1175 MAIN STREET

HOLY TRINITY UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX METROPOLITAN CATHEDRAL

City of Winnipeg
Historical Buildings & Resources Committee
Researcher: M. Peterson
May 2019
This building embodies the following heritage values as described in the *Historical Resources By-law, 55/2014* (consolidated update July 13, 2016):

(a) This basement of the Cathedral was opened in Winnipeg’s North End in 1952, the present Cathedral in 1962, major steps in the evolution of the Church in Winnipeg and Canada;

(b) It is associated with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada, the local parish organized in the 1940s;

(c) A number of architects were responsible for the design of this structure including George Korbin and Alexander Powstenko, (1949) Alexander Lasko (1949), Alex Nitchuk (1960) and Pratt and Ross (1949 and 1960) and contractors included Wallace and Akins (1949) and Semmler Construction Company (1960);

(d) It is a modern interpretation of the Cossack Baroque Style based on the Byzantine architectural style and other examples can be found elsewhere in the City and Province;

(e) Because of its scale, design and ornamentation, it is one of the most conspicuous buildings on Main Street; and

(f) The building’s exterior has suffered little alteration.
I think, the stalwart peasant in a sheep-skin coat, born on the soil, whose forefathers have been farmers for 10 generations, with a stout wife and half-dozen children is good quality…I am indifferent as to whether or not he is British born.

Sir Clifford Sifton (1861-1929), Minister of the Interior

This remark, made by Sifton, then Prime Minister Wilfred Laurier’s Minister in charge of immigration, was the basis for the massive early 20th century Dominion government program to populate the western prairies by attracting Europeans with promise of cheap (or free), farm land. Combined with the construction of a vast network of regional and transcontinental railway lines, this program was responsible for not only putting hundreds of thousands of newly arrived immigrants onto homesteads, but also swelled the population of many of the region’s urban centres and especially its primary city, Winnipeg.

The first documented immigration of pioneers from Ukraine to Canada was in 1891 – two decades later, there were approximately 170,000 Ukrainian-Canadians settled in the three prairie provinces. While many chose to homestead on the prairies, a large number of immigrants remained in Winnipeg to work and raise their families. They found jobs in the warehouses and factories operating on both sides of the Canadian Pacific Railway yards and chose to settle nearby, in the North End and Point Douglas, along with coworkers and their families from both similar and different cultural backgrounds.

Religiously, the new immigrants adhered to one of two separate churches from their homeland – Greek Orthodox and Greek (Ukrainian) Catholic – each with its own set of traditions and

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practices. Once in Canada, the immigrants struggled to organize churches and obtain the services of priests. In July 1918, 154 delegates representing congregations from across the prairies met in Saskatoon, SA and formed the Ukrainian Greek-Orthodox Church of Canada (also referred to as the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada), headquartered in Winnipeg after 1922. Over the next two decades, the church grew, and after World War II, growth in the number of adherents resulted in the construction of new churches and several cathedrals across Canada.

In Winnipeg, the Holy Trinity Parish was organized in the spring of 1946 to increase the Church’s presence in the North End. At the same time, the congregation offered to serve as a Cathedral parish which was accepted. In May, the Parish purchased a large piece of property on Main Street, just north of the Redwood Bridge on the southern border of St. John’s Park.

An international design competition was held for the Parish’s new building, the winning sketch “KIEV” submitted by architects George Korbyn and Alexander Powstenko. Based on this submission, the basement of the structure was completed and ready for use in 1952 and a decade later, the superstructure was completed and first Divine Service celebrated on Ukrainian Christmas Eve, January 6, 1962 (Plate 1).

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2 Ibid., pp. 2-3.
4 Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral website, http://www.htuomc.org/history.html, no date.
5 Winnipeg Free Press, August 10, 1951, p. 8. The congregation accepted donations for its building fund from many sources. One adherent from Saskatchewan donated a carload of wheat and $160 cash.
6 Loc. cit.
STYLE

Although the two factions of the Ukrainian Church in Canada were quite different, the architecture of their buildings was similar.  

