



- What are the dreams and expectations of young people?
- How do they react to the global challenges in their vulnerable lives?
- What role does religion play in their quest?
- And how do churches and faith communities respond to this?

By bringing young people into the conversation through empirical research, IASYM ensures that the association's work is relevant to contemporary youth around the world.

## Join the conversation

IASYM invites those interested in furthering the academic study and research of youth ministry, the formal teaching and training of youth ministry, and the growth and development of career youth ministry to join in the conversation—live, in print, and online. Affiliate Membership is open to academic institutions. Associate Membership is open to individuals who can demonstrate involvement in the study, research, or teaching of youth ministry. Join online at [iasym.org](http://iasym.org).

### Conferences

The next international conferences will be held in Pretoria (South Africa) from 6 till 9 January 2011 and in Cambridge (UK) in 2013.

### The Journal of Youth and Theology

The IASYM publishes a peer-reviewed academic journal twice a year that features interdisciplinary research in youth ministry.

### Online discussion

At [iasym.org](http://iasym.org) members share ideas and insights around the foundations and rationales behind youth ministry as a professional enterprise.

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# iasym

International Association  
for the Study of Youth Ministry

Supporting and developing  
the professionalization of  
youth ministry  
around the world



# iasym

The International Association for the Study of Youth Ministry (IASYM) is a global, not-for-profit organisation devoted to the professionalisation of ecumenical Christian youth ministry around the world. Our goal is to raise the profile of youth ministry as a calling and a career and to support local efforts in academic research and scholarship related to youth ministry.

## The birth of an idea

In the early nineties, Pete Ward was working as the youth adviser to the Archbishop of Canterbury. He got involved in different youth scenes in the United Kingdom, discussed topics of Christian faith and culture with them, played in their bands, and was part of the popular culture surrounding them. More and more he felt the need for a thorough reflection on his work with youth: the ministerial patterns, the church organisation issues and missionary methods, and the spiritual ways of "doing" theology.

Ward began to gather both reflective practitioners and practical theologians to consider issues of youth ministry:

- How are church and culture interwoven?
- How is God present in the biographies of young people?
- What kind of research is needed to better understand these difficult dialectics?

## Expanding the conversation

The first conference on youth ministry in 1995 grew out of the discussions Ward had with colleagues Dean Borgman (USA) and Christine Cook (Switzerland). The conversation brought together sixty people from around the world to share their latest scholarship on youth ministry. From that initial gathering, the IASYM was born in 2001. Today IASYM has nearly 400 members in over 40 countries.

## What makes us special?

As a global organisation, the IASYM celebrates unity-in-diversity. The association is radically ecumenical and fully international, representing the different confessions within the Christian community. The perspectives of evangelicals and main stream Christians, both situated within the two great traditions of Catholics and Protestants, provide an excellent forum for systematic-theological and practical-theological discussions on youth ministry.

There are many organisations around the world that focus on "how to" do youth ministry. But these "how to's" do not easily translate across cultural borders. The IASYM focuses on the "what" and "why" of youth ministry.

In order to help young people find "life in abundance" (John 10:10), one must first listen carefully and empathetically to their longings and daily needs:

