

# The AI will be prayed to for 'the betterment of society'

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Silicon Valley engineers are worshipping robots as gods.

Anthony Levandowski – the man who built Google's famous self-driving car – has established a religious nonprofit that appears to be something like a church devoted to the worship of artificial intelligence.

It isn't clear whether the robot God already exists, what exactly it consists of and why it is being developed. But what is clear is that Mr Levandowski appears to be building his own god, in the former of artificial intelligence, which he will then encourage people to worship so that the world can be improved.

That's according to the founding documents of Way of the Future, a group intended to "develop and promote the realization of a Godhead based on artificial intelligence and through understanding and worship of the Godhead contribute to the betterment of society", according documents published by Wired. Mr Levandowski is the group's CEO and president, and it isn't clear how many members it has or what it is actually doing.

A range of scientific experts and technology billionaires, including Stephen Hawking and Elon Musk, have warned that our relaxed attitude towards artificial intelligence could mean we're at risk of being killed by it. Mr Musk has likened artificial intelligence to "summoning the demon", suggesting that while we might think we could control such a force we ultimately couldn't – and has founded an organisation called OpenAI focused specifically on stopping such a thing from happening.

Some theories – like the idea of Roko's Basilisk, a mostly derided but incredibly popular thought experiment that suggests we may be at risk from some all-powerful AI in the future – even speculate that our current actions could have some impact on how the artificially intelligent forces view us in the future.

The discovery comes as Mr Levandowski takes his part at the centre of a legal battle between Uber and Google, though it was actually founded two years ago and before all that began. The engineer left Uber last year amid claims by Google that he had stolen trade secrets and used them at his new company.

Wired, which revealed the strange new church as part of a long profile on Mr Levandowski, pointed out that his interest in self-driving cars and our robot god are far from separate from each other. The engineer is among the foremost experts on self-driving cars in the world – and those vehicles give artificial intelligence its most powerful embodiment, as well as being a look at how AI will change the world.

