MINISTRY GOVERNANCE / POLICY AI

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

POLICY FOR UNITED YOUTH & MINISTRY

A biblical and ethical framework for pastors, ministry staff, lay leaders, volunteers, students and church members.

OUR GUIDING CONVICTION

Technology may assist ministry. It must never replace biblical faithfulness, human responsibility or the work of Christian discipleship.

Prepared for consideration by the leadership and Youth Team:

ORGANISATION	United Youth
STATUS	Active
REVIEW	Bi-Annually or following significant changes

POLICY OVERVIEW

A framework for faithful use

The policy starts with theological convictions, translates them into operational standards and then addresses ministry-specific applications and accountability.

The question is not only whether AI can do something, but whether it should.

CONTENTS

01 Purpose and policy statement
02 Biblical and theological foundations
03 Standards governing all AI use
04 Pastoral ministry and preaching
05 Pastoral care, counselling and prayer
06 Lay, children's and youth ministry
07 Academic integrity and theological education
08 Privacy, copyright and public communication
09 Appropriate use and risk categories
10 Responsibilities and governance
11 Transparency, breaches and accountability
12 Practical discernment questions
13 Our commitment as a church
A–C Examples, checklist and related guidance

READING NOTE

This is a policy; Church leadership should review it alongside applicable diocesan, safeguarding, privacy, employment and educational requirements before full adoption.

1. Purpose and Policy Statement

1.1 Our Christian Conviction

The church exists to glorify God by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ, making disciples, teaching the Scriptures, building up believers in love, and bearing witness to the world.

The emergence of artificial intelligence presents both opportunities and challenges for this mission. AI can assist with research, administration, communication, accessibility, creativity and ministry planning. However, its capabilities also raise important questions concerning truthfulness, human responsibility, pastoral integrity, theological authority, privacy, authorship, spiritual formation and the faithful stewardship of Christian ministry.

As a church, we recognise that technological innovation is neither inherently righteous nor inherently sinful. Technologies must be evaluated according to their purposes, their effects, the character of their use and their consistency with God's revealed will.

Our responsibility is not merely to ask, *Can artificial intelligence perform this task?* We must also ask:

- Should this task be delegated to technology?
- Is this consistent with Scripture?
- Does it strengthen or weaken Christian maturity?
- Does it honour the dignity and privacy of people?
- Are we being truthful about how the work was produced?
- Does this promote genuine ministry or simply greater efficiency?
- Can we undertake this activity with a clear conscience before God?

The biblical principle of **1 Corinthians 10:31** governs our approach: "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."

Technology must therefore remain subordinate to the worship of God, the authority of Scripture and the calling of Christians to love their neighbours.

1.2 Our Policy Position

The church permits the responsible and appropriately supervised use of artificial intelligence where it contributes to effective ministry without compromising biblical convictions, Christian character, academic honesty, pastoral responsibilities or the safety and dignity of others.

AI may assist human ministry, but it must never become a substitute for the responsibilities entrusted to human ministers and members of Christ's church.

Every person using AI in connection with church ministry remains accountable for the content they produce, the decisions they make, the information they disclose and the manner in which their work is presented.

2. Biblical and Theological Foundations

The church's response to AI must begin with the Scriptures rather than the assumptions of technological culture.

2.1 Human Beings Are Made in the Image of God

Genesis 1:26-28; Psalm 8:4-8; James 3:9

Scripture teaches that human beings are uniquely created in the image and likeness of God. Human dignity is not determined by intelligence, productivity, technological capacity or economic usefulness. It is rooted in God's creative purpose.

AI systems may perform intellectual tasks, produce sophisticated language and simulate human conversation. Nevertheless, they are not human beings made in God's image and cannot assume the covenantal, moral and pastoral responsibilities entrusted to God's people.

Policy implications:

- People must never be treated as replaceable because AI can perform some of their tasks more efficiently.
- AI must not be used to manipulate, dehumanise or exploit individuals.
- Pastoral care must preserve genuine human relationship, compassion and responsibility.
- Technological efficiency must not become the principal measure of successful ministry.

The church must remain a community of embodied people, united in Christ and serving one another.

2.2 Human Creativity Is a Gift to Be Stewarded

Genesis 2:15; Exodus 31:1-5; Colossians 3:17, 23

God created humanity with capacities for creativity, reason, language, work and the development of useful tools. In Exodus 31, Bezalel is equipped with wisdom, understanding, knowledge and craftsmanship for the construction of the tabernacle.

