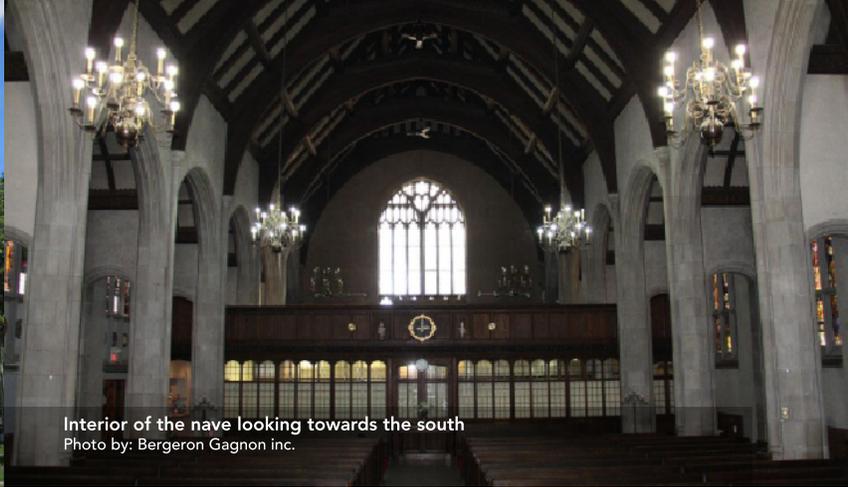


The Westmount Park United Church (left) and the Webster Memorial Hall (right)
Photo by: Bergeron Gagnon Inc.



Interior of the nave looking towards the south
Photo by: Bergeron Gagnon Inc.

THE VALUE STATEMENT

WESTMOUNT PARK UNITED CHURCH

CIVIC ADDRESS

4695 de Maisonneuve Boulevard,
Westmount

HERITAGE DESIGNATION

Municipal - Category 1: Important
(SPAIP)
Provincial - None
Federal - None

RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION

United Church of Canada

OVERVIEW OF THE VALUE STATEMENT

Historical Value

The historical heritage value resides in Westmount Park United Church's deep roots with the United Church of Canada; it was the first church in Westmount purpose-built for the United Church after its founding in 1925. Subsequent mergers with other congregations brought artefacts and stained glass windows which bear witness to its rich history.

Contextual Value

The contextual heritage value resides in Westmount Park United Church's setting, immediately adjacent to Westmount Park, and near other institutional buildings. The varied profile of the church, contributes to a picturesque composition that can be seen from different vantage points across Westmount Park. Its overall massing and soaring bell tower make it an imposing landmark in the area. The absence of fences between the two properties enhances the perception that the church is part of the park.

Architectural and Aesthetic Value

The architectural and aesthetic heritage value resides in the impressive rendering of early 20th century Gothic Revival architecture, by the Montreal architectural firm of Perry and Luke. The 1930 church is finely detailed in stone with cast stone enrichments and the excellent functional design, craftsmanship and quality of materials are evident in both its exterior and interior. The 1964 parish hall, by the same architectural firm, is of modest architectural value, but its scale and primary material palette contribute to a coherent complex. Both the church and the hall contain stained glass windows by the internationally recognized artist, C.W. Kelsey. The liturgical fittings and furniture complement the architecture. The complex has a high degree of authenticity and integrity.

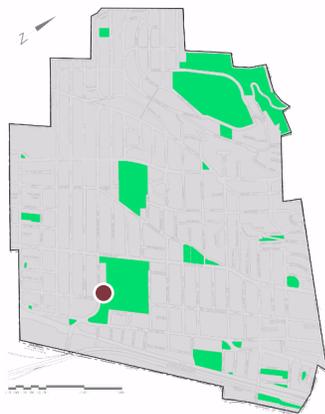
Spiritual and Community Value

The spiritual and community heritage value resides in the soaring volume of the sanctuary and the quality of light filtering through the multiple stained glass windows, which are reputed to be the largest single collection of Kelsey windows in the world. It is supplemented by the religious and commemorative themes of the windows, and in the consistency of the liturgical furnishings and fittings. It has been a United Church place of worship and community since 1930. A recent initiative, the Faith in Nature Centre, encourages the congregants to live sustainably, reconciling the natural and human worlds.



SITING

Westmount Park United Church is situated on the north-east corner of de Maisonneuve Boulevard and Lansdowne Avenue in Westmount. It is immediately adjacent to Westmount Park. When the park was extended to include part of the boulevard within its boundaries, the south façade of Westmount Park Church and its front door now seem to be within the park itself. The park provides a suitably picturesque setting for the church; its other neighbours are single family houses and apartment buildings, so that the church is a noticeable landmark in the area. Its bell tower can be seen rising above the mature trees of the Park from as far away as Ste. Catherine Street.



A. Westmount Park United Church
B. Webster Memorial Hall

DESCRIPTION

Westmount Park United Church was purpose-built in 1929-1930. Its Gothic Revival architecture and carefully carved and cast stonework belie its 20th century steel frame construction. The adjoining Webster Hall provides the community facilities for the congregation. Although it was built in 1964, it references some of the architectural language and material palette of the first construction, providing a stylistically coherent whole. The complex is also home to the Quebec Presbytery of the United Church of Canada.

