

fAlth?

(no this isn't a typo)

By Rev. Dr. Jeffrey A. Schooley



On Thursday, February 5, during my most recent study leave, I had the opportunity to travel back to Kent State University to speak at Late Night Christian Fellowship, the campus ministry I attended from 2000-2004. Blessedly, LNCF is still being led by Kris Herman, the same campus minister who was only a year into his career when I met him during my freshman year. (Side note: Kris is an AMAZING example of faithful commitment through good seasons and bad. His steadfastness has paid off not necessarily in numbers – there were only a little over a dozen students present – but in the diverse community he has assembled under the banner of the Gospel; Phd students from Africa co-mingle with sophomores from Mentor, Ohio in the common bonds of Christian fellowship. It's really something to see!). Kris had challenged me and our mutual friend, the Rev. Ben Beres (pastor at Huntsville [OH] Presbyterian Church) to discuss AI – or, Artificial Intelligence.

I'm far from a tech wizard, but Kris made it clear that this talk needn't be about the intricacies of AI technology, but rather about the relationship – if any – between “HI” (human intelligence) and AI (artificial intelligence). This newsletter article, then, is a brief reflection on some of the themes that populated during my research and discussion with this diverse array of college students last month. I'm far from having any comprehensive thoughts on AI, so what follows are some bullet-pointed thoughts and insights:

- **There is no “AI.”** Rather, there are AIs – that is, multiple manifestations of artificial intelligence, many of which are already running in the background of our lives without our being aware of it at all. This is challenging, because it means that probably no one can honestly speak of “AI” as a single entity or experience. To deal honestly with it is to have to get into the weeds of acknowledging, for example, that we're probably all interested in ways that AI might help with medical research, but *that* AI isn't to be confused with the AI that allows someone to create a picture of Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson sketched in a Charles Schultz/“Peanuts” style. We use the acronym “AI” for both sets of computing, but the two really couldn't be more different. And all this matters because...
- **There is a definitive trade-off between AI and environmental well-being.** Period. No debate needed. Indeed, when I first approached this topic, I was prepared to declare AI anathema to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I knew that I would probably sound like “old man yells out cloud” to college-aged students, but I thought the stakes were too high environmentally to concede even an inch to AI. As it stands, I still *mostly* feel and think that way, though as I have learned about some of the positive benefits of AI that could attend,

I'm more willing to engage in thoughtful conversations about what environmental impacts can be managed as we, for example, pursue better medical research.

