# Northridge Preschool Special Use Permit Amendment

**PROJECT PROPOSAL**

To continue to provide a Christian preschool opportunity for families in our community, preparing children to attend Kindergarten academically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually. Currently our maximum capacity is listed at 80 students, however, as we are looking to growth, opportunity, and need in the 29N corridor for quality childcare and preschool programs we would like to increase our capacity to 100 students should the need arise. We would also like to increase our hours of operation from 7:30 am – 1:30 pm to 6:00 am – 6:00 to allow for an after-school program with enrichment activities for our preschoolers and to better meet the needs of our working parents.

**Design:** Northridge Preschool will continue to operate from the day after Labor Day (the 1st Tuesday in September) – the Thursday before Memorial Day (typically the 3rd Thursday in May) following the Albemarle County School schedule. It will consist of up to 8 classrooms: two 3-year-old classes, one combined class of 3-4-year olds, three classes of 4-year-old classes, with the potential to have Pre-K and additional classes depending on the needs of the community. The preschool capacity will not exceed 100 students per day. The preschool morning can open at 6:00 am and will operate daily until 12:30 pm, with the availability in our extended day program allow for parent pick-up as late as 6:00 pm to allow parents who work a full day time for travel to pick-up.

**Public Need and Benefit**: The benefit of a preschool education in preparing children for kindergarten and academic success later in school is well documented and established. In addition, demographic data indicates a large population of preschool aged children within a 5-mile radius of Northridge Preschool.

**Administration:** Northridge Preschool is overseen by the Church Board of the Charlottesville Northridge Community Church of the Nazarene. The Board recruits and hires a Preschool Director. Northridge Community Church's board is responsible for Northridge Preschool's finances.

**Staffing:** For children ages 2-6 Virginia law requires 1 adult for every 1-10 children and 2 adults for 11-20 children. In keeping with Northridge Preschool's policy, adults should always be with the children. Background checks, First Aid & CPR, and AED certifications are required of all staff. Additional church and Preschool staff provide weekly Chapel and Music classes.

**Facilities:** Northridge Preschool uses all existing children's classrooms within the children's ministry wing of the building. Additional classrooms and the sanctuary are also used from time

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to time as needed for Chapel and Music class. No change to the site of building will be required for the enrollment to increase to 100 students. (Please see the attached 100 Student Plan map.)

**Hours of Operation:** 6:00 am to 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Early Care takes place from 6:00 am to 9:00 am. Preschool operates from 9:00 am to 12:30 pm., with extended care and enrichment activities to include, but not limited to rest time, snack, enrichment and center time, and free play available from 12:30 pm to 6:00 pm.

**Surrounding Properties:** Our surrounding properties are single family residential homes and two additional church properties. Located near-by and to the south are a large site currently zone industrial which is the Emerson, Inc. site. We have operated our current preschool for eighteen years in peace and harmony with all our neighbors. The voluntary and mandatory site plan plantings have matured and provide a wonderful buffer between our property and neighboring properties.

**Character of Property:** Our property contains the existing church building with various classrooms, a conference room, sanctuary, large parking lot, playground, picnic area, small storage shed and wooded areas all located on 9.9 acres. It should be noted that the average Sunday worship attendance is 50 people, and the current parking and entrances handle this and the preschool volume of traffic successfully and without incident.

**Parking:** Parents will continue to parkin in the church parking lot, escort their children into their class and later pick them up and return home.

**Outdoor Activities:** The preschool will use the outside playground located behind the church for at least 30 minutes of play and physical activity every day weather permitting. The playground is surrounded by three sides of woodland area and the church building on the remaining side which reduces the likelihood of any disturbance to our neighbors.

**Funding:** Northridge Preschool is self-funded through monthly tuition paid by families attending. The Northridge Community Church supports the ministry of the Preschool with facilities, utilities, publicity, insurance and administrative support.

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## CONSISTENCY WITH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan designates our property as a Rural Area. Under the Rural Areas section of the Comprehensive Plan, allowing a preschool expansion to 100 students supports the following Guiding Principles:

- Rural citizens are supported by community meeting places, a basic level of services and rural organizations and other cultural institutions at traditional rural scales, with opportunities to take part in community life and decisions.
- Protect and enhance rural quality of life for present and future rural area residents
- Address the needs of existing residents without fostering growth and future suburbanization of rural areas.

**Impact on Public Facilities and Infrastructure:** Located in a rural/agricultural zone of the county, the church is not serviced by public water and sewage; trash collection is privately contracted. The main public impact is on the roads as parents drive their children to and from preschool. It should be noted that these parents would otherwise be driving their children to preschools in Greene or Charlottesville, likely traveling greater distances on various county roads. We intentionally schedule and stagger programs and/or events by age or class so that there are fewer cars in our lot at the same time.

## IMPACT ON ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

We are not proposing any additional building or site changes to accommodate this amendment. Our program will help reduce the childcare and preschool needs of nearby residents without impacting the character of local historic, scenic, or cultural resources.

Health Department: We have been in full compliance with the Blue Ridge Health Department for our eighteen years of existence as a Preschool. In fact, all three of our local health inspectors' children have been students with us through their preschool graduation!

## VDOT COMPLIANCE

In our 2006 Special Use Permit the County Engineer indicated that the existing entrance was designed and constructed to VDOT Commercial Entrance standards as part of the approved site plan and therefore had no concerns and that traffic was minimal on Dickerson and therefore the Preschool will have minimal impact on the existing highway.