

AI Use Policy

Church Template

[Church Name] Effective [Date] – Reviewed Annually

Why We Have This Policy

AI is already built into most of the tools our team uses every day. This policy is not a list of approved tasks. It explains how we expect staff to use AI in their work, whatever that work happens to be.

How to Think About AI

AI is a general-purpose tool, the same way the personal computer and the internet were. Those shifts did not apply to one job or one department. They changed how everyone worked. AI is the same. The question is not "what should I use AI for." The question is how you use it responsibly.

Think of AI as the most powerful encyclopedia and thesaurus the world has ever had, along with a tireless assistant for drafting, summarizing, and thinking out loud. That makes it genuinely useful across almost any kind of work.

But it is different from the other tools you use in one important way. A calculator gives you the same right answer every time. AI does not work like that. It predicts what a good answer probably looks like, which means it can be confidently wrong. It can invent facts, misquote Scripture, and make mistakes that sound completely reasonable. So you cannot take its word for anything.

That leads to the single most important rule in this policy: **AI's output is never another person's input.** Nothing AI produces goes to a member, a leader, or the public until a person has read it, checked it, and taken responsibility for it. The work is yours. Its mistakes are yours too.

Use it to Sharpen Your Work, Not to Outsource it

AI is at its best when it amplifies thinking you have already done. It is at its worst when you use it to skip the thinking entirely.

Before you prompt, you should already know what you are trying to accomplish, who it is for, and what a good result looks like. That direction is yours to provide. When you hand the hard thinking to AI and pass along whatever comes back, you have outsourced your judgment, and it shows.

Do not use AI to do less. Use it to do more, and to do it better.

The difference usually shows up in the prompt:

Weak prompt: *"Write me an article on helping adult children care for aging parents."*

Strong prompt: *"I'm writing an article on helping adult children care for aging parents. The three points I want to make are [a], [b], and [c]. The audience is adult children in our small groups, mid-30s to mid-50s. I want them to leave feeling equipped, not guilty. Write a first draft for me to edit."*

Intelligence is Not Wisdom

AI represents a remarkable leap in digital intelligence. It can recall, summarize, and generate at a scale no person can match. But it offers no wisdom at all. It does not know your people, it does not love your church, and it cannot be held accountable before God for the care of an individual.

Wisdom stays entirely in your hands. Discernment, pastoral judgment, doctrinal faithfulness, and the weight of decisions about people remain human responsibilities. AI can help you prepare and think, but it cannot carry what God has called you to carry.

Approved Tools for Sensitive Data

For general work that does not involve sensitive information, you are free to use whatever AI tool fits the job. Generating a graphic, brainstorming ideas, drafting from public information, or cleaning up your own writing does not require an approved tool.

The rule changes the moment church or member data is involved. Any time you put sensitive data, personally identifiable information (PII), or private details about our church or our attendees into an AI tool, it must be one of the approved tools listed below. These tools have been vetted to confirm they meet our data protection standards, including, but not limited to, not storing or logging the inputs and outputs you give them. Tools that have not been reviewed may keep, log, or train on whatever you type into them, and we cannot control where that data ends up.

If you need to work with sensitive or member data and the tool you want is not on the list, get it approved first.

Data that Must Never be Shared with AI

Some information should never be entered into any AI tool, approved or not:

1. Health information. Anything that could be considered protected health information under HIPAA, whether or not HIPAA formally applies to us.
2. Sensitive personal information. Notes or details about a person that would embarrass the individual or the organization if they were accidentally exposed. This includes pastoral and counseling notes, background check details, and similar confidential records.

When in doubt, leave it out and ask first.

Approved Tools and Connections

The tools below are approved for staff use, along with the systems each is allowed to touch. Each has been vetted to confirm it meets our data protection standards, including not storing or logging inputs and outputs. Anything not on this list needs approval before use. Connections are reviewed yearly and removed when staff leave.

Tool	Approved Use	Account Type	Connected Systems
[e.g., ChatGPT]	[e.g., Drafting, summarizing]	[Personal or church-paid]	[e.g., None / Outlook only]
[Tool]	[Use]	[Account]	[Systems]
[Tool]	[Use]	[Account]	[Systems]

Questions and Accountability

For questions or concerns about AI use, please contact [Name, role, email].

Raise concerns promptly. We would rather have an honest conversation than find out too late.

Staff Acknowledgment

I have read this AI Use Policy. By signing below I agree to the following:

- 1. I am responsible for all AI-generated output I use or share.
- 2. I will not enter sensitive information into any tool not on the approved list.
- 3. I will use good judgment and ask before acting when I'm unsure.

Name:

Date:

This document is a template. Before adopting or distributing it, have your organization's legal counsel review it to confirm it fits your specific situation, jurisdiction, and obligations.