

A PROGRESSIVE CHRISTIAN VOICE AUSTRALIA

October 2017
www.progressivechristians.org.au

Postal Survey Coming Your Way! Don't forget to Vote!

If the postal survey hasn't come your way yet, it will be there soon! Christians from around Australia have stood up and said 'yes' to marriage equality believing that marriage equality is an extension of the divine love in the world. While there is skepticism about the validity of the postal plebiscite, it is important to ensure that we all participate in the vote. On the world stage over the last couple of years we have seen instances where major elections were held and a significant part of the population didn't participate out of surety of the result. We now know that we can't be sure of any result no matter what the popular opinion is. It is vital to have your voice counted in this matter.

Organizations such as A Progressive Christian Voice and Equal Voices under the banner of Australian Christians for Marriage Equality have put out a number of videos and images of Christian leaders and Church members discussing why they are voting yes. Please feel free to share these clips, pictures and stories on your social media or electronic communication. Also share your



Reverend Dr Peter Catt votes 'Yes'.



 **Australian Christians for Marriage Equality**



story or image of you posting 'yes' and why and send it to Australian Christians for Marriage Equality. It is a commonly held belief that Christians would vote no, and while we recognize that others may vote 'no', it is important to show you can be a Christian and vote yes as an extension of the Christian faith.

This year on the occasion of Brisbane Pride Festival Bishop Jeremy Greaves preached at St. John's Cathedral in Brisbane reminding us that 'in order to change the world, we need to change the story'

It is our job to be part of changing our story to be one of great hospitality using whatever voice that we have. Bishop Jeremy reminds us that 'there is still so much work to do; that in so many ways the struggle is just getting started'. This makes solidarity even more important as we support each other and spur each other along in this life and world changing journey.

- APCVA Team.

To access Bishop Jeremy's sermon please click link below.

goo.gl/NNw674

To find out more about Australian Christians for Marriage Equality check out their website

<http://www.christiansforequality.com.au/>

Equal Voice's Conference! Show Your Support and Be Informed About Issues Surrounding LGBTIQ+ Christians.

Equal Voices is a cross-denominational Christian movement dedicated to the full inclusion of LGBTIQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex) Christians in the life of the church. We believe that hearing each others' stories is an important first step in reconciliation.

Our first national conference is Saturday 21st October at University of Technology, Sydney.

We're excited to announce a final workshop that has been added to our conference program, and we have a special registration offer to assist people to attend.

We recognise some conference attendees may wish to bring along a friend, colleague, church member or family member, so are making available '2 adult tickets for the price of one' for a limited time.

In addition, another workshop has been added to the afternoon program: 'Telling Out Stories - Hearing Transgender and Intersex Voices'.

Naomi and Elise will share their stories and invite attendees to consider what pastoral care can look like for transgender and intersex people.



How do various faith traditions call their communities to respond to people seeking asylum in Australia today? How can communities of faith respond with compassion and justice, guided by religious teachings that call us to treat others as we would want to be treated, recognising the sacredness and dignity of all human life?

This afternoon workshop will introduce language and strategies for how to have value-based conversations informed and motivated by your faith with family, friends, fellow community members and people of influence about the issues that impact people seeking asylum. It will also be a chance to meet likeminded people who may want to take a collective approach in your community.

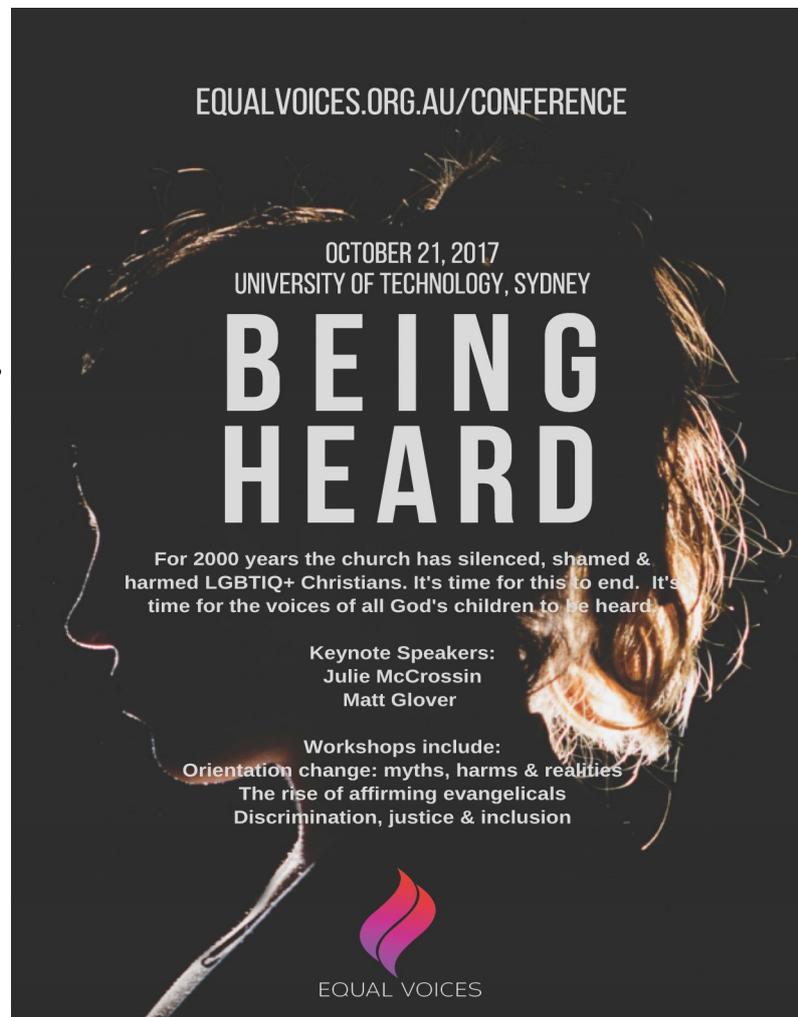
The content of these workshops draws on the findings of the ASRC's ground-breaking 'Words That Work' messaging research which found more effective ways of communicating about the rights of people seeking asylum. Workshops are interactive, with practical and inspiring ways for all of us to be part of making a real difference.

