

Discussion Guide: AI in Church Ministry

Five key questions to ask before implementing any new AI tool in your church administration or creative workflow.

Artificial intelligence promises speed, insight, and efficiency—but it also shapes habits, authority, and formation. Before adopting AI tools in church life, leaders should pause for prayerful discernment. This guide is designed to help elder boards, staff teams, and ministry leaders ask wise questions so that technology remains a servant of the church's mission, not a substitute for faithfulness.

1. What problem are we trying to solve?

- Is this tool addressing a genuine ministry need or simply offering convenience?
- Have we clearly named the pastoral or administrative burden we hope to relieve?
- Are there non-technological practices that could address this issue more faithfully?

2. How will this tool shape formation?

- What habits, expectations, or dependencies might this tool create?
- Does it encourage attentiveness, patience, and wisdom—or speed and outsourcing?
- How might this shape the formation of pastors, staff, and volunteers over time?

3. Who holds responsibility and authority?

- Who is accountable for the outputs or decisions influenced by this tool?
- Does AI assist human judgment, or quietly replace it?
- Are leaders prepared to take full ownership of what is produced or decided?

4. What are the risks to people, privacy, and trust?

- What data is being shared, stored, or learned from by this system?
- Could this tool expose sensitive pastoral, congregational, or personal information?
- How might misuse—or misunderstanding—damage trust within the congregation?

5. What limits and review practices will we establish?

- Where will we draw clear boundaries around appropriate and inappropriate uses?
- How often will we revisit this decision prayerfully and communally?
- Who is responsible for ongoing theological and ethical discernment?

Closing Prayer: Lord, grant us wisdom as we consider new tools and technologies. Help us to serve Your people faithfully, to protect trust and integrity, and to ensure that everything we use forms us more deeply into the likeness of Christ. Amen.