

Century Baptist Church

Sacred Assembly

Participant Guide

September 20, 2026 / 2:30 PM

Purpose of this guide

This participant guide is designed for a sacred assembly of at least one hour of scripted worship, Scripture, confession, renunciation, healing, commitment, and communion. The service may extend to two or three hours depending on how much voluntary personal confession takes place.

The aim is not shame, blame, or accusation. The aim is repentance that leads to renewal: God reveals sin in order to heal, names what is false in order to restore what is true, and confronts self-rule so that Christ may again become our shared center.

Guide edited by Sacred Assembly Prep Team: Brandt Dick, Angie Gallagher, Larue Goetz, Carol Grez, Will MacDonald, Pastor Dave Young and Rod Zimmerman.

Service Flow

Season	Focus
Welcome and Introduction	Call the congregation to humility, hope, and shared participation.
Opening Prayer and Scripture	2 Chronicles 34:29-33; Joel 2:12-17
1. Exalting the Living God	Worship, declaration of intent, submission to Christ.
2. Preparation and Private Confession	Search me, O God; personal silence and surrender.
3. Dealing with Sin: Personal and Corporate	Four corporate confessions with voluntary personal confession.
4. Healing and Commitment	Gospel hope and commitment to the next season of church life.
5. Prayer to Break Strongholds and Gospel Pardon	Renunciation, assurance, communion, and lingering prayer.

Note: Public confession is voluntary. No one should be called out or pressured to speak. If public confession occurs, it should be short, simple, sincere, and focused on owning one's own sin without naming or blaming others.

Welcome and Introduction

[Pastor Dave Young]

Welcome to this Sacred Assembly of Century Baptist Church. We gather today not as spectators, not as critics of one another, and not to assign blame to a person, group, staff team, board, or a ministry. We gather as the people of God under the Word of God, in the presence of the living Christ, asking the Holy Spirit to search us, humble us, forgive us, heal us, and renew us.

A sacred assembly is a holy pause.

It is a gathered moment before God where His people slow down, tell the truth, confess humbly, receive mercy, and turn together toward His ways. We come believing the gospel: Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. Because of His cross and resurrection, confession is not the path to shame; it is the path to freedom and renewed joy.

This afternoon, we will worship, hear Scripture, confess personal and corporate sin, renounce patterns we have tolerated, and commit ourselves to Jesus Christ and His mission. There will be opportunities for silence and, if the Spirit prompts, voluntary public confession. No one is required to speak. If you do speak, please follow the guidelines in the addendum: own your own sin, keep it short, avoid explaining or blaming, and trust the Lord with the response of others.

Opening Prayer

[Larue Goetz]

Holy Father, we come before You in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior, Shepherd, Head, and King. Search us and know us. Give us courage to tell the truth, humility to confess, faith to receive Your mercy, and love to move toward one another. Let this assembly not become an accusation, but an invitation to return to Jesus together. Amen.

Opening Scripture Readings

Larue Goetz: ***"Please stand with me for the reading of God's Word"***

2 Chronicles 34:29-31 (ESV) Then the king sent and gathered together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. And the king went up to the house of the LORD, with all the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the priests and the Levites, all the people both great and small. And he read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant that had been found in the house of the LORD. And the king stood in his place and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes, with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant that were written in this book.

Joel 2:12-13, 15-17a (ESV) "Yet even now," declares the LORD, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your hearts and not your garments." Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster. Blow the trumpet in Zion; consecrate a fast; call a solemn assembly; gather the people. Consecrate the congregation; assemble the elders; gather the children, even nursing infants. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her chamber. Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep and say, "Spare your people, O LORD."

1. Season of Worship: Exalting the Living God

[Worship Team]

Song of Declaration: **Be Thou my Vision**

Declaration of Intent and Desire

[Vernel Schneider]

*"Please **remain seated** and read with me in unison this declaration of intent and desire."*

We, the people of Century Baptist Church, desire to serve and proclaim the wonders of Almighty God and the free grace found in the gospel of Jesus Christ. We present ourselves to our Lord in Sacred Assembly to exalt Jesus Christ, to listen to His Word, to submit to His Lordship, and to turn our hearts toward Him by the power of the Holy Spirit.

- We declare our pursuit of and allegiance to God our Father, Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord, and the Holy Spirit who gives life.
- We commit ourselves again to live as one body in Christ, practicing humility, truth, mercy, reconciliation, and love.

