

Frequently Wondered Questions (but Rarely Asked)

Are you trying to convert me?

Getting people to sign up for Christianity is not part of our ethos.

For many of us, our faith in Christ is the life-source of our being. If others are interested in this, we are happy to share what is meaningful for us. However, our faith primarily motivates us to work for a better world rather than aim to convert others to our faith tradition.

Can I trust you?

We encourage critical engagement, including with us. Don't trust us because we sound OK in our promo material. Check us out and see what you think. Be critical – and let us know! If you feel you can't trust us, please tell us about it before you go elsewhere, so we can do better. If ASCM really doesn't work for you, we would hope to be able to help you find another supportive group where you are more at home.

Most of us who have been involved in ASCM have made life long friends through this group, both at our own university and across Australia.

We are broken people trying to be a loving community. We hope we are trustworthy, but invite you to come and make a decision for yourself.

Are you really Christian?

ASCM desires to serve God as seen in the Person of Jesus Christ. God becomes known to us through the Scriptures, through our own experiences, through the Holy Spirit, and through the life of the Church and the world.

Not all of our members would identify themselves as Christians, because we do not require people to make such an identification and understand that for some who have had difficult experiences of Christian communities it is not a helpful or healthy label.

We seek to follow Jesus, and in that we understand ourselves to be Christian.

*If I get involved,
will I be pressured to do stuff?*

It is possible that our small numbers could create a sense of pressure to be more involved that you are comfortable with. Please be encouraged to say 'no', turn up on your own terms, and let us know if you are feeling pressured.

We seek to offer a welcome that keeps the doors open for you to step away any time you choose.



Australian Student Christian Movement

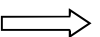


Frequently Asked Questions

How are you different to other Christian groups on campus?

Different Christian groups on campus have different emphases, such as: social networks, bible teaching, evangelism, activism and/or worship. Some are specific to one faith tradition or stream of spirituality, or are formed for a particular student group, such students in residential colleges, overseas students, students in a particular faculty, or post-grad students.

ASCM has an emphasis on exploring the social justice implications of Christian faith. We do this by discussing issues, seeking to remain aware of issues of injustice in our local and wider communities, and reading Christian scriptures in this context. We also try together to have a go at action to make a difference.



We welcome people from any Christian tradition, and also those from other faith backgrounds or who do not identify with any particular faith tradition but are interested in exploring issues of faith and life.

We welcome and seek to empower those who may be marginalised within other groups, especially gay lesbian bisexual transgendered and intersexed people.

We see spirituality as connected with our care for the environment, and aim to act accordingly.

As a small movement, we are able to provide a community where deep friendships develop and faith can be explored in an environment of love and trust.

We encourage critical engagement with all matters of spirituality and life, and welcome multiple perspectives, even if they are far from mainstream.

Are you associated with any particular church or Christian organisation?

ASCM is not connected with any particular church and explicitly seeks to welcome and include a wide variety of traditions.

ASCM is affiliated with the World Student Christian Federation. WSCF is an international ecumenical student organisation with affiliated student movements in over one hundred countries in six regions: Africa, Asia-Pacific (including Australia), Europe, Latin America & the Caribbean, Middle East and North America.

What do you actually do?

Each ASCM branch develops its own style and program. Some of the things you might expect are:

- ✦ Topical & biblical discussions
- ✦ Guest speakers
- ✦ Shared meals
- ✦ Movie & discussion nights
- ✦ Retreats
- ✦ Exploring alternative worship
- ✦ Shared attendance at justice events
- ✦ Small-scale local justice projects
- ✦ Advocacy for wider issues
- ✦ Opportunities to attend international workshops and exposure trips

What do you mean when you say you support gay lesbian bisexual transgendered and intersexed people?

ASCM welcomes and celebrates all people regardless of their sexual orientation. As an organisation we believe the Christian scriptures do not prohibit loving non-heterosexual relationships. In keeping with our commitment to including differing perspectives, we cannot guarantee that all individuals within ASCM will hold this belief. However, we expect anyone involved with ASCM to respect our organisational position and offer welcome regardless of their personal opinions on the relationship between sexual orientation and Christian teaching.

I like what you stand for, but what does Christianity have to do with it?

Our concern for issues of justice arises from a critical engagement with Christian teachings and traditions, which we believe contain a clear imperative to act for a better world. ASCM also believes that holistic action needs to be connected with spirituality, and that we do not act alone but in connection with 'God'. The amount we understand of what this God is like comes from our engagement with the story of Jesus of Nazareth and the history of those who have sought to follow him

Where can I find out more?

Our website includes general information and also links to local branch websites, where you can get an idea of what is currently going on within the movement.

www.ascm.org.au

The website of the WSCF gives an overview of the wider network we are part of, and information about programs and resources available internationally.

www.wscfglobal.org/

There are Wikipedia entries relating to both ASCM and WSCF.

A history of Student Christian Movements around the world was recently published:

Robin Boyd, *The Witness of the Student Christian Movement: Church Ahead of the Church*. (London: SPCK, 2007)