Human creativity can therefore be exercised in service to God's purposes. AI can be understood as one technological instrument developed through human ingenuity. In suitable circumstances, its use may be consistent with faithful stewardship.

However, the existence of a useful tool does not justify every possible use of it. Christian stewardship requires wisdom about what should be automated, what should remain personal and what ought not be undertaken at all.

2.3 Human Knowledge and Technology Are Affected by Sin

Genesis 3:1-7; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 1:21-25; James 3:13-18

Human beings are fallen creatures whose desires, judgments and inventions can be directed towards both legitimate and sinful purposes. AI systems are developed by fallen human beings, trained on human-produced material and deployed within a world marked by ignorance, bias, deception, exploitation and conflicting moral commitments.

Their outputs are therefore not morally neutral simply because they have been produced by a machine. AI can generate false information, reflect cultural assumptions, reinforce prejudices or communicate confidently about matters it does not accurately represent.

Christians should resist the temptation to equate technological sophistication with truth or wisdom. Proverbs 14:15 reminds us that the prudent person gives careful thought to their steps.

Policy implication: Every AI output must be evaluated critically rather than accepted because it appears intelligent, persuasive or professionally written.

2.4 Scripture Is Our Supreme Authority

Psalm 19:7-11; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Acts 17:11; 2 Peter 1:20-21

The Scriptures are God-breathed and sufficient to equip God's people for faith and godliness. Although Christians benefit from theological scholarship, historical resources, commentaries and digital tools, none of these possesses the authority of Scripture.

AI is particularly limited when used to address biblical interpretation because it may generate plausible but inaccurate explanations, fabricated references or theological conclusions that do not reflect the meaning of the biblical text.

Accordingly:

1. Scripture must remain the primary source for Christian doctrine, preaching and discipleship.
2. AI-generated interpretations must be independently examined.
3. Biblical references, quotations, original-language claims and historical assertions must be verified.
4. AI must never be presented as an authoritative interpreter of God's Word.
5. Theological convictions must not be adopted merely because an AI system recommends them.

The Bereans provide an important model in Acts 17:11: they examined the Scriptures to determine whether what they heard was true. This responsibility is no less important when information comes from artificial intelligence.

2.5 Christian Ministry Requires Faithful Human Shepherds

Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 4:13-16; 2 Timothy 2:15; 4:1-5; 1 Peter 5:1-4

Pastors and teachers are entrusted with responsibilities before God. They must devote themselves to Scripture, sound doctrine, prayer, personal godliness, teaching and the loving oversight of God's people.

Paul's instruction to Timothy is especially significant: "Watch your life and doctrine closely" (1 Timothy 4:16).

The minister is responsible not only for communicating correct information but also for cultivating godliness, demonstrating Christian character and setting an example to believers.

The preparation and communication of God's Word is therefore more than content production. Prayerful study, theological reflection, personal application and pastoral attentiveness are themselves formative aspects of the minister's calling. AI cannot undertake these responsibilities on behalf of a pastor.

A minister may receive technological assistance, but cannot delegate faithfulness.

2.6 Truthfulness and Integrity Are Christian Obligations

Exodus 20:16; Proverbs 12:22; Ephesians 4:25; Colossians 3:9; 2 Corinthians 8:21

God's people are commanded to speak truthfully and reject deception. Dishonesty is not restricted to explicit lies. It can also involve intentionally creating a false impression about one's knowledge, labour, qualifications, research or authorship.

Presenting substantial AI-generated work as independently researched or personally written, where this representation is misleading or breaches an agreed standard, is inconsistent with Christian integrity.

The obligation to truthfulness applies equally to seminary assignments, academic research, sermon preparation, ministry training, church reports, public communication, and employment or ministry applications.

The church must model integrity even when dishonest conduct would be difficult to detect.

2.7 Christian Wisdom Requires Discernment, Freedom and Love

Romans 12:2; Romans 14:1-23; 1 Corinthians 6:12; 8:9-13; 10:23-24; Philippians 1:9-11

Christians may reach different conclusions about certain uses of AI that Scripture does not directly prohibit. However, Christian freedom must be exercised with wisdom, love and concern for others.

