



420 TWEED AVENUE
ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

PREPARED BY PETERSON PROJECTS – DECEMBER 2009



420 TWEED AVENUE ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Date of Construction: 1911

Building Permit: 3091/1911 (Plans at City Storage)

Architect: Villeroy, Leopold

Contractor: Pscheider, G.

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

This modest, wood clad church faithfully served its original congregation for many decades, standing on a busy intersection in Winnipeg's Elmwood neighbourhood.

The rectangular structure features a front (north) façade with squared flat tower placed in the northeast corner of the building. This tower holds the main entrance; located on the east side and featuring a pointed arch. The heads of the uppermost windows in the tower are also pointed, as are the larger openings along the east and west sides and several windows on the front. A small projecting area is attached to the rear of the building and a large church hall is also located to the south of the church.

The building stands on its original site and appears to be in fair structural condition. Some windows have been boarded over but the basic design and original materials are still intact.



Front (north) and west façades, 2009

St. Paul's is a reduced example of the Modern or Late Gothic Revival style which rose in popularity after 1900 as a reaction to the highly ornamented buildings of the earlier Gothic Revival style. The newer version opted for much simpler silhouettes and subdued ornamentation, in the words of one author, "a calm, disciplined monumentality."¹

Flat surfaces were preferred; buildings were often long, low symmetrical masses embellished with crenellated towers and the distinctive pointed arch of the Gothic style. Construction material was monochromatic, usually brick or stone, again a departure from the multi-hued façades of the Gothic Revival style. Inspiration for the detailing of the new style was found in the English Perpendicular Gothic design of the 15th century. Because Modern Gothic found widespread expression on the campuses of many North American universities, it has also been referred to as Collegiate Gothic.²

Little is known about the architect Leopold Villeroy. He came to the city in 1905; a small advertisement in a local paper has him partnered with L. de Jurkowski and stated they had "Twenty years experience in Canada and fifteen in the United States."³ Two years later he was practicing as Foucart and Villeroy. In 1908 he ran for Winnipeg City Council in Ward 6 (North End) and was soundly defeated.⁴ The City of Winnipeg Building Permit Ledger Books, 1899-1926, list Villeroy alone from 1906 to 1911. His list of projects, given the heightened economic environment in which he practices, is relatively small, perhaps reflecting his work in the partnerships. He designed a school, several homes and apartment blocks and church on College Avenue (built 1908) and this church in Elmwood. In 1911 he is listed as living at 476 College Avenue with wife Florence and three sons and two daughters.⁵



East façade, 2009

HISTORICAL INTEREST:

This German congregation built a small church on Montcalm Street (now Watt Street) south of Tweed Avenue prior to 1906 and a rectory at 422 Tweed Street in 1906. In 1911, the new St. Paul's Church was built and was used continually by this congregation until the building's sale in 1976. It is now used by the Iglesia de Dios Pentecostes (Church of God) congregation.



Rear (south) and east façades and church hall, 2009

RECOMMENDATION TO HISTORICAL BUILDINGS COMMITTEE:

Under the Historical Buildings By-law, this building meets a number of important criteria:

- its historical importance- one of the oldest churches in the Elmwood neighbourhood and one of the few German congregation buildings still extant in the City;
- its associations- its long-term connections to its German-speaking congregation;
- its design- a reduced example of the Modern or Late Gothic Revival style;
- its architect- L. Villeroy was a known practitioner;
- its location- defines a busy intersection and contributes greatly to the historic streetscape of its neighbourhood; and
- its integrity- its main façades continue to display many of their original elements and design.



Rear (south) and west façades, 1994

ENDNOTES:

- 1 L. Maitland et al., A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press Ltd., 1992), p. 166.
- 2 Ibid., p. 166; and Identifying Architectural Styles in Manitoba (Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, Historic Resources Branch, 1991), p. 20.
- 3 Manitoba Free Press, May 5, 1905, p. 14.
- 4 Manitoba Free Press, April 25, 1907, p. 18 and December 9, 1908, p. 1.
- 5 Census of Canada, 1911.