Holy Trinity Cathedral is a modern interpretation of the Cossack Baroque Style based on the Byzantine architectural style. Named after the Byzantine Empire which centred in the city of Byzantium (later Constantinople and now Istanbul), the style emerged after the collapse of the Roman Empire around 400 A.D. Blending Roman and Eastern architectural influences, the style was most evident in the construction of churches and other religious buildings. Structures were laid out in the Greek cross plan and the use of stone was augmented with brick and plaster. Classical orders continued in use but ornamentation increased in geometric complexity with mosaics and tile replacing carved decoration. The most obvious element was the use of the dome, singular or in groups.

In the 17th century, a more colourful and flamboyant architecture developed, Cossack Baroque. It featured symmetrical façades, arched openings, circular windows and a cruciform shape. Much of the ornamentation was saved for the elongated domes – often with domes atop domes – creating a layered ornamentation (Plate 2). The domes ranged in number from one (representing Christ) to 13 (representing Christ and the 12 apostles) and were surmounted by crosses.

In Winnipeg and Manitoba, there are many examples of this style used for Ukrainian churches (Plate 3) as well as other outstanding examples of modern Ukrainian churches (Plate 4).

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7 N. Bingham & D. Butterfield, op. cit., p. 7.
8 N. Bingham & D. Butterfield, op. cit., p. 10.
CONSTRUCTION

As mentioned previously, this structure was built in two phases: the basement from 1949-1952 and the superstructure in 1961-1962 (see Appendix I for construction information). The main building measures approximately 22.6 x 27.5 metres, the circular sanctuary at the rear (east) is 4.6 metres in diameter.\textsuperscript{11} Plans show the one-storey building included boiler and fuel rooms at northeast corner of the building.\textsuperscript{12}

The building features a large central tower, approximately 41.2 metres high topped by a 7.3-metre cast aluminum cross,\textsuperscript{13} and four smaller towers in each corner. The wide concrete steps measure 10.4 metres wide.\textsuperscript{14} Glass block, cut stone and clay elements are used to accent the brick exterior walls.\textsuperscript{15}

DESIGN

The original building rose one storey from grade and was clad in smooth cut limestone (Plate 5). The east end was curved for the sanctuary.

The superstructure was built on this one storey edifice in the early 1960s based on the original 1949 winning submission (Plate 6). The front (west) façade is symmetrically designed, with a central entrance placed atop a wide, approximately 3.1-metre high set of concrete stairs.\textsuperscript{16} Three entrances in rectilinear openings are covered by a plain canopy (Plate 7). On either side of the staircase are secondary entrances, also in rectilinear openings. Interrupting the brick walls of the superstructure in the central area is an arched windowless section, originally blank (Plate 8), but now filled with a colourful mosaic depicting the “Trinity in the spiritual world”\textsuperscript{17} (Plates 9 and 10). The piece was

\textsuperscript{17} Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral website, www.htuome.org/mosaic.html, no date.
designed by world-renowned Ukrainian artist Leo Mol (1915-2009). Slender window openings are located on the building on either side of the mosaic, filled with glass block and decorative clay screens, they also feature cut stone bases and decorative heads and arched drip moulding (Plate 11). This element is repeated on the north and south façades. Date stones are found at the north and south ends of the front façade.

The side elevations are similarly designed, with raised and canopied entrances atop open metal stairs (Plates 12 and 13). The central portion of each façade holds tall windows in arched openings and the roofline angles to a point in the centre of the façade. Entrances in arched openings are also found at the east end of the two sides.

The rear (east) façade features low buildings at the north end, the original boiler and fuel rooms (Plate 14). The superstructure is curved in the centre and the south end features a two-storey extension.

The building is completed by the five multi-domed towers, four smaller elements in the corners of the building and the largest in the middle (Plate 15).

**INTERIOR**

As originally designed, the basement was completed in the early 1950s and used as the cathedral, with mezzanine levels on the north, south and west sides providing seating for over 150. The main floor could accommodate over 200 parishioners with a platform at the east end (Plate 16). ¹⁸ This space has seen extensive alteration since construction and includes the Ukrainian Museum of Canada (UWAC Manitoba Branch) in part of the mezzanine (Plates 17 and 18).