- We commit ourselves to pursue the disciple-making mission of Jesus, in Bismarck, Mandan, North Dakota, and to the nations.
- We commit ourselves to become a people whose life together displays the beauty, holiness, tenderness, and truth of Jesus Christ.
- We commit ourselves to live in the joy of the Lord, not because we are strong in ourselves, but because His grace is sufficient and His mercy is new every morning.

We, the people of Century Baptist Church, also acknowledge that we have sinned in word, deed, posture, and shared pattern before Almighty God. We present ourselves to the Lord in Sacred Assembly to confess, renounce, and turn from the false ways we have tolerated, normalized, or excused.

- We confess that we have done what is right in our own eyes, practicing self-rule rather than shared submission to Jesus Christ as Lord.
- We confess that we have honored Jesus in doctrine while displacing His authority in our preferences, speech, decisions, wounds, and relationships.
- We confess that we have allowed knowledge, conviction, role, title, and influence to become ways of proving ourselves rather than building up the body in love.
- We confess that we have too often lived as separate individuals, families, ministries, and circles rather than as one body in Christ.
- We confess that we have drifted from Jesus' disciple-making mission into comfort, preference, institutional maintenance, and consumer expectation.

Declaration of Submission to Christ

[Angie Gallagher, Carol Grenz]

*"Please **stand** and read with me in unison this declaration of Submission to Christ."*

We declare Jesus Christ to be Lord, the Head of the church - His body, His bride, His building, His family, and His flock. We are His people, purchased by His shed blood on the cross. We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

We declare Christ to be the Chief Shepherd of Century Baptist Church. We belong to Him. We are under His care. In submission to Him and His direction, we seek to follow Him with humility, courage, obedience, and love.

Silence Before the Lord

[2 minutes of silence]

Scriptures for meditation during silence:

Colossians 1:18 (ESV) And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.

Psalms 23:1-3 (ESV) The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul.

Hebrews 4:15-16 (ESV) For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace.

“AMEN, please be seated”

2. Season of Preparation and Private Confession

[Worship Team]

Songs of Invitation: **How Deep the Father’s Love for us**

[Will MacDonald]

*Please **remain seated** as I recite these scriptures, then we will pray them in unison.*

Psalm 139:23-24 (ESV) Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!

Isaiah 55:6-7 (ESV) Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

1 John 1:8-9 (ESV) If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Private Confession

Before we speak together as a congregation, we will sit quietly before the Lord. Ask Him to search your own heart first. Ask Him where you have practiced self-rule, valued being right over love, withdrawn from body life, participated in gossip or false peace, or drifted from Jesus’ mission into comfort and maintenance.

[5 minutes of silence for private confession]

“AMEN.”

3. Season of Dealing with Sin: Corporate and Personal

[Pastor Dave Young]

This is the core of our Sacred Assembly. After each corporate confession, there will be an opportunity for voluntary public confession. If the Spirit prompts you to speak, please keep your confession short, simple, sincere, and focused on your own sin. Do not name other people, explain your side, or use confession to correct someone else. Public confession is not a substitute for private reconciliation. If you have sinned against a brother or sister, you should go to them personally and seek reconciliation.

No one will be called out. No one is required to speak. We are not here to perform repentance. We are here to humble ourselves before the Lord who is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.

For all those who will stand in God’s presence and confess your sin, I ask you to use the “public confession guidelines” previously provided and copied into the addendum of this participant guide.

There are four corporate CBC sins, they should be familiar to you, we’ve introduced them to you over the last month. This section will have four facilitators, one to guide us through each corporate sin.

1. Jesus' Lordship vs. Self-Rule (Authority)

[Vaughn Rodes, Facilitator]

"God's Word for us:" In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes. (Judges 21:25 ESV)

Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
and do not lean on your own understanding.
In all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will make straight your paths.
Be not wise in your own eyes;
fear the Lord, and turn away from evil. (Prov 3:5-7 ESV)

(Other Key Scriptures: Luke 6:46; Hebrews 13:17; James 4:6-10)

We have confessed Jesus as Lord, but often lived as though personal preference, private judgment, family or group loyalty, wounds, and self-protection were final. When everyone does what is right in their own eyes, healthy spiritual authority breaks down, correction is resisted, and shared submission to Christ is weakened.

Corporate Confession

[Congregation reads in unison]

Lord, we confess that we have honored Jesus in doctrine while displacing His authority in our preferences, speech, decisions, wounds, and relationships.

Lord, we confess that we have resisted, ignored, or misused healthy spiritual authority, choosing self-rule over shared submission to Christ.

Lord, we confess that we have trusted our own understanding more than Your Word, Your Spirit, and the discernment of the body.

