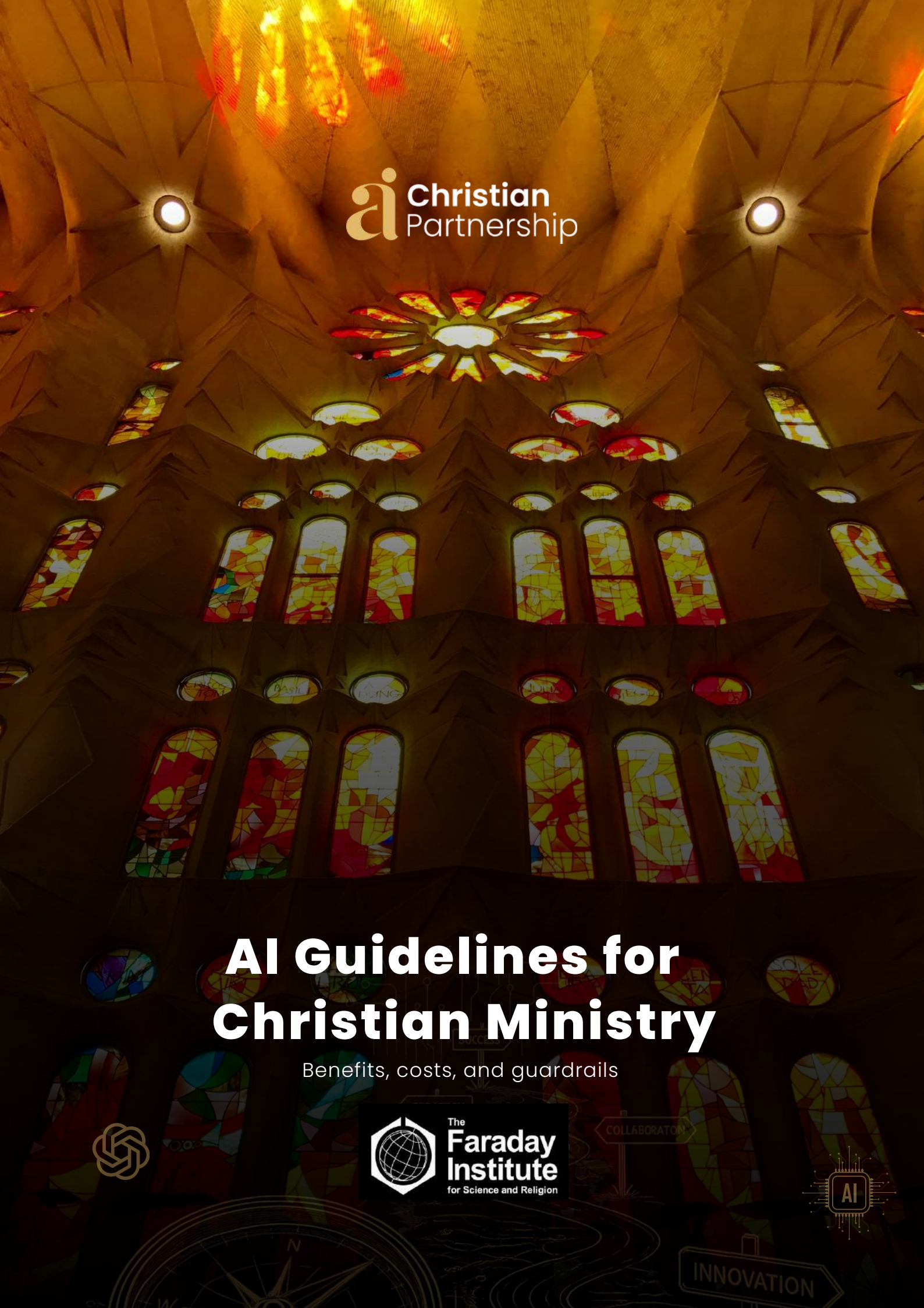




a Christian
Partnership

AI Guidelines for Christian Ministry

Benefits, costs, and guardrails



The
**Faraday
Institute**
for Science and Religion

COLLABORATION



INNOVATION

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How to use this document

Who is this for?

These guidelines are for church leaders, Christian ministry leaders, staff, and volunteers who are using, or considering using AI.

They will help you think through how to approach this immensely powerful new technology. Our goal is not to dictate how you use AI. Rather it is to ensure you understand the implications and feel equipped to have an informed conversation in your leadership team or congregation about the intentional use of AI.

The single most important goal is that you should have this conversation – don't simply allow AI to grow in your ministry, unchecked, without reflection.

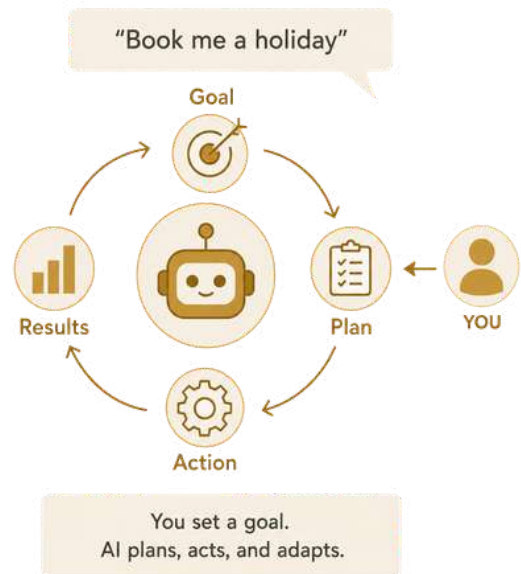
A hands-on approach

This is a practical non-academic approach. For many, these guidelines and a follow-up discussion may be all you need. If you wish to go further, we have provided an optional template "Church Statement on AI" in Appendix A. For churches that want to go further still, these guidelines provide a stepping stone to creating a formal AI Policy.

