

Reimagining AI for Missions

Ethical & Practical Post-Forum Report

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Artificial (aka Assistive) Intelligence use has accelerated exponentially over the past three years — often uncritically. The rapid uptake requires us to take stock regarding the use of the new technology. Full disclosure: this post-forum report was first drafted by an AI assistant! It provided a thorough overview of the material shared at the forum much faster than our staff could have extracted from the material shared at the live event. Below you will find the content summarised over 30 sections with links to the actual presentations. In short, the forum explored AI's potential to support translation, training, research, administration, digital evangelism, low-resource languages, and grassroots ministry. At the same time, our experienced presenters argued that AI must remain subordinate to human responsibility, theological discernment, and relational mission.

The MC Online Forum for Reimagining AI for Missions created a space for participants to reflect on the opportunities, responsibilities, and risks associated with artificial intelligence in mission. This report draws out the central premises, theological insights, ethical concerns and practical applications that emerged from what was shared at the online forum.

The forum made clear that AI is no longer a distant or theoretical matter for the Church. It is already shaping communication, translation, training, evangelism, discipleship, research, administration, and leadership. For that reason, church and organisational leaders cannot afford to ignore it. At the same time, the presenters were clear that AI must be engaged responsibly. It is a tool that may assist missions, but it must never become the mission itself.

A recurring emphasis throughout the forum was that AI should be understood within the larger calling of God's people: to love God, love neighbour, seek the Kingdom, make disciples, and serve the vulnerable. AI must therefore be evaluated not only according to efficiency or innovation, but according to theological faithfulness, relational integrity, justice, stewardship, and accountability.

1. AI as a Present Reality in Global Missions

The opening framing of the forum situated AI within a global and grassroots mission context was presented by MC Executive member Adriaan Adams, the forum host. Adriaan reflected on the practical use of contextualised AI in African grassroots settings, especially in relation to the development of training resources for local church leaders. He gave the example of AI being used in partnership with the Association of

Evangelicals in Africa across 18 countries and 700 communities to help capture local conversations, work with local languages, analyse discussions and support the development of contextualised training resources.

This is a significant foundational understanding. AI was not presented merely as a tool for large, well-resourced institutions. Rather, one of its most promising applications is its ability to assist grassroots leaders who often lack access to theological resources, research capacity, administrative support, and contextual training materials. In this regard, AI can help reduce the distance between global theological and missions knowledge and local ministry realities.

Another example was drawn from a three-month research road trip that Adriaan took from South Africa to Rwanda and back, conducted in partnership with the University of Pretoria. Leaders in 14 different regions were engaged in listening processes to better understand their contexts. Traditionally, this kind of qualitative analysis and report writing would have taken months. However, through contextualised AI agents, reports and analysis were generated in real time while the team was still travelling. This enabled faster processing, quicker reflection, and more immediate contextual application.

The implication for leaders is that AI can support learning loops. It can help churches and organisations to rapidly move from listening to analysis, from analysis

to training, and from training to practical ministry application. However, this only becomes valuable when AI serves a clear human and theologically supported purpose. The technology itself does not create wisdom. It must be guided by discernment, ethical responsibility, and contextual awareness.

2. AI a Tool not the Means

One of the foundational statements made in the forum was that AI must be seen as a tool and not as the means itself. This distinction is critical.

When AI is treated as a tool, it remains subordinate to human responsibility, theological discernment, and missional purpose. It can assist with translation, summarisation, analysis, communication, reporting, administration, content development, and training design. It can help leaders work faster and reach wider. But it does not carry spiritual authority, moral responsibility, or pastoral presence.

When AI becomes “the means itself”, however, the Church risks allowing technology to define the method, pace and even content of mission. This can lead to a subtle replacement of prayer, discernment, community, embodiment, and relational discipleship with automation, speed, and output.

For church and organisational leaders, the question is therefore not simply, “Can AI do this?” The better question is, “Should AI be used for this purpose, and if so, under what theological and ethical conditions?”