When the superstructure was designed and completed, it followed the tradition design of Ukrainian churches and cathedrals and could seat 800. The narthex (or vestibule) at the west end was separated from the nave (seating area) by a wood and glass partition wall which is still present

(Plate 19). The nave is flanked by side naves (with side altars – Plate 20), topped by gallery seating and a choir gallery at the west end (Plates 21-23).19

At the east end of the nave is the bema20 (raised platform – Plate 24), solea (portion extending into the nave), iconostasis (Plates 25 and 26) and sanctuary with altar table and curved east wall with painted icons (Plate 27). The congregation has, over time, commissioned additional painted wall icons and will continue to do so in the future.

Stained glass is present throughout the nave (Plate 28) and a dome graces the ceiling (Plate 29).

On July 14, 2016, a fire was deliberately set inside the cathedral in the southeast corner. Damage included water and smoke to various parts of the nave and elsewhere. The iconostasis, which had been installed in the 1970s, sustained serious damage and was redesigned using some of the original artwork. The original pews were cleaned and reconfigured as part of the extensive restoration program (Plate 30).

**INTEGRITY**

The building stands on its original site, appears to be in good structural condition for its age and has not suffered extensive exterior alteration.

According to the Congregation, the interior, beyond the repairs from the serious fire, is a “work in progress.” Additions to the iconostasis and other ornamental detailing will continue to occur, as they have since the cathedral was completed in the 1960s.

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20 B. Rotoff, op. cit., p. 142-46.
STREETSCAPE

The building’s architecture, height and ornamentation heighten its conspicuousness on Main Street and its domes can be seen from kilometres away (Plate 31).

ARCHITECT/CONTRACTORS

The cathedral had a number of architects, design consultants and contractors. George Korbin and Alexander Powstenko won the original design competition and the present cathedral is based on this design. Toronto architect Alexander Lasko and local firm Pratt and Ross (the Historical Buildings and Resources Committee has given them 20 points), oversaw the design and construction of the basement portion (built by Wallace and Akins of Winnipeg).

Pratt and Ross’s names are also on the 1960 plans for the cathedral and supervision was given by architect Alex Nitchuk. Semmler Construction Company was the contractor.

PERSON/INSTITUTION

Religion and church has always been an important facet of life for Ukrainians in Winnipeg. As with other immigrant communities, congregations were formed early on, temporary facilities acquired and then modest church buildings constructed. As the congregations grew and more money was available, larger, more modern churches were designed and built.

Holy Trinity Cathedral has been an important part of the life of thousands of Ukrainian Winnipeggers since its inception in the mid-1940s. Beyond its use as the central Archiepiscopal Cathedral church, the building also functions as a community and cultural centre and houses a museum.

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21 Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral website, http://www.htuomc.org/history.html, no date.
EVENT
There is no known important historical event connected with this building.

CONTEXT
The cathedral was built at the end of World War II, at the beginning of an extended period of worldwide growth and prosperity. Ushered in was an age of modernization, expansion and technological advancement. This building is illustrative of all of these themes – the expansion of Winnipeg’s population, the growth of congregations and the need for modern church facilities and the use of modern design elements, materials and practices in the completion of the new facility.

LANDMARK
Holy Trinity is a landmark building of Winnipeg and is very recognizable.
Building Address: 1175 Main Street  
Building Name: Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral

Original Use: cathedral church  
Current Use: cathedral church

Roll No. (Old): 14041662000 (---)  
RSN: 173309

Municipality: 12  
Ward: 3  
Property or Occupancy Code: ---

Legal Description: 43/45 St. John, Plan 24597, Lots 1/2

Location: east side between Redwood and St. John’s avenues

Date of Construction: 1949-1962  
Storeys: 2  

Heritage Status: NOMINATED LIST

Construction Type: reinforced concrete, steel, brick and stone

- 7588/1949 [CS] $138,000 (original – basement only); 891/1953 [CS] (interior alterations); 3281/1960 [CS] $562,000 (superstructure); 6514/1978 [CS] (interior alterations); 5058/1986 [M] (interior alterations); 4432/1988 [M] (addition); 166234/2000 $65,000 (interior alterations)

Information:
- 90 x 74

ARCHITECT- G. KORBIN, A. POWSTENKO, A. LASKO & PRATT & ROSS (1949); A. NITCHUK (1960)

