

AI Policy at St. Mark's UMC

Adopted September 22, 2026 *To be reviewed annually*

We are made in an Imago Dei, in the image and likeness of God, and serve God through leadership in the church. We have a responsibility as stewards of creation and leaders to carry the scriptural message and to ensure we are creating our work as inspired by the Holy Spirit and not relying on robots to carry the sacred message.

The use of AI negatively impacts our environment and disproportionately affects communities of color around the globe. Further, it takes our message which is divinely inspired and uniquely St. Mark's, and waters it down to look and sound like what everyone else is putting forward.

Therefore, we propose the following policy regarding the use of artificial intelligence by pastors, staff, and leadership in the church:

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) to generate work such as creating content, layout, design, or images is prohibited from use for our sermons and spiritual direction materials, web presence, social media, and marketing and promotional materials.

The use of AI to assist original work, such as employing the tool for editing, to generate summaries of original work, to solicit feedback, or to create supporting materials, such as study questions is allowed.

Submitting personal information or images of individuals to AI to edit, change, or distill personal data is strictly prohibited as it violates the confidentiality and safety of others.

Using AI to assist our work keeps the human as the author, while AI used to generate our work shifts the creative burden to the machine.

Examples of using AI to assist include asking it to remove a background, edit grammar, asking for feedback or help in developing key questions related to the human developed content, navigation, etc. Examples of using AI to generate work include feeding it directions to create images, using it to write sermons or other spiritual content, asking it to design a layout for publication, etc.

In keeping first and foremost our relationship with God, we will keep our creative and sacred work in human hands as inspired by our Creator.