

# Future tech may pose questions



BY BISHOP CHRISTOPHER

EVERY now and then I get an email from the national Church updating me on progress in artificial intelligence (AI). That's probably not the kind of email that you imagine a bishop receives, but they matter because whenever society takes steps forward, we find ourselves thinking about the bigger questions of how life should be lived.

We probably still think about AI as we've encountered it in the movies, where generally it involves some kind of futuristic scenario where robots are taking over the earth. In reality, a lot of work on AI can seem fairly mundane, but there are some developments that have grabbed our attention, such as the self-driving car.

I can't imagine ever owning a self-driving car, but where it gets interesting is when you start to ask how a car should think. Some things will be really obvious: it should probably stick to the speed limit, drive safely, and so on. But then there come deeper questions about purpose. Should it get its passengers to their destination as quickly as possible, even if it means driving selfishly? Should it let someone who has been queueing at a junction go first? What about the whole queue? Should it stop for hitchhikers?

This might all sound a bit far-fetched, but it reminds us that there are some questions that

can't be answered by technology, or not in a way where everyone would agree. And while self-driving cars may not yet be a particularly important part of our lives, there are other things where similar questions can be asked. Here we need to think not only about intelligence, but wisdom.

Wisdom is certainly something we generally like the sound of, but what is the place of wisdom in our world today? And where should it be found? Schools may teach us skills and knowledge, but at the heart of the Church's vision for education is the pursuit of wisdom, which goes far beyond technical know-how. As they say, knowledge means grasping that a tomato is a fruit, but wisdom means not putting one in a fruit salad.

For Christians, wisdom is found in the surprising guise of the foolishness of the cross. It is in Christ's willingness to abandon the pursuit of status and acclaim, and live for the sake of others. A wise car then would care about everyone's journey, and in that sense wisdom in our daily lives means caring about everyone's journey through life. It means asking how our daily routines and activities can become a blessing to those around us. It means asking how those mundane things that we take for granted might be used to the glory of God and be good news to the world.

## @CofEPortsmouth

SPRING 2020

### UPFRONT

- 3 Faith in Focus
- 4-9 Latest news

### IN DEPTH

- 10-13 How our churches are responding to climate change
- 14-17 Children's Sunday groups: what do our kids do?

### PEOPLE

- 20-21 My Faith: the trainee Reader who went to Ghana
- 23 Big Issue: Does our message resonate?
- 24 Why I love my church: Elspeth Lamb
- 25 Latest book

### AND FINALLY

- 26 Top 10: tips for greener living

**Editor:** Neil Pugmire (023-9289 9673 or [neil.pugmire@portsmouth.anglican.org](mailto:neil.pugmire@portsmouth.anglican.org))

**Advertising:** Glenda Charitos (01752-225 623 or [glenda@cornerstonevision.com](mailto:glenda@cornerstonevision.com))