



July 2024

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Sharing a mission of inclusivity and a common commitment to make the world kinder, Westminster welcomes Kindness Cafe to our Common Grounds building.



KINDNESS

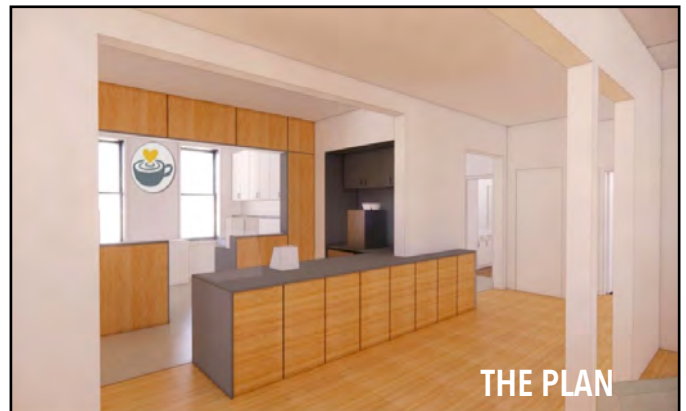
CAFE + PLAY

Construction Commences on Kindness Cafe at Common Grounds

The construction of the Kindness Cafe space within Common Grounds officially started on July 1! The buildout is slated to last until late October/early November. During construction, access to Common Grounds on the main level of the building will be limited to hours outside of construction activities (typically M-F, 7am-5 pm). There will be no access to the building through the Gordon Avenue doorway and a new code lock will be installed on the Rugby Road front door for entry. University Mission will continue to hold Bagel Brunch on Sunday mornings and Dinner & Discussion on Tuesday evenings in the building. Access to the kitchen will be limited to these activities unless specifically approved by WPC staff. Parking for construction related vehicles and deliveries will be reserved to the parking spaces directly adjacent to Common Grounds and in a few parking spaces in the circle drive off Rugby Road. A port-a-potty and dumpster will also be located on the property for much of the construction process. Meetings have already occurred between the Alloy Workshop (lead contractor), VMDO Architects, Building Goodness Foundation, Westminster Childcare Center, BMC property management, WPC staff and University Mission and Administrative (Buildings & Grounds) committee members to ensure good communication during this construction phase. Our hope and prayer is we will be enjoying a warm cup of java together in late fall in the Kindness Cafe in Common Grounds.



THE TEAM

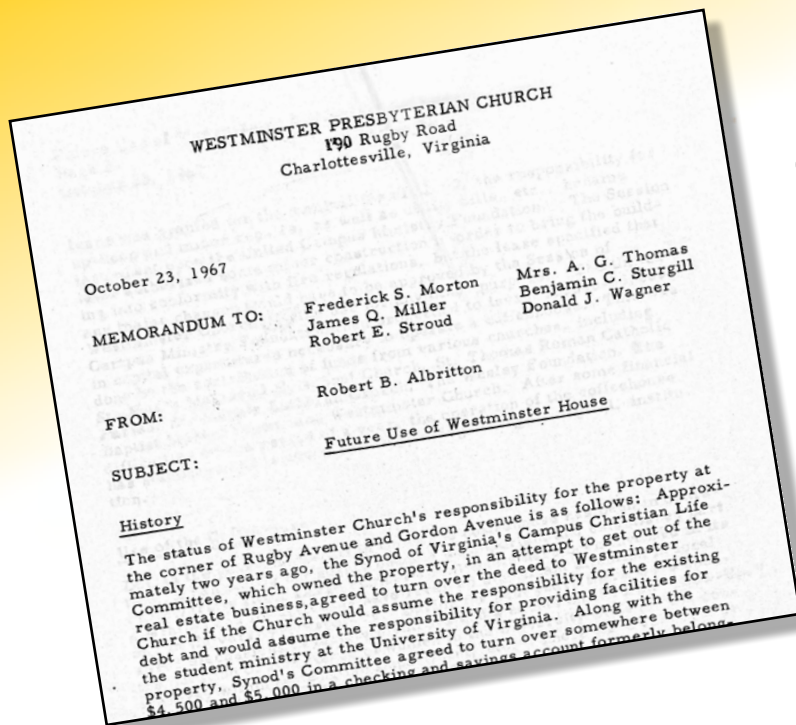


THE PLAN



THE PROCESS

THE HISTORY OF COFFEE & COMMUNITY AT WESTMINSTER'S COMMON GROUNDS



WESTMINSTER HOUSE.

