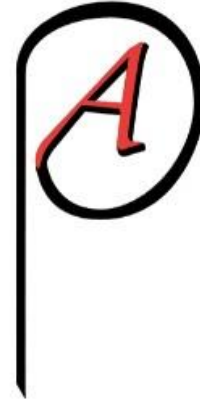


Progressive Atheists Inc.

Est. 10 Jan 2010 Reg: A0054119U Member of AAI

"Your participation is PA's future"



February 2016

... we seek to go beyond divisive racial, religious, tribal, and sectarian constructs, and instead, contribute to a universal humanity.

Headlines

- Ω **Report:** Speed Date a Muslim in Brunswick
- Ω **Announcement:** New Atheist meetup group in Tasmania
- Ω **Clean Up Australia Day:** Sunday, 6 March 2016
- Ω **International Women's Day:** Tuesday, 8 March 2016
- Ω **International Day to Defend Apostates and Blasphemers:** Monday, 14 March 2016
- Ω **Earth Hour:** Saturday, 19 March 2016
- Ω **Harmony Day:** Monday, 21 March 2016
- Ω **Easter Zombie Sunday:** Sunday, 27 March 2016
- Ω **Report:** Tim Minchin and Cardinal Pell
- Ω **Report:** Schools drop religious instruction

BackPage

Membership Renewal Term 2016: 1 July 2015 – 30 June 2016

MEMBERSHIP

Term 2015: 1 July 2015 – 30 June 2016

***** ONLY \$20 Annually *****

Purchase Membership Online:

<http://progressiveatheists.org/product-category/membership/>

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Andrew: 0438 043 050 **Secretary:**

secretary@progressiveatheists.org **Website:**

progressiveatheists.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ProgressiveAtheistsInc

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Progressive Atheist Inc. | Headlines Report:

Speed Date a Muslim in Brunswick

Hana Assafiri, chef and owner of the new 'Moroccan Deli-cacy' on Lygon Street, announced to the attendees that the meeting was to provide a platform where Muslims and non-Muslims can begin to have a dialogue, outside of the existing negativity that is being promoted by both politicians and the media. There is a view that Muslim women either need saving from their downtrodden circumstances or need to be feared as a bringer of Sharia to Australia. So being more visible as Muslims, women are bearing the brunt of negative views towards Islam in Australia.

The meeting was not meant to be a chance to debate interpretations of Islam. The Muslim women attending were not there as scholars to explain Islam, or to convert anyone to Islam. Simply as women who believe in a progressive Islamic agenda. Islam is not immune from the male dominance that permeates many religions, worldviews and systems. This meeting is a chance for Muslim women to have a voice.

The aims of the meeting include creating a cohesive, pluralistic, non-judgemental environment with absolute respect for the diversity of people present. The host informed attendees that the speaking premise is to never condone violence or the subjugation of women. The meeting is a chance to have a personal experience with real community in a positive, compassionate and humane way.



There was a good balance of Muslims and non-Muslims attending and lots of questions and conversation from topics ranging from ISIS and 9/11 to personal stories growing up in Australia and being Muslim as an adult living in Australia.

This is a fortnightly event held at the Moroccan Deli-cacy, 313 Lygon Street, Brunswick, Victoria. The next meetings are planned for Sunday, 6th and 20th March at 3 pm.

Bookings made via email: speeddateamuslimevent@gmail.com 'Moroccan

Deli-cacy' Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/Moroccan-Deli-cacy-640917089344467/>

PHOTO: Amina Sadikay and Hebba El Masri at the Moroccan Deli-cacy cafe, taking part in Speed Date a Muslim which is to become a regular event. Anyone can come along and ask a Muslim woman questions about their religion and culture. *Photo: Penny Stephens*

Read more: <http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/speed-date-a-muslim-to-ask-those-niggling-questions-20160207-gnmz3.html#ixzz41Dmha43B>

Announcement: [New Atheist meetup group in Tasmania](#)

For atheists in Tasmanian, here is a new meetup in Hobart to join.

This is a group intended for people who are atheists and/or people interested in exploring atheism. People of all political persuasions, cultural backgrounds and education levels are welcome. The focus of the group however, should be about sharing ideas about atheism, and possibly about discussing ways in which to become more organized in Tasmania. I am particularly interested in meeting people who would like to be more active in the Tasmanian community in promoting the atheist agenda.

<http://www.meetup.com/Tasmanian-Athiests/>

Clean Up Australia Day: [Sunday, 6 March 2016](#)

In the past 25 years, Australians have devoted more than 27.2 million hours towards the environment through Clean Up Australia Day and collected over 288,650 tonnes of rubbish.

