

BLESS THIS MESS

Episode 6: Typing in the Vestry

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We start with Ben's confession that he knows nothing about tech, which is a fitting way into our next question, on AI. AI is here to stay, so can we use it for good? We talk about what it's useful for and where it starts to take over relationships, why it doesn't push back, and what that means for pastoral care, prayer and silence. We also look at managing a big church, what you prioritise, how to be fully present, and how clergy can be a safe space in a world full of things that aren't real.

In this episode:

- Ben knows nothing about tech
- Our question
- Education around AI
- It's here to stay: can we use it for good?
- Ben's old school: first in the country to go completely tech-free
- AI is great for product, but not for process
- What can you use it for, and what's ok?
- When things start to take over relationships
- Educating ourselves: exploring what's been written
- Dr Peter Levenstrong's blog, The Human Part
- Pastoral needs: the silence and void with God, and AI filling that void
- Using AI as a vice
- AI doesn't push back
- Dan Brown's Angels & Demons: "sometimes God's answer is no"
- Do we want to live in a world where everyone agrees with us?
- Managing a big church: how do you delegate when there's too much to do?
- The American pastor with an AI twin
- What are you prioritising?
- Making decisions about where time and energy go
- How are you fully present?
- So much out there isn't true or real
- How are we the safe space?
- How hard is it to admit a problem like AI?
- Peter Levenstrong: why are we making such a fuss over AI?
- The therapeutic relationship is sacred
- Can you have an AI therapist?
- What are we making false idols of?
- Majesty and humility
- The Puerto Rico AI song

Mentioned in this episode:

- Dr Peter Levenstrong, The Human Part (blog)
- Dan Brown, Angels & Demons
- The American pastor with an AI twin
- The Puerto Rico Song by Saxboy Billy
- Clergy Support Trust: https://www.clergysupport.org.uk

We want to hear from you, especially our vicars!

Bless this Mess cannot exist in isolation. If you have a question for our podcast please click this confidential link

If you'd like to comment on the podcast you can do so via our email address:
podcast@clergysupport.org.uk

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Bless This Mess is a podcast from Clergy Support Trust, produced by Meraki Creative Therapies. It was recorded and mixed by La Barca Sound, with engineering by Nick Sowden and sound design by Bekah Nelson and Nick Sowden. The podcast is produced by Bekah Nelson and Nick Sowden, with content developed by Meraki Creative Therapies in collaboration with Catherine Good. It is hosted by Bekah Nelson and Ben Cahill-Nicholls, with intro and section scripts written by Louise Stanley, and was recorded on location at All Saints Church, Tilford.

Warning: *This episode contains themes around mental health. If you find any of the content difficult or triggering, please consider reaching out for support. You can contact Samaritans on 116 123 (free, 24/7), call NHS 111 and press 2 for the urgent mental health helpline in England, or in an emergency call 999. Clergy may also wish to contact Clergy Support Trust or their diocesan wellbeing team https://www.clergysupport.org.uk/*