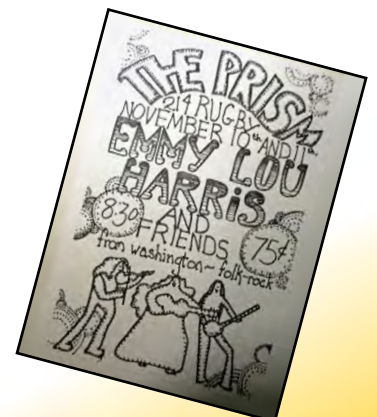
In 1965, ownership of what is now called the "Common Grounds" at 480 Rugby Rd. transferred to Westminster Presbyterian Church from the Synod of Virginia's Campus Christian Life Committee. The building was, at that time, called the Westminster House. In early 1966, a United Campus Ministry Foundation was incorporated, and WPC authorized the lease of the property to this foundation for the purpose of establishing a coffeehouse. The name was changed from Westminster House to "The Prism Coffeehouse." A major purpose of this coffee house was to provide a place where students "could talk with faculty members and each other, express themselves artistically and provide a community in which the churches' concern could be expressed for individuals and groups of students with various needs."



THE PRISM. In the 1970s and 1980s, the coffeehouse grew in popularity and became known as a favored music venue and the name was shortened to simply "The Prism." In a 2013 news article in the Cville Weekly, WTJU's long-serving folk director, Peter Jones, remembered the origins of the PRISM coffeehouse this way...

"The Prism was originally started in 1966, by what was called the "God Squad," Jones said. "A group of ministers around Charlottesville wanted to give students at the University who were opposed to the Vietnam War a place to go, and then music developed out of that—Emmylou Harris performed there back in the early '70s, and it's said that Bob Dylan even came down and introduced her the first night" "World-renowned artists of all styles came in, and loved to perform there because they knew that the audience was there to listen."

In another article on the Dave Matthews Band fan site, the author recalled many other notable artists including Joan Baez, Bela Fleck, Ani DiFranco, Nanci Griffith and Alison Krauss who played at The PRISM. He noted that Dave Matthews had played a number of shows at The PRISM in the early 1990s, including in April of 1993, when he recorded and later released an album of that performance aptly named, *Live from the Prism Coffeehouse*.



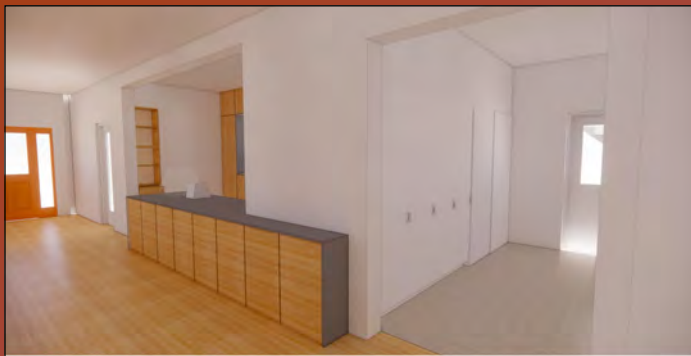
COMMON GROUNDS. The PRISM coffeehouse continued as a busy music venue until it ceased operation in 2006. At that time, the building reverted to being used mainly for church activities, including the place for university student outreach events and student fellowship gatherings. In 2010, at the request of the University Mission committee and the direction of the Session, Westminster contracted with the Darden School to study the feasibility of reopening a coffeeshop in the building. In 2011, the building was renamed "Common Grounds" and a part-time coffee shop was launched. While this endeavor only lasted a few years, the Common Grounds Building retained its name and continues to serve as the homebase for Westminster's UKIRK Presbyterian Student Fellowship, the meeting place for WPC Youth classes, as well as offering upstairs office space to non-profit organizations at a reduced rent.



REVITALIZATION. In 2020, a proposal was put forth jointly from WPC's Christian Education and University Mission Committees to address, among other items, the pressing need to replace aging furnishings, repaint, and conduct repairs in the interior spaces of Common Grounds. The proposal also included a request to construct a multi-use terrace adjacent to Common Grounds. With Session's approval and funding from the Westminster Youth Fund and the Westminster Fund, "interior" and "exterior" project sub-committees were formed and work on the design and coordination of the improvement projects began. These improvements took over two years to accomplish with the final components of outdoor terrace project wrapping up in Spring of 2024.



KINDNESS CAFE. Concurrently with improvements being made in the Common Grounds building, there was an on-going idea percolating behind the scenes between Reverend Dorothy Piatt-Esquerre and community member Katie Kishore about a potential partnership between WPC and The Kindness Cafe + Play. This idea was immediately embraced by the University Mission Committee and work began on exploring the possibility of launching a second Kindness Cafe location within Common Grounds. The UM Committee believed that there was a perfect match between WPC's commitment to inclusivity and Kindness Cafe's mission of providing meaningful work opportunities to adults with cognitive disabilities. After three years of planning, praying and a good dose of perseverance from both WPC and Kindness Cafe, the plans evolved, the city permits were secured, Session support was provided, the designs were approved, and the funds were raised; what was only a dream was now set to become a reality! This meant WPC would house, free of charge, a commercial non-profit coffee shop, run by Kindness Cafe. The Cafe would operate six days a week and be a welcoming, inclusive space in which the UVA students and community members could gather for fellowship and join in the mission of making the world a kinder place.