By working together we can transform the way our community thinks about people seeking asylum. For people of faith, this is an opportunity to come together with others who want to speak out about the injustices we see and advocate for compassion, justice, mercy and peace.

14th of October 1pm–5pm at St. Bernards Catholic Church, 4 Klumpp Rd, Upper Mt. Gravatt OR

29th of October 1pm-5pm at Aspley-Albany Creek Anglican Church, 30 Ridley Rd, Bridgeman Downs.

For tickets go to— asrccampaigns.nationbuilder.com



Our conference link is here: <https://equalvoices.org.au/conference>

Multi- Faith Workshop Justice for People Seeking Asylum

Dying with Dignity.

We have just released a briefing paper on Dying with Dignity, Voluntary Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide. The full document can be seen here. <https://tinyurl.com/yc52m3bo>

The briefing paper is designed to highlight the issues in the Australian context and particularly in relation to the Victorian Inquiry into End of Life Choices and the resulting Bill which has just come before the Victorian Parliament. It is intended to assist progressive Christians in thinking about these complex issues as legislation is proposed in each of the States or Territories in which they live. There is currently a similar Bill before the Parliament of New South Wales.

One of the issues that has become apparent as the briefing paper was prepared is the need to substantially increase the funding for palliative care. Unless this is done, alongside “Dying with Dignity” legislation, there is a danger that vulnerable people who cannot afford or access good health care

may feel pressure to consent to voluntary euthanasia. We note that the Victorian Government has given such a commitment to increase funding for palliative care. It is less clear that the New South Wales Government is so committed.

While it is the responsibility of individual members to decide on the merits or otherwise of legislation, it would appear on an initial reading that the Victorian Bill is more robust in its protections of the most vulnerable than is the New South Wales Bill. We would urge members in both States to use the briefing paper as a guide to their own assessments of the merits or otherwise of the respective Bills. We would also encourage you to distribute the briefing paper to politicians and other interested persons in your State.

Finally, a word about how this briefing paper came to be created. It originated from a meeting of progressive Christians in Victoria who felt that there was a need for a public response to the proposal for

death with dignity legislation being discussed in Victoria. A preliminary draft document was prepared and then approved for circulation by the Management Committee of APCVA. This document was then circulated to members and others who had expressed an interest in giving feedback. A second draft was then prepared and this document was circulated a second time for further feedback. Following feedback, a further draft was prepared and sent back to the Management Committee of APCVA who gave further feedback. A final document was then prepared and approved by the Management Committee.

The Management Committee is very thankful to its members and supporters who have helped create this important briefing paper.

Len Baglow, Management Committee, APCVA.

APCVA on the Radio Waves.

President of APCVA, Peter Catt, was interviewed last Sunday on Melbourne radio station 89.9 Light FM. The program is [Conversations with Clayton](#) and runs between 7pm and 9pm. 89.9 Light FM is Australia's largest community radio station with over 1 million monthly listeners. The conversation should be online on 89.9's website to listen to.

What is Your Story?

Sharing stories of our own life experiences are important not just for internal self-reflection, but for the community. Your story could change someone's life and help to guide them in hard situations and decisions.

APCVA is currently looking at including some members' stories on the website. What is your story of Faith? Many of our members have powerful stories to share of encounters in life, theology and the Church that lead them to progressive Christianity or to be instigators of change. Please email

tiffany.sparks@stpaulsashgrove.org.au your story if you would like to share your experiences

Promoting public awareness of the politically progressive dimensions of Christian opinion

- A Progressive Christian Voice (Australia): understands Christian opinion to be more diverse and broader than that portrayed by the media
- is dedicated to contributing insights from progressive streams of the Christian faith and community
- seeks to minimise the effect that powerful lobby groups have on public discourse
- is therefore concerned with promoting public awareness of the diversity of Christian opinion
- welcomes fresh and challenging contemporary insights into the interpretation of the Christian scriptures and tradition
- does not speak on behalf of any Christian denomination, congregation, community or organisation
- Our members come from a variety of backgrounds and traditions.



Like us on
Facebook

Our presence continues to grow on Facebook and Twitter. These platforms are important for letting the press know that we exist. If you haven't done so already please like us Facebook or follow on Twitter. Also don't forget to share material that you like or think is important. You can link onto our Facebook or Twitter accounts from the of the webpage.

<http://www.progressivechristians.org.au/>

Membership

This year we are hoping to build our membership to 500. We currently have about 158 members. You will shortly get an email suggesting ways you can help in building membership. In the meantime, if you have not renewed your membership below are details about how you can do it. Renewal fee, and any other contribution, can best be processed either by: Direct Debit to: *A Progressive Christian Voice (Australia) Inc.*

BSB: 633000 Account No: 146392212

or posting a cheque made out to: *A Progressive Christian Voice (Australia) Inc.* To Ray Barraclough, 25 Buderim Street, Currimundi, Qld 4551



Brisbane Marriage Equality Rally
Progressive Christians Represent.

Over September 2017 Australia wide rallies were held to support marriage equality. It was amazing to see thousands of people crowding the city streets in support of love and civil liberties. It was important to have positive Christian representation at the march all gathered under the banner of Australian Christians for Marriage Equality and Equal Voices. Thank you to all who came out for the afternoon for this event in your own cities. The next Brisbane rally is 1pm 21st October at Queens Gardens.