Lord, we confess that we have sometimes allowed real wounds to become defining wounds, holding onto victimhood as identity rather than bringing our pain under the Lordship of Jesus for healing, forgiveness, and release.

Lord, have mercy on us. Restore Jesus Christ as our shared center.

Invitation to Personal Confession

Is there anyone who would like to publicly confess a way you have practiced self-rule, resisted the Lordship of Jesus, dismissed healthy spiritual authority, or trusted your own understanding more than the Word, the Spirit, and the discernment of the body? Or any other personal public confession?

[Time for voluntary personal public confession]

Congregational Renunciation

[Congregation reads in unison]

In Jesus' name, we renounce self-rule and the pattern of doing what is right in our own eyes.

We renounce the belief that our preferences, wounds, judgments, loyalties, or self-protection should have final authority.

We declare that Jesus Christ is Lord of His church. We submit ourselves to His Word, His Spirit, and the wise discernment of the body.

Lord Jesus, restore healthy spiritual authority among us and teach us to walk in humble submission to You and one another. Amen.

2. Love Builds Up vs. Being Right or Being Seen (Leadership)

[Pastor Paul Herr, Facilitator]

“God’s Word for us:” If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. (1 Corinthians 13:1-3 ESV)

(Other Key Scriptures: 1 Corinthians 8:1; Matthew 23:23-28; Philippians 2:3-5; Ephesians 4:15-16)

We have allowed knowledge, conviction, role, title, and influence to become ways of proving ourselves rather than building up the body in love. Being right, being recognized, or being vindicated has sometimes mattered more than humility, tenderness, and Christlike care. We have too often valued “head” over “heart” and “hands.”

Corporate Confession

[Congregation reads in unison]

Lord, we confess that we have allowed knowledge to puff us up instead of allowing love to build others up.

Lord, we confess that we have sought recognition, influence, control, or vindication more than humility, tenderness, and love.

Lord, we confess that we have used conviction without compassion and wounded others while believing we were defending what is right.

Lord, we confess that we have sometimes treated too many matters as essential rather than disputable, closing down dialogue and prioritizing narrow interpretations over relational maturity, safety, and love.

Lord, have mercy on us. Form in us the mind and heart of Christ.

Invitation to Personal Confession

Is there anyone who would like to publicly confess valuing being right, being seen, being recognized, or being vindicated more than building others up in love? Or any other personal public confession?

[Time for voluntary personal public confession]

Congregational Renunciation

[Congregation reads in unison]

In Jesus’ name, we renounce pride that disguises itself as conviction without love.

We renounce the desire to be right, seen, recognized, or vindicated when it leads us away from humility and Christlike care.

We declare that knowledge must serve love, truth must be spoken in love, and leadership must reflect the humility of Jesus.

Lord Jesus, teach us to build up Your body in tenderness, courage, wisdom, and love. Amen.

3. Koinonia vs. Rugged Individualism (Community)

[Ryne Jungling, Facilitator]

“God’s Word for us:” And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. (Acts 2:42-47 ESV)

(Other Key Scriptures: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 4:1-6; 1 John 1:5-9; Ephesians 4:25-32)

We have too often lived as separate individuals, families, ministries, and circles rather than as one body in Christ. Instead of walking in the light together, we have resisted biblical authority, struggled to practice healthy submission, and normalized avoidance, gossip, factional conversations, and unhealed hurt.

Corporate Confession

[Congregation reads in unison]

Lord, we confess that we have withdrawn into our own circles, loyalties, ministries, and opinions rather than practicing sacrificial body life.

Lord, we confess that we have tolerated gossip, triangulation, faction-building, and false peace rather than pursuing truth, healing, and unity.

Lord, we confess that we have normalized relational hurt and failed to move toward one another with honesty, mercy, and reconciliation.

Lord, we confess our resistance to biblical authority and our struggle to practice healthy submission, admitting that we have often bypassed appropriate boundaries and failed to show proper deference to our pastors and elders.

Lord, we confess that we have sown seeds of distrust where Christ called us to pursue truth, love, and reconciliation.

Invitation to Personal Confession

Is there anyone who would like to publicly confess withdrawing from body life, participating in gossip, triangulation, side conversations, false peace, distrust, or failing to move toward others in reconciliation? Or any other personal public confession?

[Time for voluntary personal public confession]

Congregational Renunciation

[Congregation reads in unison]

In Jesus' name, we renounce rugged individualism and the belief that we can follow Christ apart from the body of Christ.

We renounce gossip, triangulation, hallway conversations, faction-building, false peace, and every pattern that tears down trust.