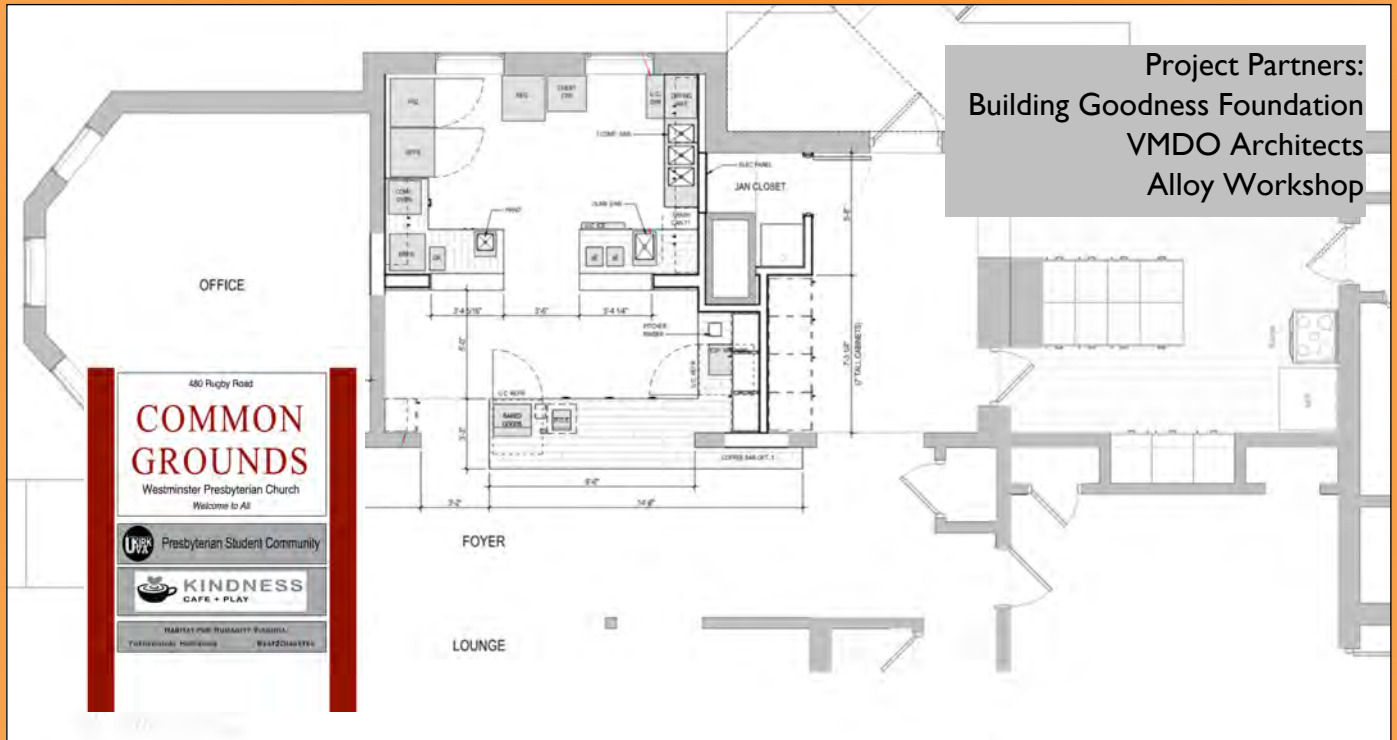
A (REVISED) | View from Foyer

VMDO



A (REVISED) | View from Lounge

VMDO



Project Partners:
Building Goodness Foundation
VMDO Architects
Alloy Workshop



KINDNESS
CAFE + PLAY

"Kindness Cafe provides meaningful employment to a demographic of adults who find acquiring and holding onto a job challenging. Having a job at Kindness provides: sense of purpose, daily structure, connection to greater community,

social network of coworkers/friends, and opportunities for challenge and growth. For all of us (with and without disabilities) meaningful employment provides a sense of belonging and a sense of purpose. For our team at Kindness, this opportunity can be life changing.

While individuals with disabilities are certainly not a monolith, they often share valuable traits that are underappreciated in our fast-paced, individualistic society. They prioritize relationships over seeking power or status. They tend to be caring and empathetic, quick to accept others and quick to forgive others. They are more likely to live in the present moment and less likely to be in a hurry. Spending time with people with disabilities can have a lasting positive impact on us as individuals and on our community. We're also excited about this opportunity for UVA students who seem to be drowning in a culture of achievement, competition, and comparison.

-Katie Kishore, founder of Kindness Cafe+Play