

525 TYLEHURST STREET – ST. JAMES ANGLICAN CHURCH & CEMETERY

Congregation, 1853



In 1853, St. James Anglican Church was built, a modest log building with wood siding located near the banks of the Assiniboine River, several kilometers west of the Hudson's Bay Company's (HBC) headquarters at Upper Fort Garry, in what is now downtown Winnipeg. After centuries of use by the area's Indigenous population, fur trading posts led to settlement by European traders and ultimately, permanent agrarian-based settlement along the rivers by retired traders and their families and newly arriving Europeans looking for a new start.

By the 1850s, settlement along the Assiniboine River had reached past Sturgeon Creek, property surveyed into long, thin strips of land known as River Lots. Just west of Omands Creek, the HBC donated a piece of property for a church and cemetery and the Parish of St. James was formed in 1851 under the guidance of Reverend William Henry Taylor.

The hand hewn logs of the church were laid in the butt and pass method, a departure from the more common Red River Frame (*Pièce sur Pièce*) style. The original building, which is the oldest standing log church structure in Western Canada, boasted a church tower that was removed ca.1871. The front (west) façade holds the entrance, the side walls windows and the

rear a triplet window, all in pointed arch openings, elements of the Gothic Revival architectural style which this building would be one of the province's earliest examples still standing.

On the south side, an addition was built and used as a vestry.

On the interior, elements from the original church include some of the seating; with some original buffalo hide kneelers and the wood pulpit. A stained glass window on the east side was installed prior to 1915 and the wood plank floor dates to 1879.

The building had suffered severe deterioration by World War I and the congregation built a new home further west. Although condemned, the old church continued to host seasonal services until the City of St. James and the congregation repaired the building as part of the Canadian Centennial celebrations in 1967.

It continues to be an important part of the congregation and used for seasonal and special services.

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

Site-

- The church building is located near the southwest corner of a large cemetery that has been continually used since 1856.

Exterior-

- The one-storey log structure clad in milled wood siding with its front (west) façade facing Tylehurst Street, its north façade facing Portage Avenue, its south façade facing the Assiniboine River and its east façade facing St. John Ambulance Way (Empress Street E);
- The front (west) windowless façade with its central entrance in pointed arch opening with modest spire atop the gable roof;
- The north façade with windows in pointed arch openings and plain pilasters;
- The south façade with projecting section and pointed arch openings; and
- The east façade with triplet window in pointed arch openings.

Interior-

- Original millwork including pulpit and pews;
- Wood plank floor; and
- Stained glass windows.