



**333 ALEXANDER AVENUE**

**EBENEZER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**

PREPARED BY PETERSON PROJECTS – JANUARY 2007



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## 333 ALEXANDER AVENUE EBENEZER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

**Date of Construction:** 1901

**Building Permit:** 387/1901

**Architect:** Palmer, F.A.

**Contractor:** Halford, George T.C.

**ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:**

Built in 1901 at a cost of \$5,000 and measuring approximately 10.7 x 12.2 metres (35 x 40 feet),<sup>1</sup> this modest brick church on the northwest corner of Alexander Avenue and Stanley Street is a remnant of the pre-history of the Exchange District when the area north of Main Street developed as one of the City's first residential districts and included services like restaurants, tailors and churches.

The main (south) façade features a raised rusticated stone base leading to the brick exterior walls. Basement windows are located on either side of the wide set of steps leading to the raised front door. This entrance is arched and features curved brick drip moulding. Attached brick buttresses frame the entrance and the large circular window with crucifix-shaped interior divisions above it. The ground floor also includes round headed windows with brick drip moulding and fan-like interior divisions. The building is finished with a high-pitched gable roof.



Front (south) and east façades, 2006

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The east and west façades continue the architectural language of the front façade, with their raised stone foundation walls, buttresses and basement and ground floor windows. A small, enclosed entrance is found on the west façade near the south corner. The rear (north) façade is windowless, only the brick chimney interrupts the flat walls. A trailer is also located next to this area.

The building stands on its original site and appears to be in good structural condition. It does not appear that the original design or exterior finishes have been greatly altered over the years. The building remains a modestly ornamented structure, displaying the subdued design and sturdy construction that made it perfectly suited to serve the needs of the growing congregation for which it was built over 100 years ago.

Architect F.A. Palmer designed this church. Nothing is known about Palmer at this time, he appears to have worked in the city for only a few years in the early 1900s. With only a handful of contracts, this church would be considered his most significant local work. Contractor George T.C. Halford practiced in the city until the 1920s. Living his whole life in the North End, he worked for many of Winnipeg's top architects and was responsible for the construction of many fine buildings including Zion Methodist Church, 343 Pacific Avenue (1904 – demolished), All Peoples' Stella Avenue Mission, 470 Stella Avenue (1909), and Robertson Memorial Institute (Presbyterian), 650 Burrows Avenue (1911). He died ca.1934.<sup>2</sup>



Front (south) and west façades, 2006

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HISTORICAL INTEREST:

This church has been home to a number of different congregations over its lifetime. Originally it was home to the Ebenezer Evangelical German Church. Formed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century in Pennsylvania by Jacob Albright, the Methodist sect ministered to German immigrants through the organization of evening prayer meetings.<sup>3</sup> The first missionary was sent to Western Canada in 1899 and the Ebenezer Evangelical Church organized with 14 charter members later the next year. In 1930 the congregation moved to its new home at the corner of Church Avenue and McKenzie Street and renamed itself Albright Memorial Evangelical Church.<sup>4</sup>

Many other congregations have used the church including the First Norwegian Baptist Church (1930-40), the German Full Gospel Church (1950), the Indian Métis Holiness Chapel (1990) and the Hoi-Thánh Tin-Lành Việt-nam Vietnamese Mennonite Church (2005).<sup>5</sup>



East and rear (north) façades, 2006

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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 Winnipeg's downtown and illustrative of the residential nature of this area prior to its transformation into a warehouse district. Early missionary activities in Winnipeg and Western Canada by organized groups from the east is also of importance;
- its associations- its connections to an early immigrant-oriented congregation and the building's subsequent use by a variety of ethnic congregations;
- its design- an example of a modest church;
- its architect/contractor- F.A. Palmer was a known local designer, as was builder G.T.C. Halford
- its location- on an intersection and contributing to the historic streetscape; and
- its integrity- its façades continue to display their original elements and design.



Details of east side window (left) and front (south) window (right), 2006

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ENDNOTES:

- 1 City of Winnipeg Building Permit, #387/1901.
- 2 Henderson's Directory, 1900-1940.
- 3 Information from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacob\\_Albright](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacob_Albright), January 8, 2007; and [http://www.albrightchurch.com/who\\_we\\_are.htm](http://www.albrightchurch.com/who_we_are.htm), no date.
- 4 Information from [http://www.albrightchurch.com/who\\_we\\_are.htm](http://www.albrightchurch.com/who_we_are.htm), no date.
- 5 City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 610000-12-2, 1910-90; and Henderson's Directory, 1910-2000.