

‘Fierce fighter against injustice’ dies

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By Staff Writer [Comment on this story](#)



CAPE ARGUS (File photo) Anti-apartheid campaigner and champion of the poor, David Russell, has died. Photo: ANDREW INGRAM

Cape Town - A widely-loved Capetonian anti-apartheid campaigner and champion of the poor, has died.

David Russell, 75, described as “a courageous veteran in the church’s struggle against apartheid and injustice” died of cancer at his home in Rosebank.

Russell was the retired Anglican Bishop of Grahamstown.

Archbishop Thabo Makgoba of Cape Town said: “With David Russell’s death, an era passes for the church and its prophetic and courageous ministry, especially to the poorest of the poor.

“Not only the church but the nation - which honoured him for his service with the Order of the Baobab in Silver - mourns this son of the soil.

“May this pastor, prophet, theologian and fierce fighter against injustice rest in peace until we meet again.”

“Steve Biko, with whom he worked closely, called him ‘a friend, an equal... a comrade’.

“In the Eastern Cape in the 1970s, he played an important role in drawing attention to the plight of people forcibly removed from their homes under apartheid and dumped to starve in areas... where they had no hope of making a living.”

As Bishop of Grahamstown, Russell ordained southern Africa’s first woman priest and repeatedly challenged the church to reverse its opposition to blessing same-sex unions. He criticised the ANC government of the Eastern Cape for its failures in areas such as health and education.

Cape Argus

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