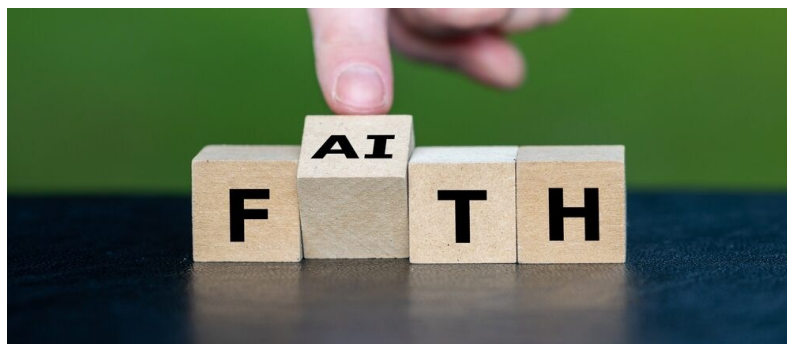
- **College students get it... sort of:** What shocked me is how well every one of those college students understand the negative environmental impacts. I thought I would receive resistance, but not really. Rather, it appeared as if those student already think the horse is out of the stable – that is, that the environment will be harmed – and that their using or not using AI matters not one iota. In many ways, they may be right.
- **There may also be a subtext of entitlement at work in their young souls.** After all, previous generations were permitted to use exploitative industries to gain personal wealth (or even basic economic well-being) – coal miners, industrialists, plastics manufacturing, etc. – so why should their generation have to be the first to show a little self-control? It's a hard argument, emotionally at least, to counter when you know that they're 22 years old with over \$100,000 of debt before they ever even start their career. Algae blooms in Lake Erie are a hard thing to care about when your \$450 student loan payment is due and your 2009 Toyota Camry needs \$1,100 in repairs. If AI equals paycheck, then these kids are going to sell out to AI.
- **Whose problem is this?** All of this is a reminder that the greatest ethical burdens should *not* be placed on the youngest/weakest shoulders; that's just as exploitative as anything we're doing to the environment. It's really on fat, middle-aged people (I count myself amongst that lot!) to step up and do the hard things rather than outsource it to young adults. If we leave them the option (to say nothing of the incentive) to use AI, they're going to use AI. Really, who wouldn't? By way of a comparative analogy, I've never owned a gun in my life, but that hasn't reduced the number of school shootings in America. I'm sure these young college students feel a similar way about AI. They could never touch the stuff and they may still watch their neighborhood burn from a wildfire born of AI-created environmental degradation.
- **Everyone wants the same thing from AI:** Efficiency. When I really got them to dig into why they would want to use AI, it was all about efficiency. It helped them study quicker, write quicker, create quicker, edit quicker. By the time we were done discussing it, I was convinced they didn't love AI; they just needed more time... and maybe a nap. And, yes, I felt the "old man yells at clouds" well up in my soul as I looked as these beautiful, bright young adults who presumably have nothing but time stretching out for decades before them complaining about not having enough time. I'd give my left arm to "lack" the time they lack. But I have to put ol' man Grumpus away and honor what they're feeling. And what they're feeling is valid because...
- **Professors are using and instructing use in AI.** When I was an English major, my favorite professors were those who could acknowledge that anything more than 75 pages for a MWF class (or 125 pages for a T/R class) basically meant I wasn't going to have time to read the full assignment. Good English professors knew what an average rate of reading was and understood that I had 4 other classes asking for a similar amount of output. I don't think there's a professor alive right now that knows what the "right" amount of output to expect from students who are utilizing AI is. The whole system is baking AI into higher education in a way that eliminates choice in the matter, even if there are legitimate ethical concerns.
- **AI runs contrary the Gospel, but in surprising ways.** I challenged these college students to explain

how efficiency (their primary reason for using AI) relates to their faith. They couldn't. More truthfully, they can't. If AI really is about efficiency, then nothing about the Christian faith is going to intersect with it there. God is VERY inefficient. I mean, seven days to create the universe when a snap of God's non-existent fingers could do the trick? Inefficient. Becoming incarnate and waiting three decades before even starting to preach? Inefficient. Promising a Kingdom come 2,000 years ago? Inefficient. Another way, of course, to narrate this inefficiency is this word: patient. Patience is a Christian virtue; efficiency ain't. Why?

- **It's all about relationships.** The Gospel is all about relationships – relationship with God in Christ Jesus; relationship with the Holy Spirit via baptism; relationships with one another in the Body of Christ. It's relationships every which way you turn. I got my best bit of nervous giggles when I pointed out how inefficient/relationship-oriented the gospel is and then drew an apt comparison for young people: "Which of you would sit down at a first date and immediately ask, 'What's the least amount of time it will take for me to score a second date?'" They got it immediately. When it comes to cultivating thick, rich relationships – not only romantic, but of any type – we are intentionally and assuredly inefficient. Indeed, even the chronically single members know that there may be nothing more intoxicating than listening to one's beloved prattle on about nothing. The sweet warmth of their breath, the sound of their voice, the fact that they've deemed you worthy to hear whatever it is they're saying... these are the things that add weight and color to life. After all, no one ever laid on their death bed and thought, "You know, I could've worked more efficiently." No, we treasure the best moments we had and, maybe, lament the good moments we missed because we were stuck at work.
- **Something similar is true in our faith.** You may have noticed, but Jesus' Church is *not* a multi-level marketing scheme where the best benefits attend to the longest tenured folks. This faith is not doesn't have quotas. As the Mary and Martha story makes clear, being with our Lord is a far better thing than running errands. AI can help with the errands; it can't do jack about Jesus.