3. AI in Mission: a Biblical & Ethical Framework

Dr Quinton McGrath’s contribution provided the main theological and ethical framework for the forum. His presentation began not with technology, but with theology. He returned to the opening chapters of Genesis and the biblical confession that “in the beginning, God” created all things. This starting point is important because it places AI within the wider reality of creation, human vocation, and divine sovereignty.

See presentation here: <https://youtu.be/sort-e7LA64>

AI is a human-made technology, developed by image-bearing humans who have been given creativity, agency, and stewardship. Yet AI is not human. It does not bear the image of God. It may imitate aspects of language, reasoning, and interaction, but it remains fundamentally different from human beings.

Dr McGrath connected the rise of AI to several major theological and ethical concerns: human identity, creation care, relationships, truth, and accountability. Each of these has significant implications for mission.

4. Human Identity & Imago Dei

The first major concern was human identity. Genesis affirms that human beings are made in the image of God. This means that human dignity is not based on intelligence, productivity, technological capacity, or usefulness. It is rooted in God’s creative act and relational intention.

AI raises new questions about identity because it can now perform tasks that were once considered uniquely human. It can write, summarise, analyse, design, translate, generate images, *simulate* conversation, and even *imitate* empathy. This creates the danger of dehumanisation, especially if leaders begin to value people mainly in terms of efficiency or output.

The forum highlighted concerns about outsourcing uniquely human tasks, diminishing human creativity, weakening relationships between God and people, and reducing human agency. However, it also recognised opportunities. AI can be designed in ways that protect human dignity, strengthen human capacity, and support authentic human-to-human relationships.

For leaders, this means every AI strategy should begin with a clear anthropology. What does the organisation believe about human beings? What must never be delegated to a machine? Where must human judgement, compassion, discernment, and presence remain central?

In ministry, AI may assist with preparation, research and administration. But it cannot replace pastoral care, spiritual discernment, embodied presence, prayer, worship, confession, discipleship, or community.

5. Creation Care & Stewardship

The second major concern was environmental stewardship. Dr McGrath drew from the Genesis mandate that humanity was placed in the garden to work it and keep it. This means creation is not ours to exploit without consequence. It belongs to God, and human beings are called to steward it responsibly.

AI carries environmental implications. Data centres, computing power, energy consumption, and digital

infrastructure all place demands on creation. While the Church may use AI for good purposes, it cannot ignore the ecological cost of the technology it adopts.

This is particularly important for Christian organisations that speak about justice, poverty, creation care, and stewardship. If AI is used uncritically, it may contribute to unsustainable technological dependency. Leaders must therefore ask whether their use of AI is responsible, proportionate, and sustainable.

The issue is not that AI should never be used because it consumes resources. Rather, the issue is whether it is being used wisely, appropriately, and with awareness of long-term costs. Stewardship requires both innovation and restraint.

6. Relationships, Incarnation, Artificial Companionship

A third major concern was relationship. Dr McGrath reflected on the Genesis account where Adam could not find a suitable helper among the animals. The helper had to be “bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh”. This was used to raise a profound question: can AI ever truly become a relational partner for human beings?

The answer implied throughout the presentation is no. AI can *simulate* relationship, but it cannot participate in genuine human fellowship. It cannot love, suffer, forgive, worship, repent, pray, or carry covenantal responsibility. It can *generate* relational language, but it cannot be relational in the biblical sense.

This is crucial for churches. AI tools that imitate pastoral care, prayer, counselling, or companionship may appear helpful, especially for lonely or isolated people. However, if a tool replaces human community, it can become spiritually and emotionally dangerous.

The forum didn’t reject all conversational AI. Later practical examples showed that chatbots may be used to filter conversations, help identify genuine spiritual seekers, and connect people with human workers. But the distinction is vital: AI may assist relational ministry; it must not replace relational ministry.

For leaders, a guiding question is: does this AI application strengthen relationships, or does it weaken them? Does it create deeper human connection, or does it allow leaders to avoid human presence?

