

Holy Listening With Children

“Help me come closer to God by myself”
—Sofia Cavalletti
(developer of Catechesis of the Good Shepherd)

“So Eli told Samuel, ...‘If someone calls out to you again, say, ‘Speak, Lord. I’m listening.’”
1 Samuel 3:9

Holy Listening Is:

Holy Listening (also called Spiritual Accompaniment or Contemplative Listening) is an ecumenical Christian ministry where children are heard and supported as they recognize and respond to God’s movement in their lives. It is a child-led exploration of their personal experiences of God and their own unique spiritual development that assumes the already forward movement of God revealing God’s self to your child.

Holy Listening is NOT:

Holy Listening is not counseling, psychotherapy, Christian witness, or Sunday-school-teaching-time. I am not a clinician nor a trained therapist. Nor is the goal to draw a confession of faith from your child or assert a particular denominational theology.

About the Sessions:

Sessions are generally one-on-one and last 30-45 minutes depending on the child’s age. With the Holy Spirit as the true listener and the child as the expert, I will ask open-ended questions, use spiritual play methods, and use child-friendly prayer practices to encourage child-led storytelling and reflection. I will be paying attention to what is captivating your child’s imagination, any tender happenings in their weeks, and any moments of divine closeness they experience. I will validate these experiences and help the child respond to God’s movement in their life. Sessions may include playing, talking, drawing, silence, prayer practices, and blessing.

Confidentiality:

Your child’s stories are their own and I will hold them confidential, encouraging them to share with you. I am glad to coach you with questions and postures that will promote this sharing. As a mandated reporter, I am mandated by law to disclose any information necessary for the protection of the child. I will also absolutely recommend to you if I feel your child is, for any reason, in need of professional therapeutic or more experienced services.

Safety:

The child’s guardian and myself will decide together on a preferred meeting location. I will employ an open-door policy at all times that will maintain the quiet moment between listener and child as well as open and easy proximity to their adult(s). At least one adult guardian must be available during our meetings in case the child needs help for any reason.

Permission Form for Holy Listening:

Child's Name: _____ Child's Age: _____

Parent/Guardian Name(s): _____

Primary Phone: _____

Secondary Phone: _____

Faith Community Affiliation or Practices Common in the Household:

Anything else I need to know about your child? _____

**By signing below, I give permission to Barbara Lyon, Children's Spiritual Accompanist, to meet with my child. I understand that the ministry provided is spiritual and not psychological in nature. I have read and understood the attached description of Holy Listening With Children.*

Parent/Guardian Print Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Sign Name: _____

Date: _____