

AN ORDER OF CELEBRATION FOR THE GATHERED COMMUNITY

Woodridge United Methodist Church

Sunday, August 16th, 2026

Blessing of the Backpacks

12th Sunday after

Music to Prepare Our Hearts

Lighting of the Altar Candles

Welcome and Announcements

Blessing of the Backpacks

***Call to Worship**

Charlotte: Family of God, we gather today to unite our voices and our lives in praise to God!

Many Voices: How good and pleasant it is when we live together in unity!

Charlotte: We gather to celebrate how God binds us together to live, work, play, and rest as the Body of Christ!

Many Voices: How good and pleasant it is when we live together in unity!

Charlotte: We gather to remember how God has worked through us to share Christ's love with one another and our neighbors through our prayers, our presence, our gifts, our service, and our witness.

Many Voices: How good and pleasant it is when we live together in unity!

Charlotte: Family of God, today we come as diverse and unique members of the Body of Christ to learn and grow not in uniformity but in unity to love God, self, neighbor, and all creation.

Many Voices: How good and pleasant it is when we live together in unity! Thanks be to God!

All: Amen.

***Opening Hymn**

"My Faith Looks Up to Thee" (*verses 1-3*)

UMH #452

***Passing the Peace**

Opening Prayer

Charlotte: Eternal God, heal the wounds that block our unity as your beloved children. Ease the hurts and betrayals that prevent us from embracing the balm of your forgiveness. Cast out the fears that keep us from seeking your peace and reconciliation. Even when our hearts are pierced with anguish, send us friends who will bring us solace through your loving Spirit.

All: Amen.

Offering Ourselves

Blessing our Gifts with Music

*Doxology

*Offering Prayer

All: Gracious God, you pour your blessing upon your people like dew upon the earth and oil upon the head, overflowing beyond every boundary we try to draw. We thank you for the gift of unity—good and pleasant, beautiful and life-

giving—given not only for us, but for the healing of the world. Receive these offerings as signs of our desire to live together in your love, to practice radical welcome, and to share your abundance with all your children. May what we give today flow outward in compassion and service, so that our life together may reflect your kingdom of peace, justice, and joy. Amen.

Scripture Readings

Old Testament Lesson

Psalm 133 *(CEB)*

Gospel Lesson

Matthew 15:10-20 *(CEB)*

Charlotte: The Word of God for the People of God.

Many Voices: Thanks be to God.

Responsive Song

"Christ Has Broken Down the Wall"

W&S#3122

Proclaiming

"Quick to Listen, Slow to Speak"

Pastor Dave

Praying

Joys & Concerns

Prayers for the People

Lord's Prayer

*Closing Hymn

"In Christ There Is No East or West"

UMH #548

*Dismissal with Blessing

Going Forth to the World