CONTRACTOR- WALLACE & AIKENS (1949); SEMMLER CONSTRUCTION CO. (1960)
R.B. Pratt and D.A. Ross

Ralph Benjamin Pratt was born in London, England in 1872 and trained as an architect at the South Kensington School of Art. After completing his education, he immigrated to Canada and by 1892 was working in Winnipeg. Within the year he became an architect for the Canadian Pacific Railway, then in 1901 became a top architect for the fledgling Canadian Northern Railway (CNoR). In this capacity, Pratt designed many stations and shops for the growing venture which ultimately became a transcontinental line. The Neepawa station, built in 1902, is an extant example of Pratt's railway work. It was at the CNoR that Pratt met Winnipegger Donald A. Ross and formed a business partnership.¹ Pratt was president of the Manitoba Association of Architects in 1917-1919. He died in Winnipeg on March 14, 1950.²

Donald Aynsley Ross was born in Winnipeg in 1878. He attended Upper Canada College in Toronto and the University of Toronto, graduating from the latter with his Bachelor of Arts in 1898. He received his engineering degree from the School of Practical Science in Toronto, then became a mining engineer in British Columbia. In 1901 he became locating engineer for the CNoR and by 1905 was terminal engineer for the line. As such, Ross oversaw construction of the Pinawa Channel Dam on the Winnipeg River and Winnipeg's Union Station, finished in 1912.³

Ross was also involved in real estate and during his career was president or director of a number of local and regional realty companies, including the Hugo Ross Realty Company and the Western Canadian City and Town Lands Corporation. He also served chairman of the Aesthetic Development Committee of the Winnipeg Town Planning Commission and vice-president of the Manitoba Association of Architects.⁴

¹ Winnipeg Telegram, September 12, 1906, p. 53.
After Pratt and Ross started their practice in 1906, they continued to design for the railway as well as working for private individuals and companies. Their body of work encompasses a wide range of building types across western Canada:

Western Canada
Belgo-Canadian Realty Company office building, Prince Albert, SA
Canadian Northern Railway, Prince Edward Hotel, Brandon, MB (1912) – demolished
Canadian Northern Railway, Terminal Building, Vancouver, BC (1917-1919)

Winnipeg
Rosemount Apartments, 351 River Ave. (1906)
Deer Lodge Hotel, Portage Ave. (1908) – demolished
Horse Show Amphitheatre (1909) – demolished (it was the largest of its kind in North America when built)
Garry Block (Belgica Block), 290 Garry St. (1911) – Grade III
Winnipeg Electric Railway Company warehouse, Main and Assiniboine complex (1912) – demolished
Brown and Rutherford Mill Plant, 1 Sutherland Ave. (1912)
Stanley Mineral Springs and Brewery Company factory, rue Messager (St. Boniface) (1912)
Electric Railway Chambers, 213 Notre Dame Ave. (1913) – Grade II
Sir Daniel McMillan House, 635 Wellington Cres. (1913)
Bank of British North America addition, 436 Main St. (1914)
Scott Block, reconstruction after a fire, 272 Main St. (1915) – Grade III
Winnipeg Electric Railway Company, new office building and post-fire car barn repairs, Main and Assiniboine complex (1920) – demolished
Breen Motor Company Building, 245 Main St. (1922 and 1925 addition)
Polo Park Race Track structures, Portage Ave. (1925) – demolished
Leonard-McLaughlin Motors Building, 686 Portage Ave. (1925-1926)
Northern Electric Building (with J.O. Despatie of Montreal), 65 Rorie St. (1928) – Grade III
Power Building, 428 Portage Ave. (1928)
Sherbrook Pool, 381 Sherbrook St. (1930) – Grade III
Structural Engineers and Mechanical Equipment Supervisors for the Winnipeg Civic Auditorium (now Provincial Archives of Manitoba), 200 Vaughan St. (1932-1933)
Harstone United Church, 905 Sargent Ave. (1946-1951)
Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral, 1175 Main St. (1949-1952)

