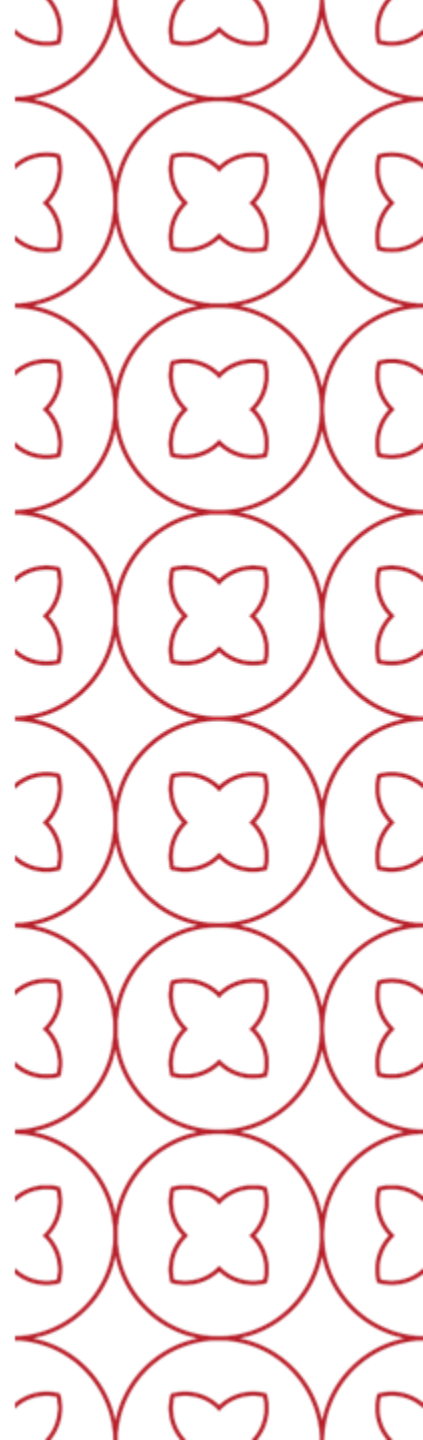


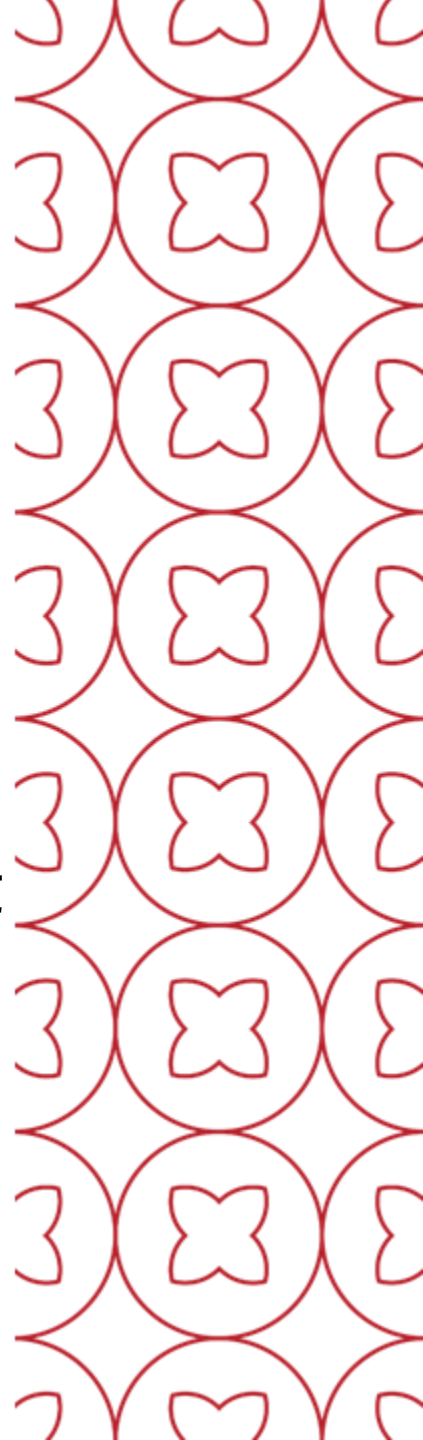
# An AI Policy?

Why and how?