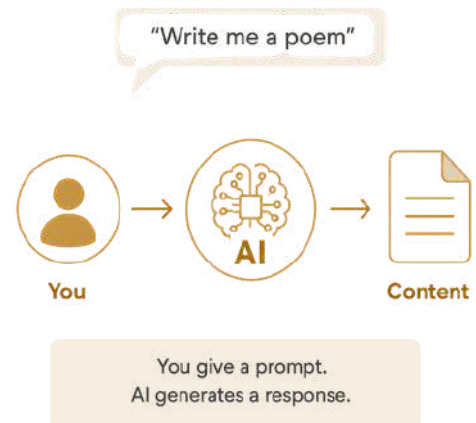
Throughout this document our focus is on how to think when approaching AI. For all of us this is a journey that will take time (and we have adopted "journeying" as a visual motif). To avoid over-complicating, the following are out of scope:

- An introduction and basic training on AI – although Appendix C contains introductory material.
- A full discussion of ethics – although some framing is provided.
- A theology of AI – again some framing is provided.
- Copyright law and data protection – these should be addressed through your own data protection / GDPR policies.

AGENTIC AI



GENERATIVE AI



What kind of AI?

These guidelines primarily refer to "Generative AI": ChatGPT, Gemini, CoPilot, Claude etc used transactionally to answer questions, take meeting notes, draft an email, generate ideas etc. This is the main way that people use AI today. Agentic AI and more advanced uses of AI are not directly covered, but the principles presented here will help you to approach any kind of AI.

This document is subject to change

AI is an area of intense activity and frenetic investment worldwide, so these guidelines will be revised and re-issued from time to time. Please register at www.aichristian.org to receive updates.

Why this matters and why it matters now

“

These guidelines are intended to help you ask not only,
“How should we use AI?”
but importantly,
“When should we not use AI?”

”

There are four “spaces” in church life where the impacts of AI may be felt



In the pulpit including sermons, prayers, liturgy, even worship songs etc



In wider ministry including pastoral care, small groups, church meetings etc



In the back office including communications, data processing, policy creation etc



In the congregation many people in our congregations are using AI in everyday life and will have opinions and questions, including questions on ethics and theology

This document is focused on the first three areas but will help prepare you for the fourth. It is primarily aimed at church leaders but also relevant for leaders of other Christian organisations.



Section 1

Why this matters and why it matters now

AI is being silently adopted in organisations worldwide including churches and Christian charities, often without conversation about how to use it, when to avoid it, or where it could lead. AI is also increasingly ambient – present around us whether we choose it or not.

Forward-thinking church leaders are asking,
“How can we use AI in ministry safely and well?”

for example, in writing liturgy, designing small-group resources, planning sermon series, or back-office administration, as well as day to day research and note-taking [1].

AI can bring significant advantages to those in ministry and tasked with promoting the Gospel.

If we refuse it entirely, we lose these advantages and we abandon our leaders, volunteers and congregations to adopt AI privately with no Christian framing – effectively outsourcing discernment to employers, schools, and tech billionaires. At the same time, a creeping dependence on AI introduces risks. AI can compromise our ability to think critically, pray deeply, and grow in Christ, and AI itself stands accused of generating unemployment and exacerbating climate change.

Section 2

A distinctly Christian approach to AI

Traditional Christian discernment

A fair question is: why can't we simply rely on proven practices of Christian discernment and waiting on the Spirit when approaching AI? AI after all is "just another resource", albeit a powerful one. Surely, we should discern and reflect on all content we gather from any source – not just AI? Why should AI be different?

If your considered view is that AI is not really any different to other resources such as a book or a website, you may well decide that no further guidance is needed. However, it is our view that AI is different – and in fundamental ways.

Firstly, with a book or website we know the author, tradition, or organisation we are trusting. With AI, even if it gives us named sources (which may be made-up), we cannot know how it derived its conclusions. The finest engineering minds in the world struggle to explain how AI arrives at a particular answer.

Then there are new risks introduced by AI (as well as benefits) which do not occur with any other resource. These change the conditions under which discernment must operate.

AI brings new dynamics including instant solutions, intense flattery, highly personalised responses, and pseudo-relationships. It is often active across many areas of a person's life including hobbies, children, and employment, as well as our faith; and all this operates at a velocity and scale we have never seen before.

Slow formative Christian practices including Scripture, prayer, wise counsel, patience, good stewardship, attentiveness to the Spirit and dependence on God will always remain primary and cannot be substituted by some new "rule of thumb". In fact, AI increases the need for these traditional practices. Christian principles of discernment must provide the context in which these AI guidelines sit. But AI is not "just another resource", it demands new thinking.

According to Christian theology, humans are set apart from any artificially created intelligence. Even if AI became sentient (conscious) and granted human rights, as some suggest, it would still lack embodied experiences – such as feeling the warmth of the sun or knowing the taste of ice-cream [2]. It also has no values or ethics of its own [3], no moral agency of its own, and importantly, it does not share our fragility, fallenness or redemption. Most importantly, since AI is not made in the image of God, it cannot have a relationship with God.

Paradoxically, this means AI can help Christians to see more clearly the value of human distinctiveness. AI creates opportunities to understand and lean into what it means to be embodied – as a kind of reaction against AI that can otherwise replace human presence.

For example, a conversation held by the AI Christian Partnership on AI companions in care homes led to an emphatic discussion about what makes human to human pastoral care irreplaceable. And one Christian organisation now states clearly on its website, "... every interaction you have with us is human".

This is a useful side-effect of AI. It's not about retreating into the past; it's about going forward whilst re-valuing human relationships. Christianity has the tools and the language to answer the question, "what makes us different to AI?" and people are surprisingly keen to hear this.

Becoming
"more human"

“Christianity has the tools and the language to answer the question, *what makes us different to AI?*”

Section 3

Benefits and costs of using AI in ministry

Benefits of using AI in ministry

AI has many potential uses in ministry as summarised below. In this section, references to “trial participants” refer to the feedback received from the UK Pilot Trial of these Guidelines:

◆ Administration, and communications

Churches are using AI for meeting summaries, administrative reports, and for organising events including programme preparation and event-checklists. In communications, AI can produce clear polished wording very quickly, including newsletters, posts, images, videos. All this can free time for relational work.

◆ Brainstorming

As a brainstorming partner, AI can spark ideas and make connections between themes, news stories, Bible passages, and our previous work. It can help us think better by critiquing our work and raising viewpoints we have missed.

Several trial participants stated that this was one of their main uses of AI.

◆ Research and preparation

As a research assistant, AI can summarise articles or books and help gather material, without necessarily replacing prayerful study or judgement.