FAITH AND COMMUNITY LIFE

Westmount Park United Church is a member of the United Church of Canada. This Christian denomination is the largest Protestant group in Canada. It was formed in 1925 from a merger of several Protestant churches. The head of the church is the Moderator, who is elected for a three year term. Ministers can be either lay or ordained. There is no restriction as to gender, age, marital status or sexual orientation, either for ministry or for adherents. The United Church believes in the centrality of the Bible in Christian faith and worship. However, it does not believe in its literalness, taking instead a historical-critical method for interpretation and understanding. The two sacraments of the church are communion and baptism, including infant baptism, which leads to informed communion at about age 13. As part of its mission, the church provides religious ceremonies, community and charitable activities. Recently, the church has developed a new program, Living Church, with a Faith in Nature Centre, working to encourage humanity's reconciliation with the planet.

GOVERNANCE

Westmount Park United Church is a congregation of the Quebec Presbytery of the United Church of Canada. Board Members are composed of a Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. The church is self-financing. It receives grants, donations and social economy through community use of the building.

RELEVANT DATES

1889

Construction of a Methodist Chapel

1895

Construction of Westmount Methodist Church

1920

Construction of the first Webster Memorial Hall on the east side of the Westmount Methodist Church

1929-1930

Demolition of Westmount Methodist Church and construction of Westmount Park United Church, installation of the organ and some of the stained glass windows

1963 -1964

Demolition of Webster Memorial Hall and construction of the present building, of the same name.

1990

Renovations to accommodate the Montreal Presbytery of the United Church of Canada: changes to entry sequence and narthex, shortening of nave, extension of organ loft (now Quebec Presbytery of the United Church of Canada)

1997

Repairs to roof and bell tower

HISTORICAL VALUE (1/2)

DESCRIPTION

Continuous occupation of the site

During the last quarter of the 19th century, as the tramway lines extended westward from the city of Montréal and development followed, Lansdowne Avenue began to take form; the pattern of houses on large lots supplanted that of farmland. The increase in population mirrored the growth of the municipal government, from village to town. The religious institutions began to relocate to Westmount to serve their burgeoning communities. Many of the first churches were mission chapels, quickly evolving into full congregations.

In 1889, eight years before the creation of Westmount Park, a Montreal Methodist congregation sponsored the construction of the Tabernacle Chapel (also known as the Westmount Methodist Church) on the site of the future Westmount Park United Church. This building was replaced in 1895 by a more substantial brick building.

Following the creation of the United Church of Canada in 1925, the decision was taken to demolish the 1895 church and build a larger structure, which could accommodate the merged congregations, one of which was the nearby Melville Presbyterian Church. According to an extract from the Melville Presbyterian Church website: "...After the founding of the United Church in 1925, Melville Presbyterian Church amalgamated with Westmount Methodist to form Westmount Park-Melville United Church in 1925. The combined congregation worshipped in the Melville Church building for two years, until it was sold to former members who remained with the Presbyterian Church. Victoria Hall served as a temporary site while the new Westmount Park-Melville Church, which is now known as the Westmount Park United Church, was under construction..."

Over two years, from 1929 to 1930, the architectural firm of Perry and Luke designed and supervised the construction of the Westmount Park United Church which stands today.

Webster Memorial Hall

In 1920, Webster Memorial Hall, named in memory of George M. Webster, a founding member of the Westmount Methodist Church, was built on the east side of the church, connected to it by a covered walkway. It housed community activities, including the Sunday school. Two years after the Calvary Church congregation joined in 1961, the original Webster Hall was demolished, to make way for a much larger building. Its name and functions remained the same.

Quebec Presbytery of the United Church of Canada

Since 1990, Westmount Park United Church also contains the head office of the Montreal Presbytery of the United Church of Canada (now the Quebec Presbytery of the United Church of Canada).

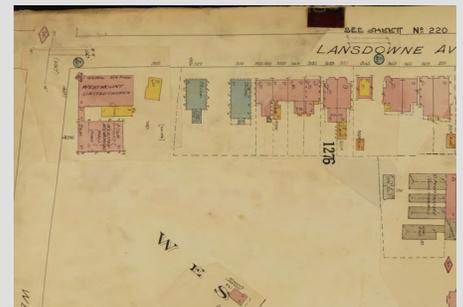
A Rich Tapestry of Religious Traditions

United Church

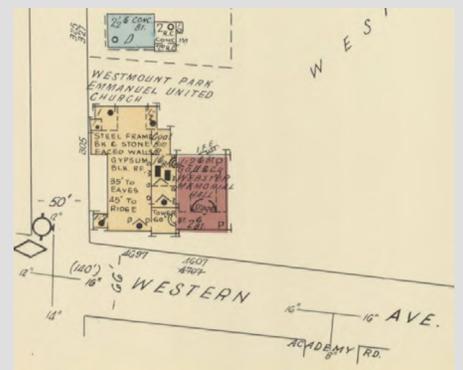
The United Church of Canada was inaugurated in Toronto when the Methodist Church of Canada, the Congregational Union of Canada and a large part of the Presbyterian Church in Canada entered into a union in 1925. (ref: The United Church of Canada, 2017)