Paul teaches that something may be permissible without being beneficial or constructive. We must therefore consider not only whether an action is technically allowed, but also whether it encourages godliness, strengthens the church and serves our neighbours.

Some Christians may choose not to use generative AI in personal study, writing or ministry preparation. Such conscientious decisions should be respected. Equally, responsible use should not automatically be condemned where Scripture and legitimate ministry standards permit it.

Christian liberty does not excuse dishonesty, negligence, breaches of confidentiality or disregard for legitimate authority.

3. Standards Governing All AI Use

The following standards apply to anyone using AI in an official church/Ministry capacity.

Standard 1: Biblical Faithfulness

AI-generated content must be consistent with the teaching of Scripture and the church's accepted doctrinal commitments. Theological content requires particular scrutiny.

Standard 2: Human Accountability

A human leader must remain responsible for all work produced or assisted by AI. AI must never become the final decision-maker in matters requiring pastoral authority, theological judgment or the exercise of church governance.

Standard 3: Honesty and Transparency

AI assistance must not be concealed where disclosure is required or where concealment would create a materially misleading impression. The extent of disclosure should reflect the significance of AI's contribution.

Standard 4: Accuracy and Verification

Users must independently verify facts, quotations, biblical references, research findings and any material claims. AI must not be treated as a reliable primary source merely because it provides citations.

Standard 5: Privacy and Confidentiality

Personal, pastoral, sensitive and confidential information must not be entered into unapproved AI systems.

Standard 6: Responsible Stewardship

AI should improve the church's capacity to serve people rather than merely increase output, reduce human involvement or create unnecessary dependence.

Standard 7: Christian Formation

AI use should support, not circumvent, the development of biblical literacy, sound judgment, theological understanding, prayerfulness and personal maturity.

Standard 8: Safeguarding

The safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults takes priority over convenience or technological innovation.

Standard 9: Respect for Intellectual Property

Users must respect copyright, licensing conditions, attribution requirements and the work of other authors.

Standard 10: Appropriate Oversight

The higher the risk associated with an AI activity, the greater the degree of approval, documentation and human supervision required.

4. AI in Pastoral Ministry and Preaching

4.1 The Primary Responsibility of the Minister

Preaching is the proclamation and explanation of God's Word for the building up of God's people. It involves careful exegesis, doctrinal faithfulness, prayerful reflection, wise application and the personal responsibility of the preacher.

The minister is called to be a faithful worker who correctly handles the word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15).

The church therefore rejects an approach to sermon preparation in which the preacher simply requests a complete sermon from AI, reproduces the material and delivers it as the fruit of personal biblical study.

This risks undermining both the authenticity of the minister's preparation and the formation that should occur through sustained engagement with Scripture.

4.2 Appropriate Uses in Sermon Preparation

AI may be used to assist with:

- Generating preliminary research questions.
- Comparing potential sermon structures.
- Identifying issues requiring further investigation.
- Suggesting possible illustrations or applications.
- Improving grammar, spelling and clarity.
- Evaluating whether an argument is understandable.
- Critiquing a sermon outline already developed by the preacher.
- Summarising non-confidential material for subsequent verification.
- Producing discussion questions from a completed sermon.
- Creating accessible versions or translations of material, subject to review.

These uses should strengthen the preacher's work rather than replace it.

4.3 Unacceptable Uses in Sermon Preparation

Ministers must not:

- Present substantially AI-written sermons as their own original preparation without appropriate disclosure and accountability.
- Rely on AI-generated exegesis without independent study.
- Use invented quotations from theologians, commentators or historical figures.
- Cite books, articles or commentaries that have not been verified.
- Present AI-generated personal stories as genuine experiences.
- Allow AI to determine the doctrinal position of the church.
- Substitute AI-generated applications for thoughtful pastoral consideration of the congregation.
- Use AI in ways that materially breach the expectations of their supervising minister or church leadership.

4.4 A Recommended Sermon Preparation Process

Stage 1: Personal engagement with Scripture. Read and examine the biblical passage independently. Consider context, structure, genre, argument and the author's intended meaning.

Stage 2: Prayerful reflection. Pray for understanding, faithfulness, personal holiness and the good of those who will hear the sermon.

Stage 3: Responsible theological study. Use the biblical text, credible commentaries, historical theology and appropriate academic sources.