◆ Applying Church teaching

AI can re-purpose sermon material into discussion questions for homegroups, summaries for social media, or a set of daily devotionals.

Going further, some churches use AI to create an interactive resource based on the Sunday sermon, which can discuss questions that congregants either didn't want or didn't get chance to ask in person. This can be a trained chatbot or an interactive podcast. However, there are risks, and some participants report dissatisfaction with this use case.

◆ Creative support

AI can assist with images and media, eg generating draft visual concepts for sermon series or cleaning up audio or video material already captured by the church.

However, there is ongoing debate as to whether this constitutes ethical use of AI.

◆ Evangelism and mission support

Christian Vision use AI to translate and lip sync evangelistic videos into local languages, while Wycliffe Bible Translators state on their website that AI enables ... “local Bible translators to produce high-quality translations quicker than ever”.

◆ Support for inclusion

AI can support inclusion for neurodivergent, disabled, or multilingual users – for example by simplifying text, generating audio from written material, producing captions, and translating spoken content into other languages- reinforcing Christian values of hospitality and accessibility [10].

Many churches already use commercial AI applications to translate their Sunday services into multiple languages [4].

◆ As a “welcome chatbot”

Several UK churches offer an “AI-welcomer” on the church website, usually restricted to answering straightforward, questions that people type in, such as: *Are there activities for children in this service ... Where do I park? ... etc.*

If God can use any medium we commit to his purposes, there is a place for AI in promoting the Gospel and growing disciples. There are many examples of AI being used well, Reference [4] and Appendix B provide some of these.

Costs of using AI in ministry

Creeping dependence on a new and enticing technology like AI is almost inevitable. As with social media, we may not fully grasp the impacts of AI until later, with hindsight. We therefore encourage churches with foresight to consider these now.

Short-term costs – manage by good AI practice:

◆ Hallucination and factual errors

AI can provide plausible answers which are factually incorrect. Sometimes this is obvious, but often it is subtle, easy to miss, and can lead to a blurring of truth [11].

◆ Bias and echo chambers

AI is biased in several ways.

Its first bias is toward you – the user – AI chatbots are sycophantic – they flatter, even enchant us [12].

AI models are also biased because of how they are trained using the input of hundreds of human trainers all of whom have biases and fallen perspectives.

As a simple example, an AI may have a very different perspective on scripture than your church, or, much worse, its flattery can lead you ever deeper into your own niche perspective – a new and powerful echo chamber.

◆ Misuse of personal data

Personal or sensitive information uploaded to AI may be stored and misused by the AI.

Medium-term costs – mitigate with good AI practice

◆ Loss of critical thinking skills

Poor use of AI weakens our ability to think independently. This “race to the bottom of the brain stem” has been demonstrated [8] – and should come as no surprise.

However, it is also true that dedicated training and advanced use of AI can extend our critical thinking. One example is where people who have never written software before, use AI to code an app for their personal use.

◆ Addiction

AI is addictive by design. Some of the best engineering minds in the world are dedicated to “keeping us coming back”.

◆ Job displacement

AI will disrupt or displace many desk-based jobs [1]. Anyone using a laptop or device in their work will have their job disrupted and this is a major concern for our society. There will be categories of new jobs, but the transition to these will be confusing for all of us, and painful. Offering support to people facing disruption is a calling to all of us in Christian ministry.

◆ Replacement of human companionship

AI has a seductive feel; it draws us in and invites us into a kind of relationship. There is a particular risk to young people [13] and in extreme cases this has led to AI assisting in suicide. As someone said, “AI is stealing our hearts – and it’s doing it in broad daylight”.

However, we also note [14] that AI is being given a “companion role” in some regulated contexts for managing stress and significantly reducing loneliness in the elderly.



“As with social media, we may not fully grasp the impacts of AI until later, *with hindsight.*”

Medium-term costs – specifically Christian – mitigate with good AI practice

◆ Compromised spiritual formation

AI offers us the end-result without the struggle. But often it is in the struggle to write a prayer, understand a verse, or construct a sermon, that God forms us, and even meets with us. If we habitually short-circuit this wrestling because the end result is all that matters, our spiritual growth may suffer. For Christians, the process must also matter.

◆ Losing a sense of the Holy Spirit

If AI eventually writes our prayers, reflections, or worship songs, we may start to wonder whether God is still in them ... eventually we may stop asking the question at all.

AI can be a great asset for ministry, or it can leave us with a fast-food version of ministry – impressive on the outside but lacking the Holy Spirit on the inside.

◆ Open to influences of evil and idolatry

AI as an increasingly omniscient and omnipresent entity can attain a central place in our lives and become a default “authority” for seeking answers, generating ideas, and giving counsel. This is a kind of idolatry, but unlike idols in the Old Testament. “Idols that speak are hard to resist” [12]. We may gradually cede to AI authority in our lives and churches that properly belongs to God. We have come across cases where AI dependence is replacing prayer for some Christians.

◆ The imperfect becomes unacceptable

Although we should always strive for our best, Christian theology embraces fallenness, fragility, and imperfection. If, let’s say, the polished prayers of an AI became normalised, there is a risk that people feel disinclined to offer prayers because their own, genuine but less eloquent prayers, feel inadequate.

