



946 WINNIPEG AVENUE
REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

PREPARED BY PETERSON PROJECTS – DECEMBER 2009



946 WINNIPEG AVENUE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Date of Construction: 1916

Building Permit: 909/1916 (Plans at City Storage)

Architect: Walker, J.W.

Contractor: Fraser and McDonald

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

This modest little building, situated mid-block in a residential neighbourhood, served its congregation for over 50 years.

The front (north) façade of this solid, dark brick building is symmetrically designed with a central entrance flanked by tall, slender windows and covered by an ornate hood supported by oversized brackets. A window tops the double doors and another window is found above this area. A set of three small openings is found at the apex of the gable end. All openings on this elevation are of pointed arch design. Below the two slender windows are carved panels with the words “REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH” (east window) and “ERECTED 1916” (west window).



Front (north) and east façades, 2009

The east and west sides are similarly designed with numerous pointed arch windows separated by modest brick pilasters.

This church 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

The building stands on its original site and appears to be in fair structural condition. The building does not appear to have suffered any major exterior alterations. Cost of construction of the approximately 8.8 x 15.3-metre structure was \$4,500.³

Nothing is known at present about the listed architect for this church, J.W. Walker.⁴



Front (north) façade detail, 2009

HISTORICAL INTEREST:

This congregation was worshipping at Maccabee Hall, 339 William Avenue in the early 1910s and in 1915 in space at the Thomas Scott Memorial Orange Hall, 218 Princess Street. The new church on Winnipeg Avenue was officially opened on February 18, 1917.⁵ It was used by this group until the early 1970s when the building became the Evangelical Fellowship Chapel. In the late 1990s it was converted into the Winnipeg Church of Christ – Filipino Congregation.

RECOMMENDATION TO HISTORICAL BUILDINGS COMMITTEE:

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

- its historical importance- an World War I-era religious facility built modestly for a small congregation;
- its associations- its long-term connection to this Presbyterian congregation;
- its design- a reduced example of the Modern or Late Gothic Revival style;
- its architect- J.W. Walker was the named practitioner;
- its location- contributes to the historic streetscape of its neighbourhood; and
- its integrity- its main façade continues to display many of its original elements and design.



Front (north) façade, 1978

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 City of Winnipeg Building Permit, #909/1916.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Manitoba Free Press, February 19, 1917, p. 5.