



# **kaĩros íreland**

*that justice and peace  
might embrace* (Psalm 85:10)

*a call to íreland from  
palestinian christians*

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## **Countering the normalisation of the Israeli occupation in the eyes of the world**

Kairos Ireland workshop on the Palestinian situation  
**Monday 16th September at 7 pm - St. Mary's College, Falls, Belfast**

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The geo-politics of the Middle East has changed substantially in the past 10 years and the region is in greater turmoil with unresolved wars in Syria and the Yemen. The spotlight has gone off the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the blockade of the Gaza Strip. The much-hoped peace process collapsed some time ago leaving the Palestinian people in despair. While the United States has pulled back its military troop presence, it has delivered more than \$134 billion in this decade to Israel in military and economic aid, despite Israel's small population and high standard of living. Yet under the Trump Presidency it has cut aid to UNWRA and the Palestinian Authority. The Arab world is split through opposing Saudi Arabian and Iranian alliances although the Arab League position of 2002 seems to remain in place. This called for the full withdrawal by Israel "to the 1967 borders" in return for fully normalized relations.

Ireland continues to live in hope of a two-state solution but every day sees continued Jewish Israeli encroachment on Palestinian land that destroys olive trees and diminishes the viability of a contiguous Palestinian state. Does that mean we are looking at a one-state reality? What would that look like and would it be a disaster for Palestinians? Has Ireland at official level backed off its traditional support for Palestine because of external economic pressures? With all the world issues facing us today, what is it about the Palestinian situation that connects us in Ireland to support the non-violent efforts of Palestinians?

## Structure of workshop

1. **Rifat Odeh Kassis** will give a Palestinian perspective through the lens of the Kairos movement
2. **Mark Braverman** will provide an American perspective on the U.S. as an “honest broker,” the problem with the two-state solution, and the role of Christian-Jewish relations.
3. **Rev Brian Brown** from his South African perspective will attempt to answer the question: Do the policies of Israel in regard to the Occupied Palestinian Territories replicate those of Apartheid South Africa?
4. Opportunities for discussion and understanding the issues involved.

## THE PANEL OF SPEAKERS



**Rifat Odeh Kassis** is founding member and coordinator of Kairos Palestine. He was born in Beit Sahour, Bethlehem. He has long been active in the Palestinian struggle through various professional and voluntary positions to secure international human rights. In 1988 he worked with the East Jerusalem YMCA and in 1991 founded the Palestinian section of the Geneva-based global child rights' movement, Defence for Children International (DCI). In 2005, he became the International Coordinator of the Ecumenical Accompaniment Program in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI) and was Special Advisor on the Middle East in the World Council of Churches. In 1994, together with four others, he co-founded the Alternative

Tourism Group (ATG) with the aim to influence the pilgrimages to the Holy Land and to introduce Palestine from within. He is an author of two books, one of them “Kairos For Palestine” and has contributed in 16 others..



**Mark Braverman** is a Jewish American with deep family roots in the Holy Land. He grew up immersed in the Zionist narrative and ignorant of the cost to Palestinians. Witnessing the ongoing Nakba and meeting the Palestinian Christians in 2006, he returned to the U.S. to help found Kairos USA and now serves as Executive Director. Mark has worked with Catholic and Protestant churches in America, the UK and Europe on their policies and actions on Israel and Palestine. He served on the World Council of Church's Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum and currently serves on the Theology Working Group of Global Kairos for Justice. Mark is a Research Fellow in Public Theology at Stellenbosch University (South Africa). He is

the author of two books - *Fatal Embrace: Christians, Jews, and the Search for Peace in the Holy Land* and *A Wall in Jerusalem: Hope, Healing, and the Struggle for Justice in Israel and Palestine*. His writings can be found at [www.markbraverman.org](http://www.markbraverman.org).



**Rev Brian Brown** is a Methodist minister and came to England as a refugee from apartheid South Africa in 1978 following the regime's imposition of a banning order. He initially worked in the Denby Dale circuit, near Huddersfield. He then became Africa Secretary for the British Council of Churches for all of the 1980s before taking up a teaching position at Kingsmead College in Birmingham which prepared people for working overseas. This was followed by a lengthy period in the Methodist World Church Office in London with responsibility for African affairs. He acted as a consultant to Kairos South Africa when they produced their document, that subsequently became a model for Kairos Palestine. He is now retired but not given up interest in world affairs and how the apartheid mindset

affects the Holy Land.

Let us know if you would like to attend by emailing [kairosireland@gmail.com](mailto:kairosireland@gmail.com)  
Organised by Rev John Parkin and Geoffrey Corry