Long-term costs to monitor

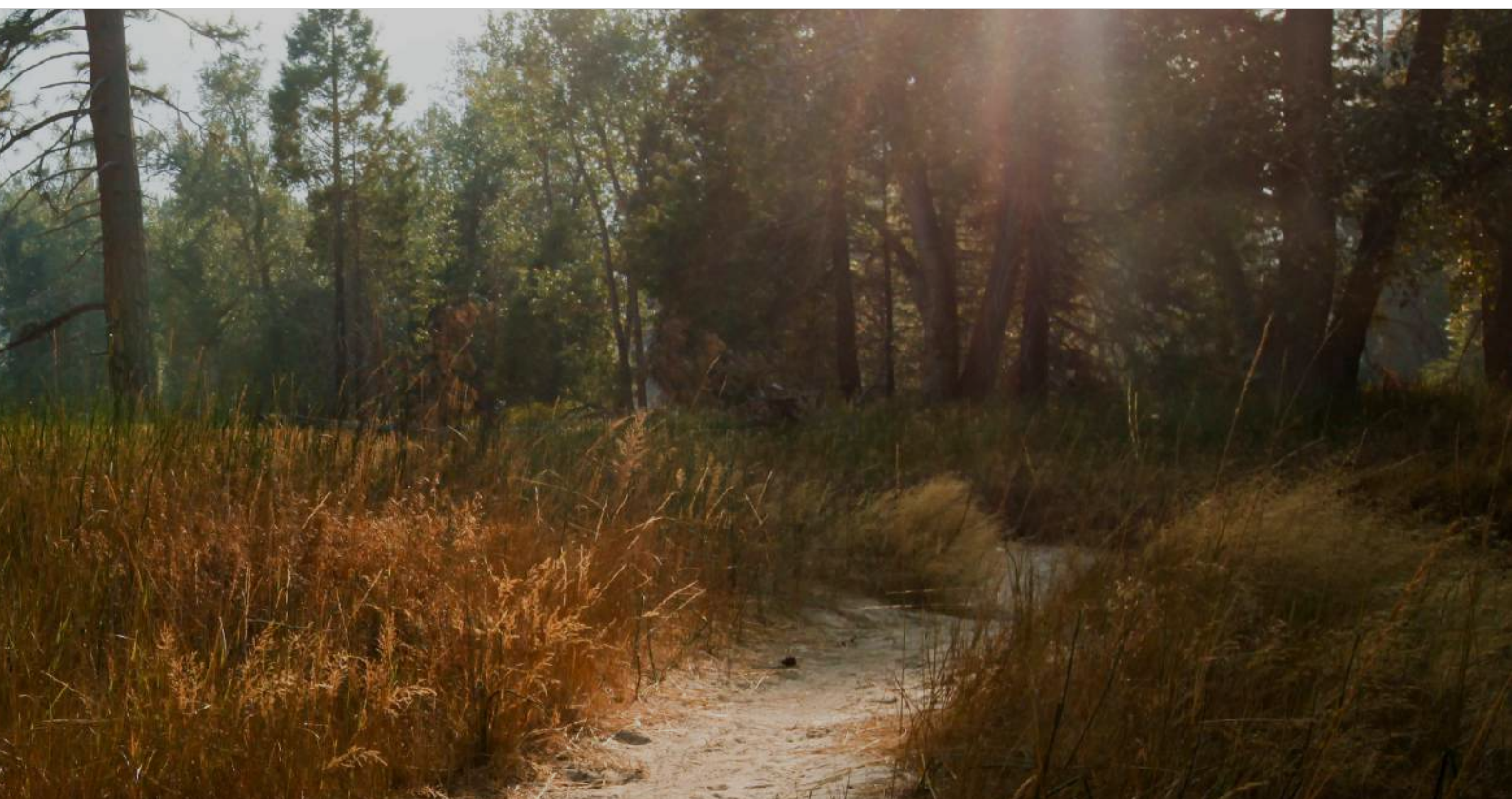
◆ Environmental impact

Due to its heavy usage of energy and water, AI is linked with exacerbating climate change.

◆ Existential risk

Some respected thinkers argue that the current unchecked pursuit of super intelligent AI inevitably leads to an extinction level event for humanity. Others disagree.

Given this list of concerns some may feel that AI has no place in Christian ministry, but this is impractical as AI brings benefits, and as our church members adopt AI either voluntarily or because their employer mandates it. Moreover, our congregations need guidance and support in this area. If churches simply respond: “don’t use AI”, many will see this as unhelpful and out of touch.



Six Ethical Principles

Section 4

There has been excellent work on Christian ethics and AI. Notable examples include work from the Church of England [5], and [9] which provides a useful starting point for anyone involved in Christian ministry, not only clergy:

“ Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be a valuable tool in ministry for communication, administration and education. However, clergy should use AI responsibly with wisdom, theological discernment and pastoral sensitivity. They should be careful what they input into AI tools and be alert to the danger that AI can produce output that is misleading, biased, false or plagiarised. Above all, clergy must ensure that AI serves the Gospel and does not replace attentive listening to the voice of God. ”

Additionally, the 2025 Vatican Report “Antiqua et Nova” [6], opens with this instructive call *[next Page]*

More recently, the encyclical Magnifica Humanitas warns Christians that, in practice, “technology is never neutral” [17], and calls for careful discernment about who shapes AI and who benefits from it.

And finally, other, more specialised, groups such as Missional AI have also produced helpful, ethical frameworks [18] explaining the thinking that ministry leaders need to adopt.

A common thread across all of these works is to identify ethical principles that must anchor our use of AI. Here we merely summarise six principles especially relevant to local churches.



Transparency

Integrity in churches matters and people should know when and where AI is being used in their church. People should also know if they themselves are interacting with AI – for example if you added a chatbot to your church website.



Privacy

Uploading personal details (names, contact details) or even anonymised pastoral visiting notes, creates a risk that this data may be used by AI for training and could breach GDPR. Most paid-for AIs have an option to not use this information, but there remains a risk.

“With wisdom both ancient and new (cf. Matthew 13:52), we are called to reflect on the current challenges and opportunities posed by scientific and technological advancements, particularly by the recent development of Artificial Intelligence.”



Caring for creation

Churches Together in England affirm the Christian calling to: “strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth” [15]. This is also an issue of justice, given the disproportionate impact of climate change upon the poorest people on earth.

As Christians we should take account of AI’s high consumption of water and electricity in training large language models and running data centres, as well as its use of precious and rare-earth metals in chips and servers.

At the same time, AI can also help mitigate climate change, for example by improving weather prediction and extreme-weather forecasting.

For a detailed treatment of AI ethics, refer to [5], [6], and [7].

Having summarised our ethics (what we value), we now proceed to guidelines to help us put these values into practice.



Accountability

If we use AI in any of our work, we are accountable for it. We cannot use a tool badly and then say, “AI did it”. Church leaders are accountable for uses of AI in their church, including checking AI output for truth and bias.

AI in ministry should always be under human authority and oversight. AI is safest when used by people who understand the subject matter and the context, and remain accountable.



Human dignity

We must hold the tension between using AI for its many benefits and yet prioritising human-to-human relationships. We are not only accountable for uses of AI in our ministry, we are also accountable for ensuring that human dignity and pastoral care stay at the centre of our planning and conversations, and are not replaced by “efficiency”.