Stage 4: Limited AI assistance. Where helpful, use AI to critique structure, identify possible objections, suggest communication improvements or raise further research questions.

Stage 5: Independent verification. Verify any claims, quotations, theological conclusions and illustrations suggested by AI.

Stage 6: Personal ownership. The preacher must understand, affirm and take responsibility for the entire sermon.

Stage 7: Appropriate accountability. Substantial AI involvement should be disclosed to the supervising minister. Where it significantly shaped material publicly represented as the preacher's own work, transparent acknowledgment should also be considered.

Routine spelling and grammatical assistance ordinarily does not require a public announcement.

Governing conviction: The preacher must never allow AI to replace the hard, good and spiritually necessary work of wrestling with Scripture.

5. AI in Pastoral Care, Counselling and Prayer

5.1 The Personal Nature of Christian Care

Romans 12:15; Galatians 6:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:14; James 5:14-16

Christian pastoral care is relational. It involves listening, compassion, encouragement, correction, prayer, wisdom and faithful presence.

AI may help pastors locate general biblical resources or prepare generic educational materials, but it must never be treated as a replacement for genuine Christian care.

The church affirms that those experiencing grief, spiritual distress, relational conflict, loneliness, suffering or serious personal difficulties deserve compassionate and responsible human attention.

5.2 Permitted Assistance

Subject to confidentiality requirements, leaders may use AI to:

- Locate potential biblical passages for pastoral reflection.
- Develop generic pastoral training resources.
- Prepare general teaching on grief, prayer, suffering and discipleship.
- Improve the readability of non-confidential pastoral communications.
- Generate general questions for reflection that are subsequently reviewed by a minister.

Such material must be evaluated for biblical accuracy and pastoral sensitivity.

5.3 Prohibited and Restricted Activities

Church workers must not enter into unapproved AI systems:

- Confidential pastoral conversations.

- Identifiable prayer requests.
- Counselling or confession records.
- Details of abuse allegations.
- Medical, psychological or financial information about identifiable individuals.
- Personal information about children or vulnerable adults.
- Sensitive information about marriage, relationships or family conflict.

Changing a person's name does not necessarily make their information anonymous. Contextual details may still identify them.

AI must not independently determine whether someone requires pastoral intervention, professional support, disciplinary action or safeguarding escalation. AI must not be used as a substitute for responding to someone at immediate risk of harm.

Pastoral principle: A church member should never discover that a deeply personal confidence was disclosed to an AI service without proper authority and safeguards.

6. AI in Lay Ministry, Children's Ministry and Youth Ministry

6.1 Biblical Responsibility of Lay Leaders

Ephesians 4:11-16; Colossians 3:16; Titus 2:1-8

Lay ministers and volunteers share in the responsibility to serve and build up the church. Although they may not hold ordained office, their conduct and teaching remain matters of serious Christian responsibility.

Youth leaders, children's leaders, growth group leaders, SRE teachers, music leaders and other volunteers must demonstrate integrity in preparing and delivering ministry.

6.2 Appropriate Uses

With suitable supervision, AI may assist with:

- Planning ministry schedules.
- Developing games, activities and discussion prompts.
- Drafting generic announcements.
- Producing age-appropriate explanations for review.
- Editing leader training documents.
- Developing illustrations or visual teaching aids.
- Creating administrative templates.
- Improving accessibility and communication.

All teaching content must be checked against Scripture and approved ministry plans.

6.3 Teaching and Discipleship Standards

Leaders who prepare Bible talks or studies must personally examine the relevant passage and understand the material they teach.

AI-generated talks or studies must not replace personal preparation, biblical comprehension or approved teaching oversight.

A youth leader who cannot explain the biblical argument, defend the central interpretation or answer basic questions about the teaching material should not rely on AI to conceal that lack of preparation.

The purpose of preparing a Bible talk is not simply to produce acceptable content. It is also to grow as a student of God's Word.

6.4 Safeguarding Children and Young People

The church adopts the following safeguards:

1. No identifiable information about children or youth participants may be uploaded to unapproved AI tools.
2. Images, recordings or voices of children must not be used to generate synthetic media without appropriate authorisation, consent and safeguarding assessment.
3. AI-generated images or videos must never be used to sexualise, humiliate, impersonate or exploit any person.
4. Minors must not be directed to unapproved AI companions, counselling chatbots or automated pastoral services as a substitute for supervised care.
5. AI may not independently communicate with minors on behalf of the church.
6. Any AI use within school-based religious education must comply with the relevant school, curriculum, departmental and authorised provider requirements.
7. Existing Safe Ministry reporting procedures must always take precedence over AI-generated advice.