7. Truth & Discernment: Did God Really Say It?

A fourth concern was truth. Dr McGrath linked the serpent’s question in Genesis (“Did God really say?”) to the contemporary crisis of misinformation, deepfakes, hallucinated AI content, and the erosion of trust.

AI systems can produce convincing but false information. They do not understand truth in the way human beings do. They generate outputs based on patterns in data, not moral commitment to truth. This creates major risks for theology, preaching, teaching, research, leadership communication, and public witness.

The Church must therefore cultivate discernment. AI-generated content must be tested, verified, and interpreted. Leaders must not assume that clarity equals truth or that confidence equals accuracy.

This concern is especially important in mission, where information crosses linguistic, cultural, and theological boundaries. Poorly verified AI outputs could distort scripture, misrepresent local contexts, reinforce bias, or produce teaching that appears biblical but lacks theological depth.

Church and organisational leaders should therefore establish review processes for AI-generated material. Human accountability must remain central, especially in theological teaching, discipleship resources, public communication, and pastoral guidance.

8. Kingdom, Commandment, Flourishing & Commission

Dr McGrath then offered a biblical ethical foundation for AI engagement. He identified several anchors.

The first is the Kingdom of God: seeking first God’s Kingdom and righteousness. This means AI should be evaluated according to whether it supports God’s reign and purposes, not merely organisational success.

The second is the Great Commandment: loving God with heart, soul, mind and strength, and loving neighbour as oneself. AI should therefore be judged by whether it deepens love for God and neighbour.

The third is flourishing. Humanity was created to flourish under God’s rule and to participate in God’s purposes for creation. AI should support human and communal flourishing, not undermine it.

The fourth is the mandate to evangelise and make disciples. Because the gospel is good news, it must be shared. AI may assist the Church in communicating, translating, and resourcing missional activities, but always under the mandate we are given by the authority of Christ.

These ethical anchors provide a helpful corrective. They move the AI conversation away from novelty and toward fidelity (faithfulness). Leaders should not ask first, “What can this technology do?” but “Does this help us seek the Kingdom, love God, love our neighbour, support human flourishing, and make disciples faithfully?”

9. The TRUST Framework

One of the most practical contributions of the forum was the TRUST framework. This framework offers church and organisational leaders a way to evaluate AI use through five lenses: Theological Alignment, Relational Impact, Utility and Justice, Stewardship and Sustainability, and Transparency and Accountability.

9.1 Theological Alignment

Theological alignment asks whether AI use is biblically responsible. Does it help people love God more? Does it help them love their neighbours better? Does it reflect God’s Kingdom and righteousness? Does it enhance or diminish dependence on God?

This is a crucial question because AI can easily become an idol of efficiency, intelligence or control. If AI begins to replace prayerful discernment, biblical study, or spiritual dependence, it has moved beyond its proper place.

For churches, theological alignment means AI should not generate the spiritual centre of ministry. It may assist with research or drafting, but leaders must remain spiritually responsible for what is taught, preached, and practised.

9.2 Relational Impact

Relational impact asks whether AI strengthens or weakens relationships with God and others. The incarnation shows that God’s mission is deeply relational. God comes near. God is with us. Ministry therefore cannot be reduced to information delivery.

AI should support pastoral presence, intergenerational knowledge transfer, disciple making,

and community. It should not create dependency, isolation, or artificial substitutes for human care.

A church may use AI to organise pastoral follow-up, summarise feedback, or prepare small-group resources. But the goal must be more human connection, not less.

9.3 Utility & Justice

Utility and justice ask whether AI serves genuine needs and whether it benefits the vulnerable or only the privileged. This is one of the most important missional questions.

AI may empower under-resourced leaders by helping them access training, translate materials, analyse community input and develop contextual resources. But it may also widen inequality if only wealthy organisations have access to advanced tools.

Leaders should ask: Who benefits from this AI application? Who might be harmed? Does it address a real need, or does it create artificial dependency? How does it affect the most vulnerable?