The common good

In general, when using AI, we must pursue what is good. Good for us, good for our churches and good for our world. This requires discernment and ongoing reflection as AI develops.

We can seek good by checking AI output for bias that reinforces prejudices, injustice or exclusion. We can seek good by checking for the specific risks to Christians noted previously, eg when AI undermines spiritual formation. And we can seek good by agreeing not to use AI, either to practise our thinking skills or to avoid trivial use of a resource-hungry technology.

Guidelines for good practice

Section 5

01. Ask great questions

AI is pushing society from solving problems to asking questions.

The only way to use AI well is to learn to ask questions really well – and remember that AI has a sycophantic nature – AI is relentlessly affirmative about almost anything we type and gives answers it deduces will please us. So ask open questions – don't lead the witness. For example:

Instead of asking	Try
Did Paul write the letter to the Philippians from a prison-cell in Rome?	Where are the likely locations from which Paul wrote Philippians?
Is penal substitution the biblical view of atonement?	Summarise the major Christian views of the atonement, and the Bible passages that support each one
Here's a report on two alternative heating systems. Which one should I choose?	Here's a report on two alternative heating systems. Explain the pros and cons of each one to me simply, and suggest questions I should ask the team who wrote it, so we can make an informed decision

“ AI is relentlessly affirmative about anything we type. ”

02. Fact check what comes back

This seems obvious – but we say it anyway. AI works by providing plausible responses, not necessarily correct responses – probabilistic rather than deterministic. We always need to ask if the answer is good, accurate, biased, or simply made up? Validating what comes back is as important as asking the right question.

Hence, AI is best used by people already expert in the field who can ask a question well and validate what comes back-the human-in-the-loop principle. If AI delivers answers which we don't understand, we are at risk.

03. Use AI to critique not create

If we repeatedly use AI to short-cut our way to an end result, we can weaken our critical thinking skills [8] and miss out on the Christian truth that God uses our struggles to shape us. A better approach is: do the work yourself, then use AI to improve it. If you want a simple, memorable rule of thumb, “use AI to critique, not create”.

“Critique” includes any secondary tasks like researching, summarising, checking, and offering alternative perspectives. See the examples below.

Instead of asking AI to “create”	Try asking it to “critique”
Write an email to our church members on [some topic]	Help me cut my email down to 300 words without losing the heart
Write an intercessory prayer for the Sunday service reflecting current news	Summarise the major news events this week for me, international and local
Draft an outline sermon for me based on <<passage / topic>>	Here is the text of my sermon. Which parts are most engaging, and which are the least? Is any of it confusing?

If you want to develop this idea further, think of your work in two dimensions:

Firstly, Critical V Non-critical work that you do

- Critical: could include public teaching, liturgy, pastoral guidance – anything that carries authority or could reasonably cause harm
- Non-critical: routine operations or communications – where errors are inconvenient but won’t cause harm

You have to make these choices yourself as they will vary depending on context, the individual and their experience with AI.

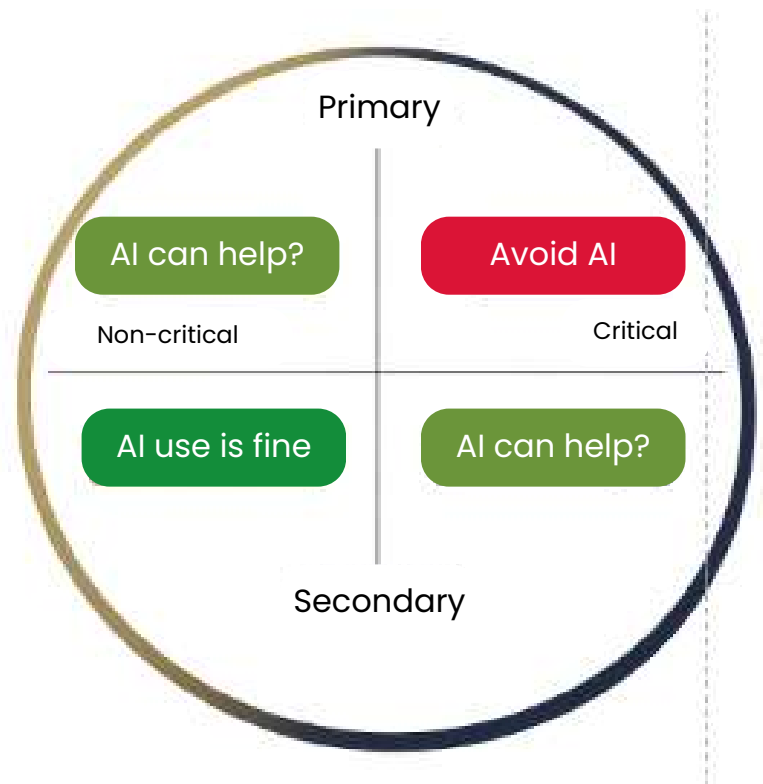
“ These guidelines will not train you in the step-by-step use of AI, but they will help you to know how to think when approaching AI. ”

Secondly, Primary V Secondary use of AI

- Primary use: AI generates the first significant draft or core content (AI is the main author)
- Secondary use: AI supports your work (research, critique, summarise, brainstorm, provide alternative perspectives etc)

Guideline: For critical work use AI only as a secondary tool, or not at all.

If AI is the primary tool, keep it to non-critical work.



For example, when preparing a sermon (which for most of us is “critical”), Secondary uses of AI with your oversight could include: web-based research, a reminder of what you have written before, or suggesting small-group questions. But scriptural interpretation and pastoral application are Primary and (we suggest) remain the responsibility of the preacher.

People will have differing views on what counts as “critical” in their context, and that’s fine. The point is to be intentional. As humans we have a creeping dependence on technology – increasingly adopting it until it becomes invisible ie we don’t even realise we’re using it. Our use of AI must consciously include both God and us. Doing some prayerful heavy-lifting ourselves helps keep the balance.

04. Be transparent re your use of AI

For reasons of integrity, it is good practice to acknowledge your use of AI.

There are different ways to do this without “over disclosure” which creates unnecessary anxiety. You could simply agree at a Church Meeting that AI can be used in some situations. Or you could offer case by case attribution if AI is used as a “primary tool”. Done well, over time people will become accustomed to this attribution.