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Plate 1 – Holy Trinity Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Cathedral, 1175 Main Street, shortly after opening in 1962, without the front mosaic.  (Reproduced from the “Winnipeg Building Index, University of Manitoba Architecture and Fine Arts Library, online.)
Plate 2 – Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral, 1175 Main Street, two of the elongated domes, 2019. (M. Peterson, 2019.)
Plate 3 – St. Mary the Protectress Ukrainian Orthodox Sobor, 820 Burrows Avenue, front and south façades, 2016; built between 1925 and 1951. (M. Peterson, 2016.)
Plate 4 – Examples of Winnipeg’s fine modern Ukrainian churches: top- Ukrainian Catholic Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 965 Boyd Avenue. Victor Deneka, architect (1950); middle- Ukrainian Catholic Church of St. Nicholas, 737 Bannerman Avenue, Alex Nitchuk of Green, Blankstein, Russell Associates, architect (1966); and bottom- Holy Family Ukrainian Catholic Church, 1001 Grant Avenue, Radislaw Zuk, architect (1962). (M. Peterson, 2016.)
Plate 5 – Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral, 1175 Main Street, elevations of original 1949-1952 structure. (Architect’s Plans, No. 3281/1960.)
Plate 6 – Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral, 1175 Main Street, “West Elevation.”
(Architect’s Plans, No. 3281/1960.)
Plate 7 – Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral, 1175 Main Street, front (west) façade, 2019. (M. Peterson, 2019.)
Plate 8 – Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral, 1175 Main Street, 1978, showing the front (west) façade prior to the addition of the mosaic. (City of Winnipeg.)
Plate 9 – Installation of the mosaic at Holy Trinity Church, Main Street, 1986 (artist Leo Mol top right). (Reproduced from leomol.com, www.leomol.com/other1.html.)
Plate 10 – Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral, 1175 Main Street, close-up of 1986 Leo Mol mosaic, 2016. (M. Peterson, 2016.)
Plate 11 – Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral, 1175 Main Street, detail of window embellishments, south façade, 2016. (M. Peterson, 2016.)
Plate 12 – Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral, 1175 Main Street, north façade, 2019. (M. Peterson, 2019.)
Plate 13 – Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral, 1175 Main Street, south façade, 2019. (M. Peterson, 2019.)
Plate 14 – Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral, 1175 Main Street, rear (east) and north façades, 2019. (M. Peterson, 2019.)
Plate 15 – Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral, 1175 Main Street, central tower, 2016. (M. Peterson, 2016.)
Plate 16 – Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral, 1175 Main Street, “Basement Mezzanine Floor – Approved Revisions.” (Architect’s Plans, No. 7588/1949.)
Plate 17 – Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral, 1175 Main Street, basement looking west, 2019. (M. Peterson, 2019.)

Plate 18 – Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral, 1175 Main Street, basement looking east towards the stage, 2019. (M. Peterson, 2019.)
Plate 19 – Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral, 1175 Main Street, vestibule (narthex), 2019. (M. Peterson, 2019.)
Plate 20 – Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral, 1175 Main Street, side altar, 2019. Although near where the 2016 fire started, this element was saved. (M. Peterson, 2019.)
Plate 21 – Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral, 1175 Main Street, nave, main floor and gallery seating, 2019. (M. Peterson, 2019.)

Plate 22 – Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral, 1175 Main Street, nave, west end choir loft, 2019. (M. Peterson, 2019.)
Plate 23 – Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral, 1175 Main Street, nave viewed from gallery, 2019. (M. Peterson, 2019.)
Plate 24 – Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral, 1175 Main Street, bema, 2019. (M. Peterson, 2019.)
Plate 25 – Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral, 1175 Main Street, iconostasis, 2019. (M. Peterson, 2019.)
Plate 26 – Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral, 1175 Main Street, iconostasis, 2019. (M. Peterson, 2019.)
Plate 27 – Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral, 1175 Main Street, sanctuary, 2019. (M. Peterson, 2019.)
1175 MAIN STREET – HOLY TRINITY UKRAINIAN
ORTHODOX METROPOLITAN CATHEDRAL

Plate 28 – Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral, 1175 Main Street, sanctuary, 2019. (M. Peterson, 2019.)
Plate 29 – Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral, 1175 Main Street, dome in nave ceiling, 2019. (M. Peterson, 2019.)
Plate 30 – Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral, 1175 Main Street, during restoration after the 2016 fire. The crystal chandelier seen in the foreground could not be saved and will be replaced by a newer fixture. (Reproduced from CBC website, “‘It’s sad’: Believers to ring in Ukrainian Christmas in church basement after fire, January 2, 2017, www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/holy-trinity-church-fire-1.3905760.)
Plate 31 – Main Street looking north from Boyd Avenue, 2019. (M. Peterson, 2019.)