9.4 Stewardship & Sustainability

Stewardship and sustainability ask whether AI is being used responsibly in relation to creation, resources, expertise, and long-term dependency. Responsible use includes environmental awareness, financial sustainability, and appropriate technical capacity.

An organisation should not adopt tools it cannot understand, govern, or sustain. Neither should it create dependency on systems that local communities cannot maintain.

For mission-serving organisations, this is especially important when working in low-resource environments. AI should build local capacity, not create permanent dependence on external experts or platforms, whether AI or human.

9.5 Transparency & Accountability

Stewardship transparency and accountability ask whether people know when AI is being used and who is responsible for the outcomes. This was strongly emphasised.

If AI is used in communication, teaching, pastoral interaction, research, or reporting, leaders should be honest about it. AI should not pretend to be human. Tools that imitate Jesus, claim to pray or simulate spiritual authority raise serious ethical concerns.

Accountability also means that humans remain responsible for what AI produces. The organisation, pastor, teacher, or leader cannot blame the tool for harmful, false, or inappropriate output. Final responsibility remains human.

10. Contextualisation & PATMOS Clusters

Dr McGrath also connected the TRUST framework to the need for contextualisation. AI ethics cannot be applied in a generic way without attention to local culture, theological resources, digital access, social realities, and mission context.

The forum referenced the importance of understanding different regional or cultural clusters and adapting the framework accordingly. This means that churches in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, Oceania, or the Middle East may face different AI concerns. Some may focus on low-resource languages. Others may focus on surveillance, religious restriction, digital discipleship, misinformation, environmental concerns, or pastoral dependency.

The key principle is that AI engagement must be locally interpreted. A global framework is valuable, but it must be translated into local questions. Leaders should ask what AI means in their own context, for their own people, in their own language, with their own risks and opportunities.

11. Digital Missions & Global Access

The second major presentation, in Korean by **Rev Dr Yong-Koo Jung** via a video with English subtitles, focused on practical AI and digital mission developments, particularly from a Korean and global mission perspective.

See presentation here:

<https://youtu.be/HkKsOs3-8F4>

(As part of our commitment to "linguistic hospitality", this presentation is in Korean with new subtitles added with the help of AI. In some places the translation may not express the Korean meaning with complete accuracy.)

A strong emphasis was placed on the role of AI in education, especially in contexts marked by war, disaster, famine, and migration. The presentation recognised that while immediate needs such as food, clothing and shelter may be addressed to some extent,

the breakdown of children's education in crisis settings is much harder to resolve. AI and digital tools were presented as possible ways to support education where traditional systems have been disrupted.

The example of Tanzania was mentioned as a context where AI-supported digital education is being developed. This highlights an important mission application: AI can support educational access in places where children and communities may otherwise be excluded from learning opportunities.

Another major focus was ministry among migrants in Korea. Many immigrants lack language ability and information about Korean society. AI platforms are being planned to help immigrants settle, access information, find work, and participate more effectively in society. This expands the mission conversation beyond evangelism alone. AI can serve hospitality, integration, justice and practical care.

12. AI Platforms, Training, & Infrastructure

Rev Dr Jung also described the development of AI-related training programmes for missionaries. A four-week curriculum was highlighted, along with the development of case studies and manuals based on real missions-site applications. This points to an important leadership lesson: AI adoption requires training, not only enthusiasm.

Churches and missions organisations should not simply tell people to "use AI". They should create structured learning processes, develop examples, collect case studies, and produce practical manuals that help leaders apply AI responsibly.

The Korean example also highlighted the importance of networking. Churches, missions organisations, and leaders are working together under a broader AI missions roadmap. The vision is not for one organisation to monopolise knowledge, but for churches and missions bodies to share learning with the wider global Church.

For missions leaders, this suggests that AI development should be collaborative. The global Church needs shared platforms, shared ethics, shared case studies, and shared learning environments. No single region or organisation should own the future of AI in mission related activities.