Transparency is dealt with in Appendix A.

05. Contain your AI

You may decide to limit your church to specific, named, AI tools. If so, be clear about which AI tools your church will use or prohibit. This can simply be a list of trusted tools.

A further step could be to try to limit where AI gets its answers from. This is a complex topic, but the following summary may help:

General-purpose tools	Specialist restricted tools	Source based tools
Eg ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, or Copilot	Eg Magisterium AI – pre-trained on Catholic sources	Such as Google’s NotebookLM which you can focus on specific sources
These are trained on vast amounts of internet content and will draw freely on everything they have learned making them highly versatile, but you cannot control what they draw on	This works well but the underlying model still carries broader knowledge which can surface when the AI cannot find “a good answer” in its permitted sources	These prioritise documents you provide – PDFs, videos, websites etc – and work with these very powerfully. Containment is strong but not absolute: they may draw on background knowledge

Contain how your data will be used by AI

AI tools with a paid subscription come with increased user-control on how your data is used. Use a paid subscription, check the settings and switch off data sharing options. Even with these settings don’t input sensitive information like identifiable children’s data, safeguarding or sensitive pastoral details, or other confidential HR/disciplinary information.

Additionally, paid-for AI tools often incorporate “Custom Rules”. This can help you to shape the way your AI responds. Here’s one example of a custom rule included here for illustration:

- *Talk to me informally like a wise friend. Don’t waffle, get to the point, don’t make stuff up and don’t flatter me – but if genuine praise or criticism is due, give it to me. I appreciate alternative views I may not have thought of. And don’t end every response with a follow up suggestion.*

Lastly, note that AI meeting tools (eg from Zoom, Teams, or Google Meet) vary. Some create audio or video recordings; others do not create a recording, but transcribe, process, and may store what is said. Ensure participants are OK with your AI note-taker.

06. Discern falsehood from truth

We have not so far discussed the proliferation of fake audio, videos or images generated using AI. This is a complex area but, in the spirit of providing guidelines that are easy to remember, here is a simple rule of thumb that we can use and encourage others to use.

Heads and hearts:

Use your head: whenever you come across a strange, surprising, or emotionally charged image or video, or post, always ask: “where did this come from? ... Is it a source I recognise and can trust?” It doesn’t matter if you don’t agree with the source but is it a serious source? Eg The Guardian and The Telegraph newspapers in the UK are at opposite ends of the political spectrum, but they both employ serious journalists, intent on discovering truth. Always check the source.

Use your heart: ask “how does this make me feel?” ... If a post or video makes you, say, immediately angry or salacious (eager to share it), it may well have been designed to do just that. Take a beat – don’t simply forward it on.

[11] contains a helpful reflection on the nature of truth.

07. Treat AI as an intern not an expert

We can be empowered by AI or overpowered by AI – it’s our choice.

Think of AI as an enthusiastic intern – smart, keen, and quick – but it doesn’t know the rich history of your church or organisation, it makes mistakes, and it always has its own bias. Treat whatever comes back as an **opinion**, its opinion may be correct, slightly off, or completely wrong. Work with it as you would an intern: iterate. If, say, you’ve used AI to draft a newsletter article, you might say,

“Try again but make this simpler and warmer.”

The general prompt: “have another go, but like this...” is very useful.

And think of AI as a sparring partner – a sounding board to test out ideas. Challenge what comes back, disagree with it. **A poor response from AI can very often help us realise what a good response looks like**, and develop it ourselves. Good use of AI will sharpen your thinking. And ask AI to ask you questions. For example:

- *I’m considering a career change. Don’t suggest a new career. Just ask me 5 questions I should ask myself to help me reflect on my career progression and my goals*
- *I’m about to write an introductory letter for our Annual Report. Don’t write it for me. Just ask me 3 or 4 questions to help me scope it down and identify areas to focus in on*

The crucial point here is to tell AI NOT to do the authoring for you (this needs to be stated).

“Use AI to release your thinking – not replace it.”

08. Choose not to use AI!

Using AI well means understanding where not to use it at all.

A recent “workplace report” by Microsoft and Harvard Business School [16] draws on what it calls “frontier firms” – those companies at the cutting-edge of using AI. It states that 43% of professionals in these organisations intentionally do some work without using AI in order to keep their human skills sharp.

“ [frontier professionals] intentionally pause before starting work to decide what should be done by AI versus a human ... Frontier Professionals refuse to outsource their thinking—they know long-term success means continuing to build human skills and not letting them atrophy. ”

This is a trend known as “frictionmaxing”, where we deliberately choose analogue over digital solutions, eg choosing to write with pen and paper instead of a keyboard, or using a physical map instead of GPS. Deliberately not using AI is frictionmaxing.

If the secular world recognises the importance of not depending on AI, how much more so those of us who claim to depend on wisdom, and the Holy Spirit!

What about images and video?

Several trial respondents asked for guidelines on using AI for creating images, videos, and audio. At this stage, we do not offer a specific guideline, but the following are worth noting:

- Image and video creation are much more resource-hungry operations than generating text – see our Caring for Creation ethic.
- You should consider your view on valuing and appropriately paying designers and artists – see our Human Dignity ethic.
- And yet you may have no access to a person adept in using tools such as Adobe Photoshop – and it is also true that some of these skills are being commodified by AI.



Section 6

What to do next

In a recent discussion on AI in ministry, one person pointed out that, on the Emmaus Road, Jesus deliberately allowed the disciples to remain in a muddle for what was probably hours. Somehow their struggle, their doubting, their confusion was sufficiently important for Jesus to allow it to persist. There was something going on that was more important than immediately jumping to the “right answer”. The moment of revelation came only later, over the meal: ‘Then their eyes were opened, and they recognised him’ (Luke 24.31).

AI gives and takes away. We get polished answers by the dozen, but we may pay a price that we have not yet fully understood. Its usage must be intentional and considered, and not simply because it seems to be the most efficient.

At the start of this document, we stated that our aim was to help you to understand these implications, apply them to your ministry, and to have a meaningful conversation on how to use AI intentionally in your church or context. Hopefully, it has become clear that how we use AI is as important, possibly more important, than whether we use AI. The better question is not: “Is the Spirit at work in AI?” but: “Is the Spirit at work in me as I use AI?”

