Quicksheets
Fast and fabulous ideas for ministry
Youth Ministry
PRESBYTERIAN YOUTH AND TRIENNIUM

AI is Already Here

What It Is, What We're Using, and Why Youth Ministry Should Care

Why This Matters
Artificial intelligence is here and it's already shaping how we learn, communicate, and make decisions. Young people are encountering AI in school, online, and at home. The church should look at how we might faithfully discern how we use AI and guide youth in their discernment too. This will be a three-part series that looks at what AI is and isn't, a tool to help create an ethical framework when using AI, and ways to use AI in youth ministry.

What Is AI?
Artificial Intelligence refers to computer systems that aim to mimic human intelligence by recognizing patterns, predicting responses, and generating content based on large amounts of existing data.
AI is:

- A tool, not a moral agent
- Powerful, but not conscious or wise
- Shaped by human values, assumptions, and bias

AI is not a replacement for discernment, creativity, or relationships.

AI We Already Use Every Day
Many of us use AI constantly without naming it:

- Search engines & predictive text
- Spellcheck and grammar tools
- Apple and Google Maps
- Streaming recommendations
- Social media algorithms
- Facial recognition on phones
- Customer service chatbots

The question isn't *"Will we use AI?"* We already do. The question is *how intentionally and faithfully we use it.*

Newer, More Visible AI Tools
Youth are especially aware of tools like:

- ChatGPT and Claude (writing, brainstorming, tutoring)
- Image and video generators
- Homework and study assistants
- Resume and college essay tools

These tools raise questions about learning, honesty, authorship, and dependence, questions we and our young people are often left to navigate alone.

Why This Matters for Youth Ministry
AI shapes:

- How youth learn and think
- How they approach schoolwork
- How they understand creativity and originality
- How quickly they expect answers
- How they relate to authority and trust

Why This Matters for Youth Ministers & Church Leaders

AI doesn't just shape young people; it shapes our leadership and the ministries we lead. The ways we choose to engage (or ignore) AI will influence how faithfully we teach, lead, and form others.

AI shapes:

- How leaders prepare, teach, and reflect, including sermon and lesson development
- How we understand authorship, integrity, and transparency in ministry work.
- How we model discernment and lifelong learning.
- How trust is built, or eroded, between leaders, youth, families, and institutions.

Because youth watch how adults navigate power and tools, our practices become their curriculum. Engaging AI thoughtfully is not just a technical decision, it's a pastoral one.

Youth ministry is a space to practice discernment, integrity, and faith, not fear or avoidance.

Bottom line: **AI is here. Faith helps us decide how to live with it.**

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