The church's Safe Ministry Policy, applicable diocesan standards and relevant legislation remain binding.

7. Academic Integrity and Theological Education

7.1 Why Academic Integrity Is a Christian Matter

Proverbs 10:9; Luke 16:10; Colossians 3:23; 2 Timothy 2:15

For Christians, academic honesty is not merely compliance with an educational institution. It is an expression of discipleship.

A theology student is not simply completing assignments. They are developing habits of careful interpretation, honest research, intellectual humility, perseverance and sound theological reasoning.

These habits are essential for faithful ministry.

A student who uses AI to bypass the intellectual labour required by an assessment may obtain an academic outcome without acquiring the knowledge and skills the assessment was intended to develop.

This creates a serious problem when the qualification is later used to establish credibility in preaching, teaching or pastoral leadership.

The church must never encourage academic achievement at the expense of genuine learning and Christian character.

7.2 Institutional Academic Requirements Take Precedence

All students undertaking theological, biblical, ministry or other academic study must comply with the specific AI policy of their educational institution and the instructions for each assessment.

Where an institution prohibits AI assistance for an assessment, that prohibition must be respected even if this church policy would otherwise permit the activity.

Where an institution allows limited AI assistance, students must remain within those limits. Permission must never be assumed.

7.3 Appropriate Academic Uses

Where expressly permitted by the institution, AI may assist with:

- Explaining unfamiliar academic terminology.
- Generating study schedules.
- Identifying possible research questions.
- Suggesting lines of inquiry.
- Providing general feedback on clarity and structure.
- Assisting with spelling and grammar.
- Helping students understand referencing conventions.
- Providing practice questions or revision exercises.
- Explaining general linguistic or theological concepts that are then independently verified.

Such assistance must not replace assessed learning outcomes. For example, if an assignment tests independent exegesis, students must not delegate the exegetical reasoning to AI.

7.4 Unacceptable Academic Uses

Unless explicitly permitted under the relevant assessment rules, students must not:

- Submit AI-generated arguments or paragraphs as their own original scholarship.
- Use AI to produce an assignment that they were required to complete independently.
- Submit AI-generated biblical exegesis as evidence of their own interpretation.
- Invent bibliographical sources, quotations or page references.
- Cite works they have not consulted or independently verified.
- Use AI-generated summaries as substitutes for required reading.
- Conceal AI assistance when disclosure is required.
- Use AI to rewrite copied material in order to disguise plagiarism.
- Submit AI-assisted work that breaches the permitted level of assistance.

A claim may be academically dishonest even when it is factually correct. The issue is not only whether a statement is true, but whether the student has truthfully represented the origin and nature of their work.

7.5 Theological Research and Original Languages

Special care is required when AI is used to discuss Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, textual criticism, biblical history, patristics or systematic theology.

AI can produce explanations that sound academically credible while misrepresenting grammatical constructions, lexicons, source material or scholarly positions.

Students and ministers must independently verify relevant claims using appropriate primary sources and credible scholarly materials.

A fabricated quotation attributed to Augustine, Calvin, Luther, Cranmer or a modern scholar must never be used simply because an AI system supplied it.

7.6 Academic AI Disclosure

Where institutional rules permit AI use and require acknowledgment, the student must provide a truthful declaration.

Suggested declaration: "I used [AI tool and version, where known] to assist with [specific permitted tasks, such as generating research questions or reviewing grammar]. The biblical interpretation, research, argumentation and final written work are my own. I have independently verified all sources and followed the assessment's AI requirements."

This example must be adapted to the student's actual use and the institution's required declaration format or context in which you are in, like youth ministry, kids ministry and so on.

7.7 A Pastoral Approach to Academic Dishonesty

The church recognises that academic dishonesty can arise from fear of failure, pride, exhaustion, poor time management or a desire for recognition.

These circumstances may help explain misconduct, but do not justify it. Where dishonesty occurs, leaders should encourage truthful acknowledgment, repentance, appropriate restitution and genuine growth.

The church should cultivate a culture in which faithful learning matters more than impressive results.