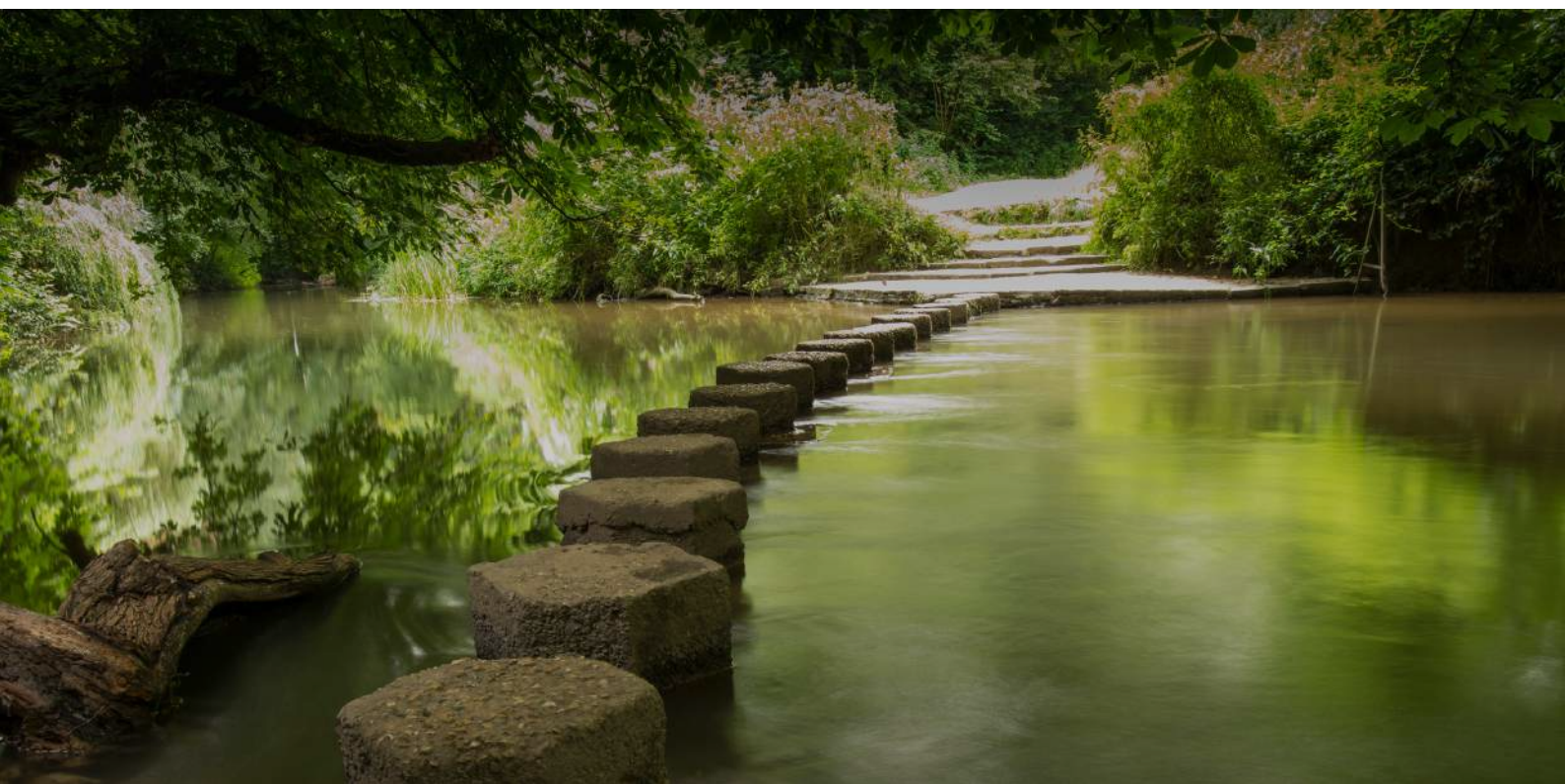
Moving forwards, we believe that churches have a role not only to discern appropriate guardrails for use of AI in their context, but also an educational role in helping congregations navigate AI in everyday life, managing the questions of ethics and theology that will arise.

How to have a meaningful conversation

You may already feel confident and equipped to have a conversation in your ministry leadership team without further assistance. Go ahead!

If you want more help there are two resources, described on the next page, that you can draw from to create this conversation among your team or congregation.

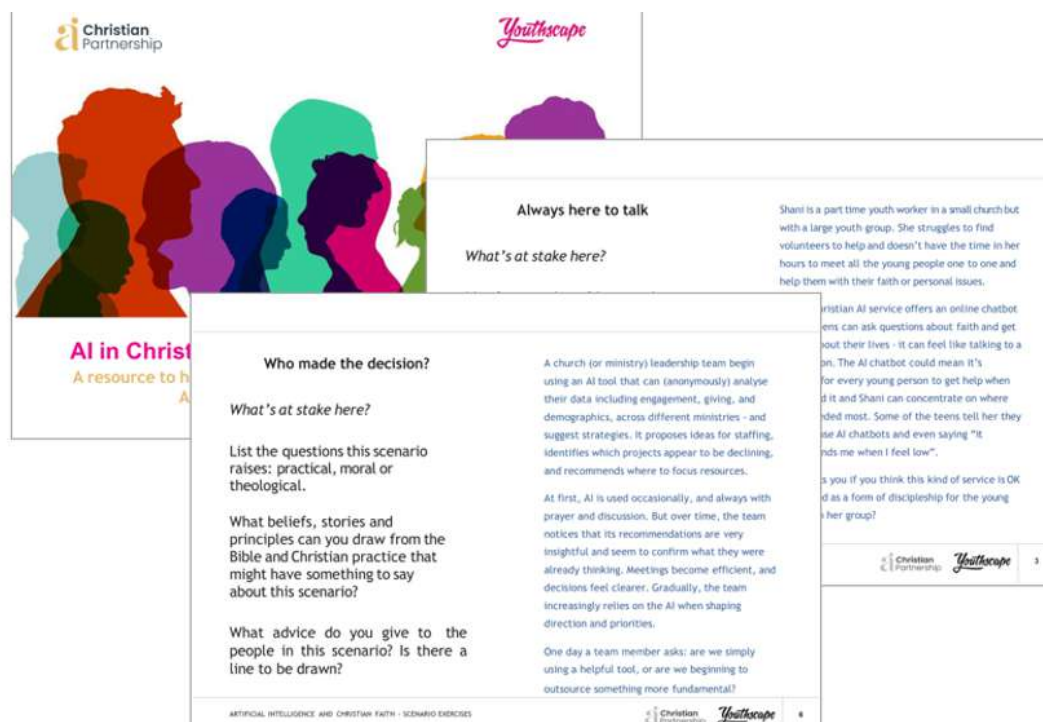
In terms of educating our teams and congregations, we hope to provide more material on this soon. In the meantime, members of the AI Christian Partnership already provide education and training, within reasonable limits, around the country. We also encourage you to sign up at aichristian.org (free) for important updates in the world of AI and faith, and for the next release of these guidelines and related resources.



