

Embodied Prayer of Confession

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Tips for adaptation to your own congregation:

- Do **NOT** print this prayer in your bulletin—it is too tempting then for people to read it. When they read it, it becomes a cognitive exercise and the body is not able to really take the lead and feel the prayer.
- Come up with your own postures/gestures of living a lie and living in Christ. Just like when you write prayer of confession, you know some of what your congregation is struggling with at the time.
- When developing language for invitation and confession trust the congregation to “get it” without explaining it all to them. Use as few words as possible and let the body “speak” the prayer. Leave room for mystery. Don’t be afraid to be quiet!
- Maybe your congregation knows some other song you could use as a refrain (like a *Taize* song or just a few words of Amazing Grace). Make it easy and repetitive.
- I learned the “Open the Window” song from singer/songwriter Elise Witt. Go to www.elisewitt.com and read more about the song “Open the Window,” an adaptation of a Georgia Sea Islands Spiritual. There are also verses and you can write your own verses.

Call to Confession:

You may want to begin the call by simply singing the “Open the Widow” song refrain through once. Then in your own way invite congregation into “hands-free” postures of truth telling and repentance and postures of redemption and grace. The Holy Spirit moves and breathes through us and transforms who we are and who we can be. Each posture, we invite the Holy Spirit to transform us from living a lie to living in Christ’s healing way.

Prayer of Confession:

(postures alternate by being introduced with “when we live a lie” and “when Christ touches us”)

- Posture One: Clenched Fist (clenched fists up and out)
~ open the window let the dove fly in
Posture Two: Open Hands (outreaching open hands)

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- Posture Three: Guarded Heart (hands over heart in protective gesture)
~ open the window let the dove fly in
Posture Four: Open stance (feet firmly on ground, arms stretched out to each side)
- Posture Five: Holding others at arms length (hands stretched out like you are pushing people on both sides away from you)
~ open the window let the dove fly in
Posture Six: Living our Deep Connection (hands connected to people on each side)
- Posture Seven: Turning a blind eye (turn while shielding your eyes)
~ open the window let the dove fly in
Posture Eight: Taking a closer look (looking our neighbor in the eye, hold their hands)
- Posture Nine: Brace ourselves for change (hands out in front and head turned as if anticipating something being thrown at you)
~ open the window let the dove fly in
Posture Ten: Embracing God's Mystery (graceful, swirling hands and arms move into an embrace)

Sing:

~open the window children, open the window now, open the window children,
open the window let the dove fly in

Assurance:

(Using postures/gestures)

- Open hands
- Open stances
- Deep connections
- Taking a closer look
- Embracing God's mystery

These are the postures of a people infused with God's Spirit, touched by Jesus' healing power.

Breathe, O Breathe. You are a new creation (really take a deep, deep breath here).

And be at peace. (Hands in prayer position in front of your chest)

AMEN