13. Multilingual Access & the Globalisation of Local Content

One of the most striking practical examples from Rev Dr Jung's presentation concerned multilingual digital publishing. A large document of 983 A4 pages was converted into a link-based format containing the full content, with language options that could change the book into many other languages almost instantly.

The significance of this example is profound. Local missions content no longer needs to remain local because of language barriers. A resource developed in one region can potentially be translated, shared, and adapted for use in other contexts.

This has major implications for the global Church. It means that theological and missional resources from non-Western contexts can become globally accessible. It also challenges historic patterns where theological knowledge often flowed from the West to the rest of the world. AI translation could help create a more polyphonic missions conversation, where Korean, African, Asian, Latin American and grassroots voices can be shared and interacted with more widely.

However, translation must still be handled carefully. AI translation can create access, but it must be reviewed for theological accuracy, cultural sensitivity, and contextual meaning. Language is never merely technical. It carries worldview, emotion, theology, and identity.

14. NextGen & AI Mission

Rev Dr Jung placed strong emphasis on the next generation. He suggested that AI and digital missions are areas where younger generations may be able to engage deeply and lead effectively.

This is an important point for church leaders. Many churches struggle to involve younger leaders meaningfully in missions activities. AI may provide a bridge. Younger believers who understand digital culture, online communication, media tools, and emerging technologies can contribute significantly to missions strategies.

However, they need theological formation and intergenerational guidance. The goal should not be to hand AI missions over to the young just because they are technically capable. Rather, the Church should create intergenerational spaces where older leaders

bring theological wisdom and younger leaders bring digital fluency.

This could become a powerful model of shared leadership.

15. The Example of Paul

Rev Dr Jung used the example of the Apostle Paul, who used the roads, languages, letters, and transport systems available in his time to spread the gospel. He argued that if Paul lived today, he would likely have used modern tools, including AI, for gospel communication.

This analogy is helpful, but it must be used carefully. Paul used available infrastructure, but his mission remained Spirit-led, relational, embodied, and sacrificial. He didn't merely distribute information; he planted communities, discipled believers, suffered with churches, and wrote out of deep pastoral concern.

The lesson is therefore not simply that the Church should use every available technology. The lesson is that the Church may use available infrastructure when it serves faithful witness, gospel communication, and community formation.

AI may become part of today's missions infrastructure, but it must remain governed by the character of Christ and the apostolic pattern of relational mission activity.

16. AI & Gospel Applications

The third major contribution came from (Mr) **Wendy "Phodi" Phodiansa**, based in Indonesia and serving in media, technology and mission development. His presentation focused strongly on practical applications of AI in evangelism, digital communication and ministry innovation.

See presentation here:

<https://youtu.be/07W0Aei5kQk>

He began with the image of Noah and the flood. In the biblical story, Noah received instruction from God to prepare for something the world had not yet seen. This was used as an analogy for the current AI moment. AI is arriving rapidly, like a flood, and the Church must respond with wisdom, preparation and obedience.

The point was not that AI is identical to the flood, but that new realities require faithful preparation. Leaders may not fully understand everything that is

happening, but they must seek God's wisdom and respond responsibly.

Phodi emphasised that throughout Scripture, God's people used available tools and skills: Noah used the ark, Bezalel used craftsmanship for the tabernacle, and Paul used ships and letters. In the same way, AI may become one of the tools available for mission today.

17. Prayer Prior to Prompting

One of the most memorable phrases in Phodi's presentation was "pray before prompting". This phrase captures a vital spiritual discipline for the AI age. Prompting is the act of instructing an AI system. AI use should not be impulsive, careless, or merely productivity driven. It should be preceded by discernment.

"Pray before prompting" reminds leaders that wisdom begins with the fear of the Lord, not with technical skill. It places spiritual dependence before technological action.

For church and organisational leaders, this can become a simple but powerful practice. Before using AI to write, plan, analyse, communicate, or design, leaders should ask: What is the purpose? Who will be served? What could go wrong? Is this faithful? Does this require human presence instead?

