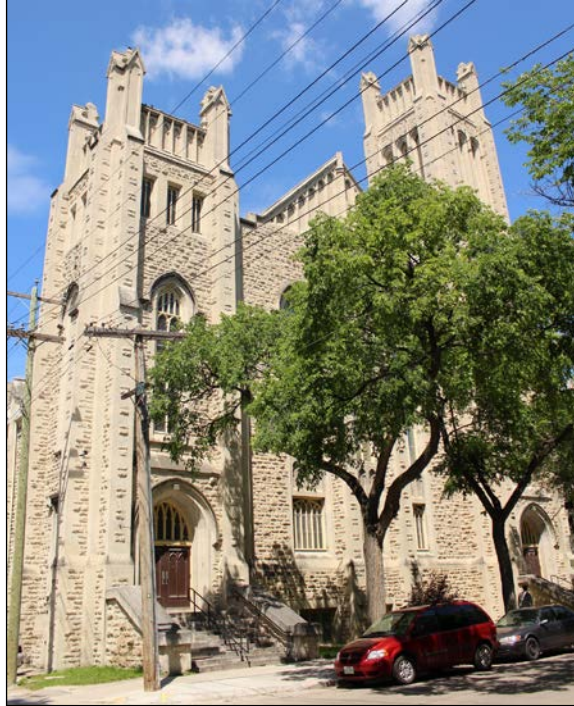


## 400 EDMONTON STREET – KNOX UNITED (PRESBYTERIAN) CHURCH

*John Hamilton Gordon Russell, 1917*



The Presbyterian Church began offering services in what is today downtown Winnipeg in the 1860s. It had arrived in Western Canada with the Selkirk Settlers several decades earlier and built its first church, Kildonan Presbyterian, near today's St. John's Park on Main Street, in 1854. An actual church was completed in 1872 at the corner of Fort Street and Portage Avenue, replaced in 1879. A third Knox Presbyterian Church was completed at Donald Street and Ellice Avenue in 1884 but like the other two structures, the growth of the congregation necessitated the construction of a more modern, larger building.

The present church, which became a United Church entity after the amalgamation of many of the Methodist, Congregational and Presbyterian churches in 1925, is an excellent example of the Modern or Late Gothic Revival Style, with elements such as monochromatic stone cladding,

pointed arch openings, hood mouldings, wood tracery, buttresses, towers with crenellation and other classic details.

The building boasts three corner towers; the tallest in the southeast corner was damaged by lightning in 2010. The side façades are similarly designed with buttresses, tall pointed arch windows with wood tracery and several large chimneys. The rear of the building includes the two-storey Sunday School building.

On the interior, the same attention to detail, wealth of ornamentation and rich, varied materials is the rule. With seating for 1,400, the nave with its curved pews also includes a large balcony, coloured ceiling panels, dark wood accenting, hardwood and terrazzo flooring and raised choir area with Casavant organ. Offices and meeting rooms are likewise detailed and much of the interior remains in its original state.

The Sunday School building has seen numerous changes and activities in the area have evolved. The second floor gymnasium remains intact.

Knox Church was designed by John Hamilton Gordon Russell and built by the James McDiarmid Company. Both were local practitioners who also found work elsewhere in Manitoba and Western Canada and both were extremely well-known. Russell designed dozens of church buildings throughout the region.

The congregation continues to use the church and continues to expand its work in the community.

Elements of the building that would require approval if alterations were planned are:

Exterior-

- Large stone church located on the northwest corner of Edmonton Street and Qu'Appelle Avenue with its front façade facing south onto Qu'Appelle Avenue, its east façade onto Edmonton Street, its west façade facing the back lane and its north façade with its attached two-storey Sunday School Building;
- The front (south) façade with its two corner towers separated by a gable end with three pointed arch windows with wood tracery, buttresses, hood moulding and blind pointed arched arcade, the tower with attached columns, corner buttresses with extended buttress caps, pointed arched window openings and blind arcades

and narrow louvred belfry openings on the southwest tower and entrances with pointed arched openings in the southwest corner tower (south side) and on the south and east sides of the southeast tower;

- The similarly designed east and west façades with buttresses and extended buttress caps, tall windows with wood tracery in pointed arched openings and large chimneys;
- The gable end and large chimneys of the north façade; and
- The north end of the building occupied by the two-storey Sunday School Building with its windows in rectilinear openings on its north, east and west façades.

#### Interior-

- Volume of space in the vestibules and the nave with its arched, coloured panelled ceiling with encircling cornice, the arched narthex with a feature screen and sets of double nave doors and side balcony staircases;
- The nave's auditorium plan with curved pews set on a bowled floor between wide aisles and a large cantilevered balcony with sloped seating
- The raised choir area with recessed, wood panelled area, round compound arch and Casavant organ pipes;
- Examples of the dark wood finishes, hardwood and terrazzo flooring, coloured glass windows and wood accented marble staircases, pulpit, pews and balcony; and
- The fireplaces in the vestry and DuVal Hall.