In 2015 an estimated 526,268 volunteers removed 13,933 tonnes of rubbish at 6,333 sites across the country.

Please register your interest to join with other atheists for a Clean Up Australia event: cleanupaustralia@progressiveatheists.org



International Women's Day: Tuesday, 8 March 2016

IWD 2016 campaign theme #PledgeForParity

Worldwide, women continue to contribute to social, economic, cultural and political achievement.

And we have much to celebrate today. But progress towards gender parity has slowed in many places.

The World Economic Forum predicted in 2014 that it would take until 2095 to achieve global gender parity. Then one year later in 2015, they estimated that a slowdown in the already glacial pace of progress meant the gender gap wouldn't close entirely until 2133.

Celebrate the social, economic, cultural and political achievement of women.

Yet let's also be aware progress has slowed in many places across the world, so urgent action is needed to accelerate gender parity.

<http://www.internationalwomensday.com/PledgeForParityCampaign>



International Day to Defend Apostates and Blasphemers:

Monday, 14 March 2016

Countless individuals accused of apostasy and blasphemy face threats, imprisonment, and execution. Blasphemy laws in over 30 countries and apostasy laws in over 20 aim primarily to restrict thought, expression and the rights of Muslims, ex-Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

<http://ex-muslim.org.uk/2013/03/14-march-2013-international-day-to-defend-apostates-and-blasphemers/>

Earth Hour: Saturday, 19 March 2016

Switch off for the Places We Love in 2016

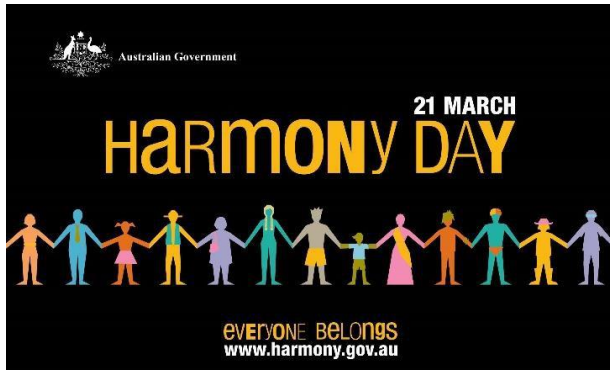
One of the things that makes Australia so great is the beautiful outdoor lifestyle we live. From beaches, rainforests and rivers, to snow-capped mountains, coral reefs and lakes, we have one of the most beautiful countries in the world.

But the healthy, outdoors lifestyle we enjoy is under threat from rising temperatures and more extreme weather caused by carbon pollution - it only takes a small change in the climate to mess up the delicate balance of nature.

That's why in 2016, we'll be switching off to protect the Places We Love!

Register here to switch off: <https://earthhour.org.au/home/>





Harmony Day:
Monday, 21 March

Harmony Day, 21 March 2016, celebrates Australia's cultural diversity. It's

about inclusiveness, respect and a sense of belonging for everyone.

It is a day for all Australians to embrace cultural diversity and to share what we have in common.

The central message for Harmony Day is that 'everyone belongs', reinforcing the importance of inclusiveness to all Australians.

The theme for Harmony Day 2016 is our diversity is our strength.

We want to hear how diversity makes you or your community stronger

'Our diversity is our strength, because together we...' share your thoughts with us using #harmonyday

From the biggest businesses that together are more connected to the world right through to the smallest pre-schools who together can learn about the world with their friends.

Find out more on the government website:

<http://www.harmony.gov.au/>

Easter Zombie

**Sunday: Sunday, 27 March
2016**

The event provides an opportunity for us to demonstrate the ridiculousness of heeding claims made by a book written hundreds of years before the advent of modern science.

In this case the words of Matthew 27:50-53.