18. Understanding AI Use Levels

Phodi gave a helpful overview of different levels of AI development...

The first level is generative AI, which can produce text, images, video, audio and code. This is the most common form many leaders encounter. It can assist with blog posts, social media content, sermon repurposing, images, communication, and resource development.

The second level is AI agents. These can perform specific tasks using available tools and data. They may analyse information, summarise material, or produce recommendations. However, human wisdom is still required to interpret and act on the results.

The third level is agentic AI, where multiple agents work together on complex tasks. This is a more advanced and emerging area, with significant implications for workflows, productivity and labour.

For leaders, understanding these distinctions matters. Not all AI use is the same. Drafting a social media

post is very different from allowing an AI system to manage complex workflows or make recommendations that affect people. The more complex the AI system, the greater the need for governance, transparency, and accountability.

19. Technology Carries the Message but Relationship Carries Transformation

A central theological and missional principle in Phodi's presentation was this: technology can carry the message, but relationship carries transformation.

This statement should become a guiding principle for AI in mission. AI can help *distribute* gospel content, generate media, *translate* messages, *answer* initial questions, *identify* seekers, and *connect* people with resources. But *transformation* happens through relationship, disciples making, community, prayer, and the work of the Holy Spirit.

Evangelism and disciple making are not merely about information transfer. People do not become disciples simply because they receive content. They need witness, care, explanation, community, modelling, correction, encouragement, and belonging.

This principle protects the Church from confusing reach with making disciples. AI may increase reach dramatically. It may help connect with people online, across languages, and in restricted contexts. But leaders must still ask: how will these people be followed up? Who will walk with them? Where will they find community? How will they be discipled?

20. New Technology Opens New Mission Fields

Phodi observed that new technology often opens new mission fields. Social media was once new and is now one of the major platforms for communication and gospel engagement. Similarly, AI is opening new spaces and methods for missions activity.

He also challenged older definitions of the "unreached". Traditionally, unreached people were often imagined as people far away in remote places. Today, someone may be physically near but spiritually unreached because they live primarily online, isolated from physical community and immersed in digital spaces.

This is a crucial insight. Mission geography is changing. The unreached may be in cities, online communities, gaming environments, social media spaces, closed religious contexts, or isolated digital lifestyles. AI may help the Church identify and engage some of these new mission fields.

However, the Church must be careful not to reduce people to data patterns. Digital missions must still honour human dignity, privacy, and consent.

21. Chatbots as Filters not Replacements

One practical example involved the use of AI chatbots or avatars in contexts where religion is sensitive, such as Indonesia, Nepal, and Bangladesh. In such contexts, it may be difficult to have visible Christian representatives available for live conversation at all hours. AI-assisted tools can help *respond* to initial questions, provide *companionship-like* conversation and *identify* those who are genuinely searching.

A six-month test reportedly generated 885 conversations. The goal was not for the bot to replace human witness, but to *filter* and *identify* people with genuine spiritual need so that human workers could *connect* with them.

This is an important distinction. Used wrongly, chatbots can become artificial pastors. Used carefully, they can become first-contact tools that help connect people with real human ministry.

Leaders considering this kind of application should establish clear boundaries. The chatbot should not pretend to be Jesus, should not claim spiritual authority, should not replace human care, and should be transparent about its nature. Its purpose should be to *assist* connection, not simulate salvation or discipleship.

22. Low-Resource Languages & Oral Access

Another significant example involved a woman in West Nepal who connected with ministry through Facebook but could not read. An audio Bible and translated oral learning resources became necessary. AI was used to learn from recorded speech and support translation into her language.

This highlights one of the most important missions opportunities for AI: serving low-resourced languages and oral communities. Many people cannot benefit

from written theological resources because of literacy limitations, language barriers, or lack of translated materials. AI may help produce audio, translate learning materials, and support oral discipleship.