8. Privacy, Confidentiality, Copyright and Public Communication

8.1 Privacy as an Expression of Love

Proverbs 11:13; Philippians 2:3-4; 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Confidentiality is not simply an organisational obligation. It is one expression of care for our neighbours.

People entrust church workers with information concerning their lives, families, struggles and spiritual circumstances. That trust must be honoured.

8.2 Information Handling Requirements

Church workers must not upload personal, confidential or sensitive church information into public or otherwise unapproved AI tools.

This includes congregation databases, private contact lists, giving records, pastoral files, personnel information, ministry incidents and internal safeguarding material.

Use of AI with personal information requires specific authorisation, a documented assessment of the tool and its data practices, and compliance with applicable privacy obligations.

Approval of an AI product for general use does not automatically authorise the disclosure of confidential information.

8.3 Public Communication and Media

AI may assist with drafting public announcements, newsletters, promotional material and website content. However:

- Published information must be factually accurate.
- The church must not fabricate testimonies or misrepresent real events.
- AI-generated images must not create a misleading impression of actual church activities.
- Synthetic audio or video must not impersonate real people without appropriate authority and consent.
- Material AI-generated content must be disclosed where necessary to avoid deception.
- Public communications must remain subject to appropriate editorial oversight.

The church must not use AI to create false impressions of attendance, spiritual outcomes, testimonies, community engagement or financial performance.

8.4 Copyright and Intellectual Property

Church workers must respect copyright and intellectual property requirements when using AI.

They must not assume that material is freely available for AI processing merely because it can be accessed online or is available under a church licence.

Permission to reproduce, display or distribute a work does not necessarily include permission to use it in AI systems.

Before uploading substantial copyrighted material, such as a book, commentary, academic article, music recording or photograph, users must establish that the proposed use is permitted.

AI-generated outputs must also be checked for potentially infringing, unattributed or misleading material before publication.

9. Appropriate Use Standards and Risk Categories

The following categories establish the church's minimum operational expectations.

CATEGORY	EXAMPLES	CHURCH STANDARD
GREEN: Generally permitted	Spelling, grammar, generic scheduling, public-content formatting, non-sensitive brainstorming	Permitted with ordinary human review
AMBER: Requires care or approval	Sermon research support, theological teaching aids, public-facing AI content, significant AI-assisted drafting, approved-tool work involving personal data	Requires greater verification and, where stipulated, ministry supervisor approval
RED: Prohibited or formally restricted	Confidential pastoral data in unapproved tools, deceptive authorship, fabricated academic sources, autonomous pastoral decisions, harmful synthetic media involving minors, unapproved AI contact with children	Must not proceed; exceptional proposals require formal review and applicable safeguards

9.1 Routine Administrative Use

Generally permitted examples include formatting rosters without private data, improving generic policy wording, developing event-planning templates and editing public information.

The person using AI remains responsible for the final result.

9.2 Substantive Ministry Content

AI involvement in sermon preparation, doctrinal resources, Bible studies, formal training, policy development and sensitive public communication requires higher standards of verification.

The responsible ministry leader must approve the final material where that is required by existing ministry procedures.

9.3 High-Risk Uses

AI must not independently:

- Make decisions about pastoral discipline.
- Assess a person's spiritual standing.
- Determine employment or ministry suitability.
- Evaluate allegations of misconduct.
- Decide safeguarding responses.
- Approve payments or other significant financial transactions.
- Produce authoritative pastoral advice without responsible human review.

These decisions require appropriately authorised human judgment.

10. Responsibilities and Governance

10.1 Senior Minister and Parish Council

The Senior Minister, with appropriate Parish Council involvement, is responsible for establishing governance arrangements for AI use. This includes:

1. Approving AI tools for official church use.
2. Ensuring staff and volunteers receive suitable guidance.
3. Establishing procedures for confidential information.
4. Appointing responsible persons for AI-related concerns.
5. Overseeing significant AI deployments and associated risks.
6. Ensuring compatibility with existing diocesan and parish policies.
7. Reviewing the policy regularly.

10.2 Ministry Staff

Staff must:

- Use approved systems for church work.
- Protect sensitive information.
- Review and verify significant AI outputs.
- Maintain truthful authorship and disclosure.
- Follow their supervisor's direction.
- Report errors, breaches or concerns promptly.