We declare that we are one body in Christ, members of one another, called to walk in the light, speak truthfully, forgive freely, and pursue peace.

Lord Jesus, rebuild our koinonia. Make us a church family marked by truth, mercy, humility, and love. Amen.

4. Disciple-Making Mission vs. Comfort and Maintenance (Mission)

[Rod Zimmerman, Facilitator]

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in ^a the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20 ESV)

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." (Acts 1:8 ESV)

(Other Key Scriptures: John 20:21; Luke 9:23-24; Revelation 3:1-3)

We have drifted from Jesus' disciple-making mission into comfort, preference, institutional maintenance, and consumer expectation. The church can become a place to preserve what serves us rather than a body submitted to Jesus and sharing the gospel.

Corporate Confession

[Congregation reads in unison]

Lord, we confess that we have protected comfort, preferences, familiar programs, and institutional needs more than Your disciple-making mission.

Lord, we confess that we have lacked urgency and courage to share the gospel, expecting the church to serve us more than equip and send us.

Lord, we confess that we have treated good church activities as substitutes for obedience to Your call to make disciples.

Lord, we confess that facilities, programs, staffing, familiar patterns, and past fruitfulness can become functional priorities over gospel urgency and disciple-making mission.

Lord, have mercy on us. Reawaken us to Your mission.

Invitation to Personal Confession

Is there anyone who would like to publicly confess mission drift, consumer expectation, lack of urgency for evangelism, or protecting comfort and familiar patterns more than Jesus' disciple-making mission? Or any other personal public confession?

[Time for voluntary personal public confession]

Congregational Renunciation

[Congregation reads in unison]

In Jesus' name, we renounce comfort, preference, consumer expectation, and institutional maintenance wherever they have displaced Jesus' mission.

We renounce passivity toward lost people and apathy toward our own growth as disciples.

We declare that Jesus sends His church as the Father sent Him. We receive again His call to make disciples, bear witness, and share the gospel in word and deed.

Lord Jesus, make Century Baptist a disciple-making church for Bismarck, Mandan, North Dakota, and the nations. Amen.

[Worship Team]

Song of Response: **Living Hope**

4. Season of Healing and Commitment to the Next Season of Church Life

[Brandt Dick, Mike Pitkin]

1 Peter 2:9-12 (ESV) But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.

Corporate Prayer of Healing

[Congregation reads in unison]

Our Father, we thank You for Your kindness, mercy, patience, and peace. We acknowledge that Your kindness leads us to repentance. As You have forgiven us, help us forgive one another. As You have reconciled us to Yourself in Christ, help us pursue reconciliation with one another. Heal what has been wounded. Restore what has been broken. Rebuild what has been neglected. Make us again a people whose life together proclaims the excellencies of Jesus Christ.

We ask You to lead Century Baptist into the next season of church life with humility, courage, renewed trust, healthy leadership, clear governance, repaired relationships, and fresh obedience to Jesus' disciple-making mission. Amen.

I. Congregational Commitment to Love God

[Congregation reads in unison]

Our Father, our desire is to pursue You. You alone are our true God. You are holy, beautiful, faithful, merciful, and worthy of all worship. We confess that our deepest joy cannot be found in control, comfort, reputation, being right, or getting our own way. You alone satisfy. Let us become captivated again by Your greatness, Your goodness, and Your grace in Jesus Christ. Therefore, we declare together: the joy of the Lord is our strength. Amen.

Congregational Response: Is there anyone who would like to declare a renewed commitment to pursue God for the next season of Century Baptist Church?

[Time for voluntary personal public commitment]

II. Congregational Commitment to Love One Another

[Congregation reads in unison]

Our Father, we believe that You are love and that we are Your beloved children. Because You first loved us, teach us to love one another. Let Century Baptist become a center of love where relationships inside the church body reflect the loyal, truthful, forgiving, and reconciling love of Jesus. May Your Spirit produce patience, kindness, humility, gentleness, and self-control among us. May our love spill over into our community and region. May we be known by our love. Amen.

Congregational Response: Is there anyone who would like to declare a renewed commitment to love others, pursue reconciliation, and rebuild trust in the body?

[Time for voluntary personal public commitment]

III. Congregational Commitment to Jesus' Mission

[Congregation reads in unison]

Merciful Father, we believe You love the world and have sent Your Son as Savior and King. We acknowledge that You have given Century Baptist the redemptive gift of the gospel to be a blessing to our neighbors and to the nations. We commit ourselves to proclaiming and embodying the gospel in word and deed. We commit to making disciples who make disciples, serving the poor and marginalized, raising up the next generation, and participating in Your mission locally and globally. We devote ourselves to this work, motivated by the grace and beauty of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Congregational Response: Is there anyone who would like to declare a renewed commitment to share the gospel, make disciples, and be a blessing to the world?