For grassroots mission, this is highly significant. AI can help move beyond text-heavy theological education and *support* oral, audio, and heart-language learning. This may be especially relevant in rural areas, refugee communities, low-literacy contexts, and restricted-access regions.

However, theological review remains essential. AI-generated translation or audio material must be checked by trusted local speakers and theological leaders.

23. Testimony Analysis & Conversion Pathways

Phodi also shared an example of using AI to analyse 1,300 testimonies from different people groups, including Khmer, Thai, Indonesian, Sudanese, and Javanese contexts. The purpose was to *identify* patterns in how people engage with ministry and come to Christ.

This is a powerful research and strategy application. Mission organisations often collect testimonies but lack the capacity to analyse them deeply. AI can help *identify* themes, pathways, barriers, questions, and contextual patterns.

For example, AI analysis may help leaders understand how Iranians, Malays, or other people groups describe their journey toward Christ. This can *improve* contextual evangelism, discipleship materials, and worker training.

Yet this use also raises ethical questions. Testimonies are personal and often sensitive. Organisations must consider consent, anonymisation, data security, and potential risk to individuals, especially in restricted contexts.

24. Vibe Coding & Rapid Prototyping

Another practical example was “vibe coding”, where a person describes a desired digital tool in plain language and AI *generates* the code. This allows non-specialists to create prototypes of websites, tools, or applications much faster than before.

An example was given of a dream interpretation site designed as a conversation starter for people from Muslim backgrounds who may have dreams about a figure in white. The prototype was reportedly developed in three days by one person.

This demonstrates how AI can lower the barrier to innovation. Mission workers, local churches, and small organisations may be able to prototype tools without large budgets or technical teams.

However, rapid prototyping must be matched with careful theological and ethical testing. A tool that interprets dreams, for example, can easily become manipulative or theologically problematic if not handled carefully. Leaders must ensure that such tools invite conversation rather than exploit spiritual vulnerability.

25. AI for Church Life, Small Groups, & Disciple Making

Phodi also showed examples of simple AI-assisted tools for church life, including small-group conversation cards, truth-or-dare style discussion prompts, discipleship action tasks, and sermon repurposing tools.

These examples illustrate that AI in mission is not only about global evangelism or large-scale data systems. It can also assist ordinary church life. It can *help* small groups start deeper conversations, *generate* practical discipleship actions, *repurpose* sermons into social media content, and *support* volunteers who lack time or design skills.

This is valuable because many churches struggle with volunteer capacity. AI can reduce the administrative burden and help leaders produce resources more quickly.

But again, the principle remains: AI should *support* relationship, not replace it. A small-group tool is useful if it helps people talk more honestly, pray together, and act faithfully. It is harmful if it turns Christian formation into automated content consumption.

26. Theological Outcomes

Several theological premises emerged clearly.

First, God is the Creator and remains sovereign over all human creativity and technology. AI must be understood within God's world, not outside it.

Second, human beings are made in the image of God,

while AI is not. This means human dignity, responsibility, and relational capacity must remain central.

Third, the Church is called to steward creation and technology responsibly. AI use must therefore consider environmental, social and ethical consequences.

Fourth, truth matters. AI must be tested against Scripture, wisdom, theological tradition, and contextual discernment.

Fifth, mission is relational. Technology may carry the message, but transformation requires human witness, community, and the work of the Holy Spirit.

Sixth, AI must serve justice. It should empower the vulnerable and under-resourced rather than deepen inequality.

Seventh, transparency and accountability are non-negotiable. People should know when AI is being used, and leaders must remain responsible for the outcomes.

27. Relevance for Church Leaders

Church leaders should begin by educating themselves and their leadership teams. AI should not be treated as a specialist issue only for technicians. It affects preaching, pastoral care, discipleship, youth ministry, administration, communication, and mission.

Churches should develop simple internal AI guidelines. These guidelines should address areas such as sermon preparation, pastoral communication, confidentiality, use of AI-generated images or videos, children and youth ministry, social media content, and theological review.