10.3 Lay Ministers and Volunteers

Volunteers must use AI within the boundaries established by their ministry leader. They must not assume that access to a tool constitutes approval for every use.

When unsure about theological, confidentiality, safeguarding or academic implications, they should consult their supervising leader.

10.4 Church Members

Members are encouraged to approach AI with Christian discernment. The church does not seek to regulate every member's lawful personal use of technology.

However, members are encouraged to apply biblical principles to personal study, work, education, relationships and digital habits.

Members should be especially careful about sharing information concerning other people and about relying on AI-generated spiritual advice in place of Scripture and trustworthy Christian community.

10.5 Technology Approval Requirements

Before the church formally adopts an AI product, an authorised leader should consider:

- What the tool will be used for.
- Whether personal information is involved.
- Who can access submitted information.
- Whether prompts or outputs may be retained or used for model training.
- Security protections and account access controls.
- Relevant contractual, legal and copyright obligations.
- Whether human oversight is adequate.

- Risks of inaccuracy, bias or harmful output.
- Whether a less intrusive alternative is available.

Where supported, approved accounts should use appropriate security controls, restricted access and privacy-protective settings.

The church should maintain a register of approved AI products and their permitted purposes.

11. Transparency, Breaches and Accountability

11.1 Transparency Standards

The church expects honest disclosure proportionate to the use of AI.

Minor editorial assistance: Routine spelling and grammar review generally does not require public disclosure, unless an applicable assessment or other rule requires it.

Substantive drafting or research assistance: The responsible supervisor should be informed, and public acknowledgment should be considered where AI materially shaped work represented as personally produced.

Academic work: Institutional acknowledgment rules must be followed strictly.

Synthetic public media: Material must not mislead audiences about the authenticity or origin of the content.

11.2 Responding to Breaches

Concerns about misuse should be addressed fairly, promptly and proportionately. Depending on the circumstances, responses may include:

- Correction or withdrawal of inaccurate material.
- Appropriate acknowledgment of previously undisclosed AI assistance.
- Additional training or supervision.
- Restriction of access to particular systems.
- Academic or employment processes where applicable.
- Pastoral correction and support.
- Formal disciplinary action for serious or repeated misconduct.

Where confidential information has been exposed, the matter must be escalated promptly to the appropriate church authority for incident assessment and any required notifications.

Suspected abuse or safeguarding incidents must be managed through the church's established Safe Ministry procedures and applicable legal reporting obligations. This policy must never be used to delay or replace those processes.

Biblical accountability should reflect both truth and grace (Ephesians 4:15; Galatians 6:1), without minimising wrongdoing or compromising the protection of vulnerable people.

12. Practical Discernment: Questions Before Using AI

Before using AI for ministry, study or church business, every person should consider the following questions.

12.1 The Scripture Test

Is what I am doing consistent with God's Word? Consider 2 Timothy 3:16–17 and Romans 12:2.

12.2 The Integrity Test

Am I being truthful about the origin, nature and extent of my work? Consider Ephesians 4:25 and Proverbs 12:22.

12.3 The Stewardship Test

Does this use of AI help me fulfil my responsibilities faithfully, or am I avoiding responsibilities I should undertake myself? Consider Colossians 3:23 and Luke 16:10.

12.4 The Formation Test

Is this technology helping me grow in wisdom and competence, or making me dependent and less disciplined? Consider Proverbs 2:1-6 and Hebrews 5:14.

12.5 The Love Test

Does this use protect the dignity, interests, safety and trust of others? Consider Philippians 2:3-4 and 1 Corinthians 13:4-7.

12.6 The Accountability Test

Would I be comfortable explaining this use to my supervisor, congregation, lecturer or those affected by it? Consider 2 Corinthians 8:21.

12.7 The Glory of God Test

Can I sincerely undertake this activity for God's glory and with a clear conscience? Consider 1 Corinthians 10:31 and Romans 14:23.

If these questions reveal a serious concern, the person should reconsider the activity and seek appropriate guidance before proceeding.

13. Our Commitment as a Youth/Church

We affirm that Jesus Christ is the head of the church (Colossians 1:18). The church belongs to him, exists for his glory and is called to proclaim his gospel.

Artificial intelligence may change how some administrative, educational and communicative tasks are performed. It does not alter the church's fundamental calling.

We remain committed to:

The authority of Scripture: God's Word governs our doctrine, worship and Christian life.