Further resources

Church Life Scenarios

This is a set of cards designed to create discussion among a team of leaders or any interested parties. Using “everyday church situations”, they offer a chance to explore the benefits and dilemmas of AI in Christian ministry in an interactive manner.



Available from our website as a free download: <https://aichristian.org/resources/>

The second resource is the template Church Statement on AI in Appendix A.



Appendix A – Your Church Statement on AI

This is an optional tool to enable you to effectively communicate both at ministry team level and congregation/team level. It helps put the ethics and guidelines in this document into practice.

Available from our website as a free download: <https://aichristian.org/resources/>

Appendix B – Examples of using AI in church ministry

We are collating examples of how churches and leaders are using AI in ministry. Please send these to us (chris@aichristian.org) and they will be available as a link from <https://aichristian.org/resources/>



Appendix C – Further reading and viewing

These optional articles and videos, mainly authored by AI Christian Partnership Core Team members* and referenced in the text, were selected for their clarity and accessibility.

1	The AI Revolution – What Every Church Leader Needs to Know – Video 2025 James Poulter* Explores the acceleration of AI capability and implications for churches. Leaders should use AI for functional and administrative tasks but safeguard the distinctly human, relational core of ministry.	<u>AI Christian Org</u>
2	The limitations of sermons produced by AI (shortened) 2024 Tim Bull* AI can generate fluent content, yet still lacks lived experience, moral depth, and spiritual awareness and remains fundamentally different to humans.	<u>AI Christian Org</u>
3	Why We Shouldn't Expect AI to Be More Moral Than Us 2025 Rob Hornby* Why AI cannot possess moral agency. Responsibility, judgment, and ethical decision-making should remain with human beings.	<u>AI Christian Org</u>
4	When is AI an intelligent choice for churches? 2026 Chris Goswami* A positive summary of some of the life-affirming ways that AI is being adopted in Christian ministry.	<u>AI Christian Org</u>
5	Artificial Intelligence The Advice of the Church of England Ethical Investment Advisory Group 2024 Church of England Ethical Investment Advisory Group A framework of ethical principles, some applicable to all technology, some specific to AI – addresses risks, opportunities, and the protection of human dignity and social good.	<u>Church of England</u>
6	ANTIQUA ET NOVA Note on the Relationship Between Artificial Intelligence and Human Intelligence 2025 The Vatican Vatican statement setting out ethical and theological principles for AI, emphasising human dignity, moral responsibility, and the need for technology to remain at the service of the human person.	<u>The Vatican</u>
7	Resisting AI – Missional AI Summit, London – Video 2025 Simon Cross* Positions AI within a wider spiritual search for meaning and hope, encouraging forms of ethical and spiritual resistance that protect human presence and community.	<u>AI Christian Org</u>
8	Your Brain on ChatGPT: Accumulation of Cognitive Debt when Using an AI Assistant for Essay Writing Task 2025 MIT Study The long-term educational implications of Large Language Model reliance.	<u>MIT Study</u>
9	Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy (DRAFT) 2026 Church of England Guidance outlining the professional, pastoral, and ethical standards expected of clergy.	<u>Church of England</u>

10	Technology and the Marginalised 2025 Ruth Bancewicz* How AI and digital systems can deepen exclusion and inequality for vulnerable people, or be used as a tool for inclusion, calling churches to respond with justice and discernment.	AI Christian Org
11	Truth and authenticity in an age of AI (shortened) 2024 John Wyatt* How AI-generated content can blur truthfulness, and authenticity, and the need for Christian integrity, transparency, and responsibility.	AI Christian Org
12	Enchanted by AI: Christian, Muslim, and Jewish Responses to Artificial Intelligence 2025 Chris Goswami* How AI systems designed to be responsive and affirming create a subtle bias toward flattery that can reinforce echo chambers and lead to idolatry.	AI Christian Org
13	Raising kids in an AI world – Video 2025 Chris Goswami* The impact of AI on teens. From AI “friends” and cheating at school and radicalisation, to personalised learning, career preparation, and tools to help teens discern well.	AI Christian Org
14	Artificial Intimacy – Podcast series 2026 Financial Times	Financial Times
15	What is Mission? Churches Together in England	Churches Together in England
16	2026 Work Trend Index Annual Report Microsoft	Microsoft
17	Magnifica Humanitas – Encyclical 2026 The Vatican On safeguarding the human person in the time of Artificial Intelligence	The Vatican
18	From Responsible to Redemptive – E-Book 2026 Missional AI A Christian Framework for AI Ethics — 7 Principles to Help You Navigate AI with Integrity, Purpose, and Faith	Missional AI
Introductions to AI – not referenced in the text		
19	AI through a Christian lens – Video 2025 Rob Hornby* A detailed but clear explanation of how Generative AI works by prediction and by simulating understanding. Compares the good of AI with the Christian ethical framework, grounded in God’s love.	AI Christian Org.
20	Faith and AI: how worried should we be? 2026 Tim Bull * An accessible talk on AI, truth and what makes us human – argues that the issue is not AI, but how easily we can be misled, distracted, or tempted to over-trust technology.	AI Christian Org

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	From February to April 2026 this document was trialled by ten church leaders / leadership teams from four denominations, and a small number of independent experts, in different parts of the UK and their feedback taken into account.
	Staff and Students who attended AI Training also provided helpful feedback and comments.
	Especially in helping to set up the Pilot Trial



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