To be sure, there's so much more to be said about this topic. And, in fact, our very own Synod of the Covenant recently received a grant to research faith and AI. (I have applied with the Rev. Dr. Chip Hardwick to be on the steering committee of this grant; I'm awaiting his decision. Pray for me). But maybe what I like best about AI – and any new technology – is the invitation it gives us to ask the question: What are my hopes for this thing? Because *any* conversation about hope will always be fertile ground for theological thinking and discipleship doing. What I remain convinced of, though, is that – quite paradoxically – you *can* spell "faith" without "AI."

Gloria in excelsis Deo.





Green News March 2026

As we get closer to spring (yay!), the Green Team is making plans. Corky has been thinking about how to strategize the community garden all winter. She wants to bring in more people or maybe groups, and share more of the veggies with the Brown Bag Project. Talk to Corky (419-345-8415) if you're interested in being involved.

We're also looking forward to hosting We Meet on April 22, which is Earth Day. More information to come next month.



Tip of the Month: The Washington Post recently posted an article about coffee ("Buy-it-for-life Coffee Makers ...", Feb. 10, 2026). Coffee is the second most consumed beverage in America (after water). It has health benefits like lower risk of head and neck cancer, Type 2 diabetes, and Parkinson's disease.

But the popularity of coffee means there's an estimated 10 billion paper or plastic cups in landfills, and coffee makers which no longer work after a few years.

The article argues that buying better coffee brewing equipment will be more cost effective in the long run and make better coffee at home. If you use a Keurig, the price of coffee works out to about \$30 per pound, not to mention the waste from single use pods.

For a better, less expensive cup of coffee, they recommend that you buy whole

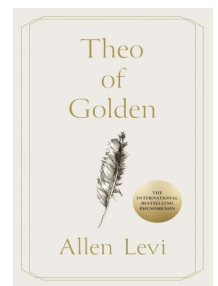
beans and invest in a good grinder. To then brew your coffee, a good machine will be more expensive, but last much longer. Or you can use pour over systems like simple glass or ceramic systems that will last for many years. These have a place for a filter in the top, then allow the coffee to drip through the grounds into the bottom portion. A French press is another simple system which will also last much longer. The grounds get steeped in hot water, then you use the mesh filter that's part of the press. The author estimates that a good machine or a simple system will save about \$2000 over 15 years and brew a better cup of coffee



First Friday will be on **March 6th at 6 pm at Ninja Hibachi Steak House**, 1080 S. Main St.,

BG. Please **RSVP** to Nettie Rose (429/262-7889) or nettierose@aol.com **by Wednesday, March 4th.**

The **Tuesday afternoon book group** will begin a new book entitled, **Theo of Golden** by Allen Levi. They meet at 1 pm in the church library. If you have questions please contact Judy Martin (419-308-2584).



Kindred Spirits Circle will meet again on **Monday, March 16th at 4:30 pm in the church library.** Linda Smith will lead the discussion on compassion & a healing spirit. Scripture involves the story of the bent woman. Please join us.

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**The office is closed daily for
lunch 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.**



The shop is now open on the fourth Saturday of each month from 9:30 to 11:00 am. These extended hours accommodate patrons who are unable to visit on Thursdays. Donations of clean, seasonal clothing are accepted Tuesday through Thursday, 9 am to 4 pm, and on Friday from 9 am to 1 pm.

Children's clothing is especially needed.

Please drop off clothing in the church lobby, using the cart by the bulletin board.

Volunteers are always welcome. Sorting clothing and stocking racks and shelves takes place on Wednesday mornings. If you would like to assist customers during shop hours, your help would be greatly appreciated. For questions, please contact Susan Dunn or Peggy Brigham.



Helping Hands

The next Helping Hands hygiene and cleaning item distribution is March 13th. Last month, there were a lot of new people looking for assistance. If you would like to donate products, we need the following items.

1. Toilet paper
2. Facial Tissues
3. Paper towels
4. Dish soap
5. Laundry detergent/dryer sheets
6. Body wash/shampoo
7. Deodorant
8. Baby diapers (sizes 3, 4, 5, 6)

Please place donations in the box located in the church lobby by March 8th. The items will be taken to First Christian Church for distribution on March 13th. If you want to contribute but don't have time to shop, a monetary donation can be made. We'll do the shopping.