The centrality of the gospel: The person and work of Jesus Christ remain the substance of our message.

The ministry of prayer: We depend upon the Lord rather than trusting technology to accomplish spiritual transformation.

The importance of discipleship: Christian maturity requires learning, obedience, perseverance and genuine engagement with Scripture.

The dignity of people: Human beings are made in God's image and must be treated with love and respect.

The integrity of our witness: We will seek to speak truthfully, act honestly and honour the confidence placed in us.

The responsibility of ministry leaders: Those who teach and shepherd God's people must personally fulfil the responsibilities entrusted to them.

The wise stewardship of resources: We will use technology where it genuinely contributes to faithful and effective ministry.

Final Policy Affirmation

We believe that AI may be a useful servant/tool within the life of the church, but it must not become our authority, preaching or our shepherd, or the foundation of our confidence.

Our hope is not in technological progress but in the risen Lord Jesus Christ. Our power for ministry is not found in the sophistication of our systems but in the work of God through his Word and Spirit.

As Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 4:5: "For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake."

We will therefore pursue the responsible use of artificial intelligence with biblical conviction, theological discernment, intellectual honesty, pastoral sensitivity and Christian love.

Our commitment is to use technology faithfully without compromising the truth we proclaim, the people we serve or the Lord to whom we belong.

Appendix A: Practical Ministry Examples

MINISTRY ACTIVITY	APPROPRIATE APPROACH
Minister requests potential sermon illustrations	Permitted, subject to verification and appropriate discernment
Minister asks AI to write an entire sermon and delivers it without personal study	Unacceptable
Youth leader uses AI to create a generic game for Friday night	Generally permitted
Growth group leader uses AI to brainstorm discussion questions after studying the passage	Generally permitted, with review
Pastoral worker uploads a confidential counselling transcript into a public chatbot	Prohibited
Theological student uses AI to improve grammar where their course permits it	Permitted within assessment rules
Student submits an AI-generated exegetical essay contrary to assessment rules	Prohibited
Church administrator uses AI to improve a generic invitation	Generally permitted
Staff member uploads a congregation database to an unapproved AI system	Prohibited
Ministry leader uses an approved tool to translate public material	Permitted with competent review
Church creates an AI-generated testimony and presents it as a real conversion story	Prohibited
Leader uses AI-generated quotations without checking their authenticity	Unacceptable
Church creates synthetic promotional media with clear labelling and appropriate permissions	Potentially permitted following review

Appendix B: Implementation Checklist

Before adopting this policy, church leadership should:

- ☐ Confirm consistency with the church's statement of faith and existing ministry policies.
- ☐ Review relevant diocesan Safe Ministry requirements.
- ☐ Identify and approve suitable AI tools.
- ☐ Establish privacy and information-handling restrictions.
- ☐ Inform pastoral staff and ministry team leaders of their responsibilities.
- ☐ Provide training on accuracy, disclosure, academic integrity and confidentiality.
- ☐ Create an approval process for high-risk or substantive ministry applications.

- ☐ Establish incident reporting and oversight responsibilities.
- ☐ Review any existing AI integrations in church software.
- ☐ Approve the policy and communicate the applicable standards.

Appendix C: Related Policies and External Guidance

This policy should be read alongside the following, where applicable:

- The church's doctrinal statement and ministry policies.
- Faithfulness in Service, the Anglican Church of Australia's code of conduct for clergy and church workers.
- The Sydney Anglican Diocese's Safe Ministry requirements and relevant ordinances.
- The church's privacy, child protection, employment, IT security and media policies.
- The Australian Privacy Act 1988 and Australian Privacy Principles, where applicable.
- OAIC guidance on commercially available AI products.
- TEQSA academic integrity resources and the requirements of relevant theological colleges.
- Australian Government guidance on responsible AI adoption.
- Relevant copyright, intellectual property and school education requirements.

This document is a church (United Youth) policy, not a substitute for legal advice or the requirements of applicable legislation, denominational instruments or educational institutions.

***That said, the policy was originally drafted using AI features (wording and format), while we maintained its biblical principles and the church's theology and understanding of pastoral oversight and human dignity, and aligned it with safe practices and standards. Our Youth Minister conducted the final review.**

Policy approval: __Youth Team _____

Date adopted: __Feb 2026_____

Next review date: __Feb 2028_____