Pastors should teach congregations how to think about AI biblically. Many members are already using AI in work, education and personal life. The Church has an opportunity to form people in wisdom, discernment and responsibility.

Churches should also explore constructive uses of AI. These may include *translation*, sermon *summaries*, Bible study *preparation*, administrative *support*, volunteer *training*, small-group *questions*, accessibility *tools*, and *communication* with multilingual communities.

At the same time, churches should protect the irreplaceable nature of embodied ministry. Pastoral

care, prayer, discipleship, confession, spiritual direction and community life must remain deeply human.

28. Relevance for Missions

Mission organisations should treat AI as a strategic leadership issue. It affects field communication, reporting, translation, media, training, evangelism, data analysis, research, and donor engagement.

Organisations should conduct an AI audit. They should ask where AI is already being used, by whom, for what purpose and with what level of oversight.

They should then develop policy and training. Field workers need practical guidance on what is appropriate, what is risky, and what requires approval. This is especially important in restricted contexts where digital communication may create security risks.

Missions organisations should also explore AI for low-resource languages, oral learning, testimony analysis, contextual training, migrant ministry, and digital evangelism. These are areas where AI may offer genuine missional value.

However, organisations must establish data ethics. Testimonies, participant input, community stories, conversion accounts and pastoral information should be handled with consent, confidentiality, and security.

29. Relevance for Other Leaders

The forum also has relevance for Christian NGOs, educational institutions, networks, denominations, and leadership bodies.

Organisational leaders should not pursue AI merely because it appears modern or efficient. They should clarify the organisational purpose of AI. Does it help the organisation serve people more faithfully? Does it strengthen justice, learning, communication, and accountability? Or does it merely increase output?

Leaders should also consider staff formation. AI may

change workflows and expectations. Staff may feel pressure to produce more, faster. Leaders must ensure that AI does not create unhealthy cultures of speed, comparison, or dehumanisation.

Organisations should invest in training that includes both technical competence and ethical discernment. People need to know not only how to use AI, but when not to use it.

30. Recommendations for Leadership Practice

The following leadership practices are recommended:

1. Establish a theological position on AI grounded in Scripture, human dignity, and mission.
2. Use the TRUST framework as an evaluation tool for all AI adoption.
3. Create clear guidelines for AI use in communication, teaching, pastoral care, data analysis, and public content.
4. Require human review for all theological, pastoral and public-facing AI-generated material.
5. Be transparent when AI has been used in significant ways.
6. Protect personal and sensitive data, especially testimonies, pastoral conversations, and information from restricted contexts.
7. Prioritise AI applications that serve under-resourced communities, local languages, and grassroots leaders.
8. Train younger leaders and create intergenerational teams for AI mission development.
9. Use AI to strengthen human relationships, not replace them.
10. Practise “pray before prompting” as a spiritual discipline of discernment.

Conclusion: Creativity with Caution

This MC Forum revealed both the promise and the seriousness of this moment. AI is already reshaping the mission landscape. It can help the Church *translate, communicate, train, analyse, prototype, organise, and reach* people in new ways. It may *assist* grassroots leaders, *support* low-resource languages, *strengthen* migrant ministry, *improve access* to theological resources, and open new forms of digital engagement.

Yet AI also raises deep theological and ethical questions. It challenges the Church to clarify what it believes about human identity, truth, relationship, stewardship, justice, and accountability. It exposes the danger of

replacing embodied ministry with artificial interaction. It reminds leaders that speed and reach are not the same as wisdom and discipleship.

The most faithful response is neither fear nor uncritical enthusiasm. The Church must engage AI with courage, humility, theological clarity and ethical discipline. AI can *serve* mission, but it must never define mission. It can *support* the work of the Church, but it cannot replace the people of God. It can *carry* messages, but only relationships, empowered by the Spirit, can carry transformation.

The way forward is responsible, contextual, and deeply theological engagement. Church and organisational leaders are called to steward AI as servants of Christ, guardians of human dignity, witnesses to truth and participants in God's mission in the world.