# Why have a policy?

- Policies are a way of ensuring you communicate how you want things to happen in an organisation
- A policy is actually the way things end up happening – what you allow, encourage, demonstrate – rather than a piece of paper in a file
- However! The piece of paper can be a useful reference point so people can access in writing what you've agreed will happen
- The point is getting people to follow a policy, not the policy itself



# Your PCC's responsibilities as a charity

As registered charities, Parochial Church Councils (PCCs) are subject to the same legal and ethical responsibilities as other charitable organisations. This includes ensuring that any use of emerging technologies—such as artificial intelligence (AI)—is consistent with their charitable purposes, complies with data protection and safeguarding requirements, and upholds public trust. While AI can offer valuable tools to support mission, administration, and communication, PCCs must approach its use with care, transparency, and accountability. Trustees remain ultimately responsible for decisions made with or informed by AI, and should ensure that appropriate oversight, risk management, and ethical considerations are in place.



# Do you need an AI policy?

- The Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) have approved a policy that covers DBF employed staff – it can't be exactly the same as what you might need at parish level.
- Our advice:

We would suggest that PCCs have a conversation about the current use of AI in their parish or benefice, and the following pages are offered as a starter guide for those who are new to the idea. It may be that with small numbers of people contributing to church life and low levels of technology being used that a simple awareness of some of the risks and benefits is considered. In larger church settings, with multiple staff and volunteer roles and people keen to explore the potential benefits of AI technology, developing a policy is an appropriate way to consider your priorities regarding risks and benefits and to guide people in their use.



# What has your diocesan team provided to support you?

## The ethical bible perspective

### Five Principles for ethical concerns from a biblical perspective:

(taken from *The Church of England Ethical Investment Advisory Group (EIAG)*)

*Advice* <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2025-01/eiag-artificial-intelligence-advice-2024.pdf> )

#### **Flourishing as persons**

- That it does not undermine inherent human dignity
- That it does not lead to a devaluation of good work and of human skill, expertise and creativity

#### **Flourishing in relationship**

- That it does not lead to a devaluation of existing human relationships (i.e. by getting too used to the attenuated relationships afforded by robots)
- That it encourages honesty and authenticity (e.g. AI is clearly labelled as such to minimise wilful or inadvertent deception)

#### **Standing with the marginalised**

- That it does not exacerbate societal prejudice (e.g. by training AI algorithms with biased data sets)

#### **Caring for the creation**

- That it is not wasteful of resources (e.g. needlessly encouraging single use or constant upgrade to new product models)
- That it does not add significantly or needlessly to emissions (e.g. through the need for more energy consuming data servers)

#### **Serving the common good**

- That it does not lead to greater inequality through poor distribution of the benefits of AI



# What has your diocesan team provided to support you?

## What even is AI??

AI Tool	Benefits	Risks
<b>Analytical AI</b> <b>Examples:</b> Data dashboards, forecasting tools, donor analytics. Tools such as ChatGPT, Co-Pilot or Gemini can be used in an analytical way e.g. for research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Helps identify trends in giving, attendance, or community needs</li><li>• Supports evidence-based decision-making</li><li>• Can improve resource allocation and planning</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• May reflect biases in the data (e.g. underrepresented groups)</li><li>• Over-reliance may reduce human discernment</li><li>• Requires good data quality and interpretation skills</li></ul>
<b>Generative AI</b> <b>Examples:</b> ChatGPT, image generators, content assistants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Speeds up drafting of newsletters, reports, or social media posts</li><li>• Can help brainstorm ideas or simplify complex language</li><li>• Useful for accessibility (e.g. summarising long documents)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• May produce inaccurate or misleading content</li><li>• Risk of plagiarism or copyright issues</li><li>• Can unintentionally generate biased or inappropriate material</li><li>• Can lead to a sense of companionship or human understanding. Potential to lead to confirmation or encouragement of unsafe behaviours</li></ul>
<b>Automation Tools (AI-powered)</b> <b>Examples:</b> Chatbots, automated email responders, scheduling assistants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Saves time on routine admin tasks</li><li>• Improves responsiveness to enquiries</li><li>• Can support out-of-hours engagement</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• May frustrate users if poorly designed</li><li>• Could mishandle sensitive or pastoral issues</li><li>• Needs clear boundaries and human oversight</li></ul>
<b>Predictive AI</b> <b>Examples:</b> Risk assessment tools, volunteer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Helps anticipate needs or risks (e.g. safeguarding, building use)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Can reinforce existing inequalities if based on biased data</li></ul>

# What has your diocesan team provided to support you?

## Guided questions

### Guidance for developing a PCC Policy on the use of AI

#### 1. Policy Statement

*Questions to consider:*

What is your overall position on the use of AI within your church and ministry? How do you balance welcoming technological advancement and human flourishing?  
Where do you see the overarching risks and benefits?