If you would like to help with the distribution of the cleaning and hygiene items, just show up on March 13th from 4 to 6 pm at First Christian Church, corner of Poe and Haskins Roads. You will see familiar faces.

We are making a difference in people's lives. Thank you for supporting this community project.

D  **ACONS**
Following to Lead | Leading to Serve

Terri McNamara

Ellyn Stout, Scotty Huntington, Libby Dachik,
Kathy Sweeney, Lee Liebetreu, Anna Beeker,

MARCH FYMS PAGE

Family and Youth Ministry Monthly Updates

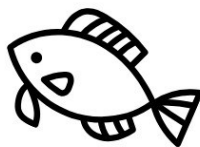
WE MEET *A Wednesday time of community and learning*

We Meet will continue through March. As we did for for the fall sessions, help is needed again to assist with meals each week If you can help, please let Amanda or Michael Botts (the new head of Christian Nurture) know!

LENTEN STUDY

40 Days of Reflection

Our daily lenten study will begin Continue though March. There will be a daily verse and reflection posted on our Facebook page as well as an ask to put so many coins in your One Great Hour of Sharing boxes based on each reflection. Boxes and study calendars can be picked up at the church starting February 15th. If you do not have access to Facebook but still would like the daily reflections. Ask Amanda to be put on the daily e-mail list.



**HOLY WEEK PLANS
WILL BE ANNOUNCED
CLOSER TO APRIL! LOOK
OUT FOR THEM THEN!**



CHILDREN'S CHURCH!

Children's Church will start a Lenten study as we complete a project during Moment for Ed and learn more about each part of the project during CC. Join us during Lent!



SUBSTITUTES WANTED

Children's Church and the Nursery could use some people to be on call to be the lead teacher if Araya or Amanda are sick or off. If you think you can help please let Amanda know!

Presbyterian Women are pleased to offer **13 white Easter Lily plants** for sale to decorate the church sanctuary for Easter and to commemorate and honor the memory of loved ones. **The price is \$16.00** per plant. **Checks should be made payable to *Presbyterian Women* with the word "lily" on the memo line.** Money may be placed in the church offering plate or mailed to the Church office.

The deadline to request and turn in money is Wednesday, March 25, or until the lilies are sold out. Families who purchase flowers may pick them up after the Easter Service on April 5.

Please fill out your Easter Lily order with the following information:

Name _____

Phone number _____

In Memory or Honor of _____

Number of plants ordered _____

Leonardo Da Vinci painted the **Mona Lisa** portrait with a green-colored costume.

New York City is known for its iconic green taxis

IRELAND
Green is the national color of Ireland

Green traffic lights mean "go"

Green light is used in night vision goggles.

Green anacondas are the largest snakes in the world

Chicago has dyed their rivers green on St. Patrick's Day since 1962

The Emerald City in "The Wizard of Oz" is green

Red is the opposite of green on the color wheel

Dragons are believed to be green to blend with forests.

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Witte's Words

Note from the Editor: Karen Witte (said "witty") has been a member of FPCBG for 50+ years. She currently resides at BG Manor and isn't able to make it to church, but would still like to bless her church using her God-given gift with words. She used these gifts in her career as a proofreader for the Sentinel-Tribune. Make sure to check out "Witte's Words" each month in the pages of this newsletter. This month's offering is a poem about sin. It seems appropriate as we ourselves are in the midst of Lent, a time of reflection. Humanity caused sin. We caused Christ's death. A death He did willingly so that we could go back to God.

I'm sorry

Dear Jesus, I'm so sorry for what we did to you.

You came to save us from our sins, but we murdered you.

I know it was your father's plan to bring us back to him.

I'm so sorry it had to be so painful and so grim.

The wounds we gave you are visible above, lasting through eternity, like your undying love.

I'm sorry we're so wicked you had to die,

But with your strength and goodness

You rose to live on high

I'm glad you gave humanity

Another chance in life. I hope we won't blow it.

With more sins and wars and strife.

I'm sorry I still sin.

I don't put you first.

I'm guilty of the sin of pride

And that one is the worst.

I don't know how to stop it.

I don't know what to do.

I know I won't be sorry

To turn into prayer to you.