Matthew 27:

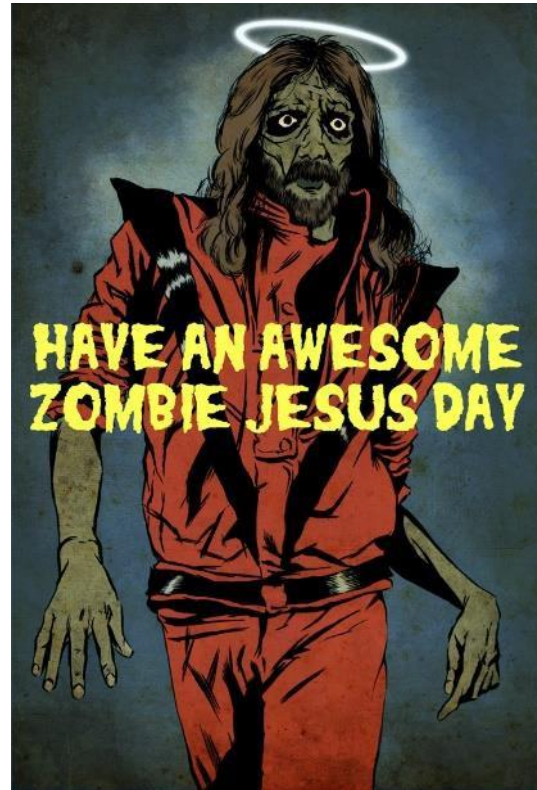
50: And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up his spirit.

51: Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to the

bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split,

52: And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised;

53: And coming out of the graves after his resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.



Please register your interest to participate with a Zombie Day event co-ordinator: zombie@progressiveatheists.org

Report:

Tim Minchin and Cardinal Pell

Comedy singer/songwriter Tim Minchin has written a song calling Cardinal George Pell “scum” for not returning to Australia to face the Royal Commission into child sexual abuse.



The cardinal has been given permission to give evidence via videolink to the royal commission into child abuse this month from Rome after a doctor’s report said he was too sick to return to Australia.

Minchin has used his music to express his anger at the decision in a song called Come Home Pell which he debuted on The Project on Tuesday night.

The singer’s song begins in a lighthearted manner joking about how the cardinal, who he calls “Georgie”, wanting a “doona day”. The lyrics take a harder line as Minchin implores the Cardinal to come down from his citadel and then he slams Pell singing: “With all due respect I think you’re scum and you should come home”.

To watch it: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EtH0mforqxk>
SMH: <http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/tv-and-radio/come-home-tim-minchins-lament-to-cardinal-pell-packs-a-punch-and-a-few-abuses-20160216-gmvvy9.html>

The Guardian Opinion:

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/feb/17/when-i-first-heard-tim-minchins-song-about-cardinal-pell-i-laughed-then-i-started-crying# =>

Report: Schools drop religious instruction

Dozens of Victorian schools have abandoned religious instruction after the state government moved the controversial program out of regular class time.

Lobby group Fairness in Religions in Schools said at least 55 schools had axed the program this year following changes introduced by the Andrews government, which they support.

The state's largest provider of special religious instruction, Access Ministries, said they expected the figure would rise.

In August, the Andrews government announced that special religious instruction would be axed from the Victorian curriculum and replaced with respectful relationship, global cultures, ethics and faith education.

The 30-minute religion classes can now only be delivered during lunchtime or before or after school.

Access Ministries spokesman Rob Ward said "bureaucratic obstacles" had made it challenging for some schools to continue offering the program.

Teachers must give up their lunch break, start work early, or stay back at school to supervise the classes, he said.

"We are very disappointed that the government made this decision. We don't think it is in the best interests of children," Mr Ward said.

He said Access Ministries had made its program more interactive to attract students during lunchtime.

"It is still about the principles and beliefs of the Christian faith, but it is more physical. There's craft work."

Read more: <http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/schools-drop-religious-instruction-after-government-changes-ban-teaching-during-class-time-20160219-gmyrnf.html#ixzz412vtjF8g>

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Progressive Atheists Inc.

Est. 10 Jan 2010 Reg: A0054119U Member of AAI

Progressive Atheists Inc. Open Meeting

Our next Progressive Atheists Inc. Open Meeting will be held on Open Meeting at 12 pm, Saturday, **27th February 2016** Melbourne Unitarian Hall, 110 Grey St, East Melbourne VIC 3002. All who support our purpose are welcome.

<http://www.meetup.com/Melbourne-Atheists/events/224846868/>
Reminder for March Open Meeting: **Saturday, 26 March 2016**

Progressive Atheists Purpose Statement:

<http://progressiveatheists.org/about-us/purpose-statement/>

Melbourne Atheists MeetUp Group | Event Calendar

Keep in touch with atheists around Melbourne via the Melbourne MeetUp:

<http://www.meetup.com/Melbourne-Atheists/events/calendar/>

Membership Term 2015 | 1 July 2015 – 30 June 2016

Progressive Atheists Membership is \$20 per annum / \$10 concession.

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Email our Membership Officer:

membership@progressiveatheists.org

OR ASK the person who gave you this bulletin

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