#### 2. Who is covered by the policy?

*Questions to consider:*

Will the policy apply to office holders?  
Staff employed by the [PCC?](#)  
Volunteers (think about what you expect of church wardens, treasurers, PCCs members, those involved in delivering ministry such as children's workers, worship leaders, those leading prayers, home/small group leaders? Visiting speakers?)

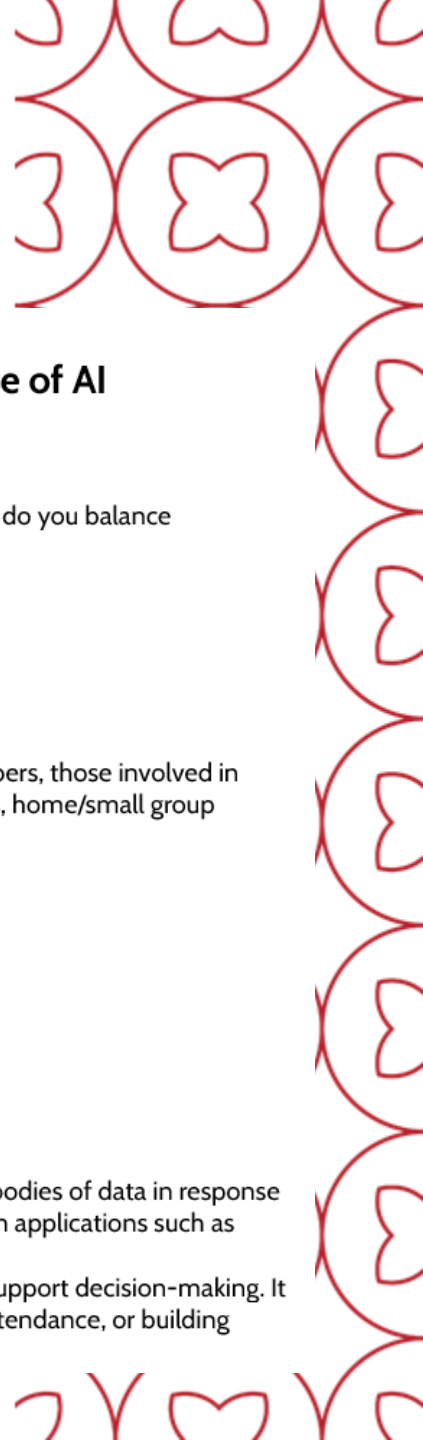
#### 3. Definition of Artificial Intelligence Tools

*This may well change as AI develops but current key tools might include the use of:*

- Large Language Models (such as ChatGPT, Claude, or Bard)
- AI-powered productivity tools
- AI image generation tools
- AI transcription services
- AI-powered analysis tools
- AI writing assistance tools

**Generative AI (GenAI)** is technology that synthesizes new text, audio, or imagery from bodies of data in response to user prompts. GenAI models can be used in public AI tools, such as ChatGPT or within applications such as Adobe applications.

**Analytical AI** refers to systems that use data to identify patterns, make predictions, or support decision-making. It does not create new content but helps analyse information—such as trends in giving, attendance, or building use—to inform planning and strategy.



# What has your diocesan team provided to support you? The DBF policy



Search for AI policy

The PCC guidance is at the bottom of the page and you can copy and paste any of the text that is useful from the DBF policy itself

<https://dioceseofyork.org.uk/policies/ai/>

# Upcoming support from the Diocesan Central Team

- AI Basics practical training: starting from how to access AI tools such as Microsoft Co-Pilot and Chat GPT, what a prompt is and how to write a good one, key things that AI does well that could be useful in your church setting
- In the meantime, try [Charity Excellence](#) AI training
- More from Revd Tim Bull...
- AI Tools for:
  - Risk Assessments
  - Minutes of meetings
  - Policies and contracts
  - Newsletters/posters/ orders of service
  - Rotas



# Questions