[Time for voluntary personal public commitment]

5. Season of Prayer to Break Strongholds

[Mark Issacs]

Leader: Our Father, we forgive one another and every person who has hurt us or our church.

People: We forgive as the Lord has forgiven us. We forgive because the Lord has forgiven us.

Leader: Father, where we have resisted Your grace, we ask Your forgiveness. We repent of the ways we have allowed sin to rob us of joy, trust, unity, and mission.

People: Forgive us for doubt, self-protection, unrighteous anger, suspicion, and self-pity.

Leader: Lord Jesus, we ask You to break any stronghold the evil one has held over our church. We come to You as our Savior, Shepherd, Healer, Warrior, and King.

People: We submit to You now - spirit, mind, and body - asking for Your restoration.

[Leader and people in unison]

Father, we give ourselves to You. We give You our pain, worry, brokenness, anger, and distrust. We resist the devil and any foothold we have given through unresolved anger, gossip, bitterness, pride, false peace, or self-rule. In the name of Jesus Christ and by His power and authority, we reject every stronghold that has opposed our life together and our mission.

We reject the stronghold of self-rule and doing what is right in our own eyes. We reject the stronghold of knowledge without love, conviction without compassion, and leadership without humility. We reject the stronghold of rugged individualism, gossip, triangulation, distrust, and false peace. We reject the stronghold of comfort, consumer expectation, institutional maintenance, and mission drift. We reject every lie that says Jesus is not enough, His Word is not true, His ways are not good, or His mission is not urgent.

We announce that Century Baptist Church belongs to Jesus Christ. We invoke the power of His precious blood and mighty resurrection to cast down every attack against this church, its leaders, its staff, its members, and its mission. We do so in the strong name of Jesus. Amen.

Leader: We confess our sins. We forgive those who sin against us.

People: Father, we accept Your grace. Father, we receive Your healing. In Jesus' name, Amen.

The Pardon of the Gospel

[Pastor Paul Herr]

Leader: Surely this saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance:

People: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

Leader: If we confess our sins,

People: He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Brothers and sisters, look to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Jesus died and rose again to save sinners. He said, "Whoever comes to me I will never cast out." Let us return to Him. Let us press on to know the Lord, for in His presence there is fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore.

[Worship Team]

Song of Assurance: **Trust in God**

Communion

[Pastor Paul Ewing]

We come now to the table of the Lord. This table is not for those who have no sin; it is for those who know their need of mercy and have come to Jesus. The bread reminds us that Christ's body was given for us. The cup reminds us that His blood was shed for the forgiveness of sins. As you come, come in faith, repentance, gratitude, and hope.

[Instructions for communion distribution]

After receiving communion, you may remain in prayer, reconcile quietly with others as appropriate, or leave in silence. Please keep the sanctuary quiet for those who remain before the Lord. Further conversation can continue in [designated area].

Closing Prayer

[Pastor Dave Young]

Lord Jesus Christ, You are the Head of Your church, the Shepherd of Your people, and the Savior of sinners. Thank You for meeting us in mercy. Seal in us what You have begun. Make us humble, truthful, loving, courageous, and missionally faithful. May Century Baptist Church walk forward with Jesus as our shared center. Amen.

Addendum A: Guidelines for Public Confession

Public confession should be voluntary, brief, sincere, and focused on owning your own sin. It should not be used to correct, accuse, explain, or defend yourself.

1. Own your own sin specifically. Say what you did, thought, said, neglected, or tolerated. Use “I” language.
2. Confess without qualification. Agree with God that you were wrong. Avoid “if,” “but,” or explanations that shift blame.
3. Be cautious that your confession does not create new harm. Do not name another person unless you have already begun reconciliation with them and have their permission.
4. Ask forgiveness when appropriate. “I recognize my sin caused hurt and harm to God, to others, and to myself. I was wrong. Please forgive me.”
5. Return to your seat and be still. Do not explain how others hurt you. Trust the Lord with how others respond.
6. Let repentance continue after the service. Make restitution where needed, rebuild trust, and pursue reconciliation privately and biblically.

Summary: Let your confession be short, simple, sincere, and humble. Then wait silently before the Lord.

Scripture Translation Note

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations in this guide are from the English Standard Version (ESV).