THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF WESTERN NEW YORK

Young Voices Bring Hope to Listening Sessions

Among those taking part in a recent listening session were two younger participants, whose perspectives shaped much of the conversation — particularly when it turned to where people find hope in the church today.

They pointed to music as a real source of joy: the mix of traditional and contemporary styles, moments like flute performances or selections from *Wonder, Love, and Praise*, and collaborations between parishes that make services feel alive. They also spoke to the promise of efforts that bring generations together outside a typical Sunday morning — like Holy Hikes and Youth United in Ministry — as models for the kind of connection they'd like to see more of across the diocese.

Their presence, and their willingness to speak up, is itself a sign of hope: proof that younger people are looking for a place in the life of the church, where the church is ready to meet them. One of the youth participants wants to talk to the bishop. They've got a whole notebook full of questions for the bishop! This kind of engagement in the church by our youth makes all the difference.

Listening sessions continue and have since reached Christ Church, Lockport, with a growing food pantry ministry; St. Peter's, Westfield, an historic congregation hoping they can continue to embark on projects to keep that holy space open for worship and mission in their village and to the wider world; and St. Paul's, Springville, who invite all to worship or for a long, meditative walk on their labyrinth.

Upcoming church visits:

St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Grand Island	Nick Evancho	Cheryl Emerson	July 26, 2026
St. John's-Grace, Buffalo	Susan Woods	Susan Hadden	July 26, 2026
St. Paul's, Harris Hill	Karen Gengo	Katelyn Nicoloff	July 26, 2026
St. Stephen's, Niagara Falls	William Duthe	Barbara Price	July 26, 2026
St. John's, Medina	Robin Kozlowski	Joe Kozlowski	July 26, 2026
St. John's, Wilson	Susan Keppy	Ed Walker	July 26, 2026
St. Paul's, Mayville	Cathy Smith	Sharon Drennen	July 26, 2026
St. James', Batavia	Diane Cox	Amy Swanson	July 26, 2026
Trinity, Fredonia		Lisa Yaggie	July 26, 2026

St. David's, West Seneca	Marc Gutierrez	Daniel Thibodeau	July 26, 2026