March 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
ESL=English as a	YG=Youth	Med.	HYT=Horizon	CN=Chris. Nurture	TL= Trumpet	SC=Sort Clothes
1 10 Worship 11 Fellowship time 3:30 Girl Scouts 7 MRG-GL	2 Closed Synod of the Covenant 2-day mtg. (FH) →	3 1 Book Group in Library 5:30 ESL Classes 8 AA in FH	4 9 Sorting Clothes 3-4 Trumpet Lessons 5:30 We Meet	5 9:30 Deacons' Shop is open & Staff mtg 5:30 ESL Classes 6 Bell Choir 7 Choir 7 MR in FH	6 6 First Friday at Ninja Hibachi Steak House	7 8:30-12 PEO group EJ Chap. In FH
8 10 Worship 11 Fellowship 11 Mission mtg 3:30 Girl Scouts 7 MRG-GL	9 Closed 6:30-8 BGSONG in FH	10 1 Book Group in Library 5 Session mtg 5:30 ESL Classes 6-8 La Conexion in GL 8 AA in FH	11 9 Sorting Clothes 3-4 Trumpet Lessons 4:30 Trustees 5:30 We Meet	12 9:30 Deacons' Shop is open & Staff mtg. 5:30 ESL Classes 6 Bell Choir 7 Choir 7 MR in FH	13 4:30- Helping Hands at First Christian Church	14 1:30-4:30 in FH BGOPRIDE Clothing Swap
15 10 Worship 11 Fellowship 11:30 Deacons' 3:30 Girl Scouts 7 MRG-GL	16 Closed 4:30 Kindred Spirits Cir.	17 1 Book Group in Library 5:30 ESL Classes 8 AA in FH	18 9 Sorting Clothes 3-4 Trumpet Lessons 5:30 We Meet	19 9:30 Deacons' Shop is open & Staff mtg. 5 Worship Mtg. 5:30 ESL Classes 6 Bell Choir 7 Choir 7 MR in FH	20	21
22 10 Worship - 11 Fellowship 3:30 Girl Scouts 7 MRG-GL	23 Closed	24 April Newsletter Deadline 1 Book Group in Library 5:30 ESL Classes 7 Cong. Care & Christian Nurture mtgs 8 AA in FH	25 9 Sorting Clothes 3-4 Trumpet Lessons 5:30 We Meet	26 9:30 Deacons' Shop is open & Staff mtg. 5:30 ESL Classes 6 Bell Choir 7 Choir 7 MR in FH	27	28 9:30 Deacons' Shop open to the public
29 10 Worship— Palm Sunday 11 Fellowship 3:30 Girl Scouts 7 MRG-GL	30 Closed	31 1 Book Group in Library 5:30 ESL Classes 8 AA in FH	April 01	April 02	April 03	April 04



March 01 Skip Oman, Makellen Stottlemeyer
March 03 Betty Long
March 04 O'Leo Loki, Doug Nusser
March 05 Marcia Young
March 08 Ryan Rife
March 10 Peggy Brigham
March 13 Mickey Cochrane
March 19 Doretta Schmidt
March 23 Anne Clark, Linda Evans
March 24 Dick Martin
March 25 Allen Holder
March 29 Adriane Weisert, Karla Geyman
March 30 Joan McEwen, Jackson LaPointe

2026 Officers of the Church

SESSION

Class of 2026: Dar Bevelhymmer, Karla Geyman,
Chris Williams
Class of 2027: Anne Moser, Christine Guenther, Lisa Lawson
Class of 2028: Jen Coddling, Michale Botts
Moderator: Rev. Dr. Jeffrey A. Schooley: Clerk: Anne Moser

DEACONS

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Class of 2027: Libby Dachik, Scotty Huntington, Ellyn Stout
Class of 2028 Anne Beeker , Terri McNamara
Chair: Terri McNamara Secretary: Libby Dachik

TRUSTEES

Class of 2026: Lowell Nees, Dana Nemeth
Class of 2027: Rosemary Apple, Chet Marcin
Class of 2028: Mike Evens, Joyce Kepke
Chairs: Dana Nemeth

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We are on Facebook.

