity of the Christian faith and for what it means to be a decent human being.

In recent years Dr Le Bruyns served as Director of the postgraduate Theology & Development Programme, and Senior Lecturer in Theology & Development within the School of Religion, Philosophy & Classics at UKZN. He studied at Cornerstone Christian College, the University of South Africa, the University of the Western Cape, Fuller Theological Seminary and at Stellenbosch University before serving at institutions including Pat Kelly Bible College, Cornerstone Christian College, Stellenbosch University and Eastern University. He was an active member within various professional theological and ethics societies and editorial boards.

Kairos Palestine, the most extensive Palestinian Christian ecumenical non-violent movement, is based on Kairos Palestine document: A Moment of Truth, launched in 2009, affirming that the Palestinian Christians are part and parcel of the Palestinian nation, calling for peace to end all suffering in the Holy Land by laboring for justice, hope and love, embraced by the Christian community, signed by all historically recognized Palestinian Christian organizations, and endorsed by the Heads of Churches in Jerusalem.

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A tribute by Rev. Moss Nthla, Chair of Kairos South Africa and General Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance of South Africa (TEASA) asks what is to be done under circumstances like these:

What do you do when a brave soldier falls in the middle of a fierce battle?

When the foe is not merely another tribe from across the river, but an empire arrogantly straddling the globe?

Corrupting the mind with theologies of death.

Enslaving the soul with the values of darkness.

Subjecting the majority of the peoples of the world to the falsehood that evil can trump good.

You celebrate.

You celebrate a life well lived, though painfully short.

Consumed in a struggle for justice, both at home and for people in lands beyond the seas.

You celebrate his passion and fierce conviction in the God who inspired him.

You celebrate his inspiration and invitation to many to join the struggle for the common good.

You ready yourself to pick up from where he left off.

To continue his noble charge.

To anticipate the future today.

To live as though another way to live exists.

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