Insurance plan of 1915
Photo by: BAnQ



Insurance plan of 1926
Photo by: BAnQ



Insurance plan of 1961
Photo by: BAnQ

HISTORICAL VALUE (2/2)

DESCRIPTION

Today, the congregation of Westmount Park United Church is the result of the merging of four congregations: Westmount Methodist, Melville Presbyterian, Emmanuel Congregational and Calvary Church. In consequence, there have been several names, reflecting the different amalgamations: Westmount Park-Methodist (1889), Westmount Park-Melville United Church (1929 to 1948), Westmount Park-Emmanuel United Church (1948), Westmount Park-Calvary United Church (1961) and Westmount Park United Church (1963).

Each one of these congregations has brought commemorative elements and architectural artefacts that have been incorporated into the church and which bear testimony to the rich history of the present congregation. For example, stained-glass windows from the Emmanuel and Calvary churches are found in the church and in Webster Memorial Hall. The transept of Remembrance contains the communion table from the Emmanuel Church and commemorative plaques from the Westmount Methodist, Melville Presbyterian, Emmanuel and Calvary churches. There are a total of twelve Hurst Plaques by Dr. Hurst of former Emmanuel Church. Three of them portray the founding denominations of the United Church: the descending dove of Methodism; the burning bush of Presbyterianism and the open Bible of Congregationalism. This latter congregation also donated the Frank Simons Memorial Clock, which has been installed in the centre of the (relocated) gallery balustrade.

CHARACTER-DEFINING ELEMENTS

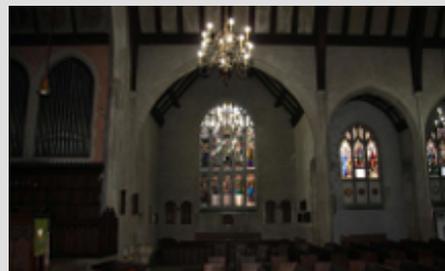
- The continued presence of two constructions on the property: Westmount Park United Church and Webster Memorial Hall.
- The continual use of the property for religious and community worship since 1889, with the amalgamation of various congregations over the years.
- The artefacts brought by each successive merger, representing in physical form the rich evolution of the site. These include the memorial plaques and stained-glass windows, etc. Four of these are World War II memorial windows, installed on the east side of the nave, commissioned in 1951 by Emmanuel Church.
- The Transept of Remembrance, consecrated in 1965, contains the commemorative plaques from the Westmount Methodist, Melville Presbyterian, Emmanuel and Calvary churches.



Tabernacle Chapel
WHA Archives



Westmount Methodist Church (1896)
WHA Archives



The Transept of Remembrance
Photo by: Bergeron Gagnon inc.

CONTEXTUAL VALUE

DESCRIPTION

A Religious Complex Adjacent to Westmount Park and near Other Institutions

The site is immediately adjacent to Westmount Park, and near other institutional buildings, including the Westmount Recreation Centre, Victoria Hall and the Westmount Public Library.

A Landmark within a Picturesque Environment

The imposing volume of the church tower emerges over the surrounding houses and ensures that the church complex is a visual landmark within the neighbourhood. The varied roofline and bell tower, which are characteristic of Gothic revival architecture, contribute to a picturesque composition that can be seen from different vantage points across Westmount Park. It is conceivable that the original architectural part deliberately meant to evoke a Constable painting.

The picturesque aspect of the church within a large park is further reinforced by the absence of fences along the east, west and south property lines. This results in a mutually beneficial situation, in which each property gains from the other. The church property is lush, with mature vegetation.

CHARACTER-DEFINING ELEMENTS

- The unique setting in Westmount, adjacent to Westmount Park: the absence of fences allows the church property to be perceived as part of the park. Each property gains from this visual fluidity.
- The generous vegetative cover on the property, the mature trees, which contribute to the bucolic setting on the edge of the park.
- The imposing volumes, which distinguish the church complex from the surrounding residential fabric, and assure its status as a visual landmark.
- The varied roofline of the church, including the bell tower, which contribute to the picturesque effect of a Gothic revival construction within a parkland.
- The general massing and scale of the Webster Memorial Hall, which provides a balanced composition with the church and its surroundings. While it is not a significant building in itself, its similar material palette, modest Gothic revival references and overall volume contribute to the context of the site.



John Constable: Salisbury Cathedral
Photo by: BAnQ



Westmount Park United Church and the Westmount Park
Photo by: Google



View from Lansdowne Avenue & De Maisonneuve Boulevard
Photo by: Bergeron Gagnon inc.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC VALUE (1/3)

DESCRIPTION

The Church, an Impressive Example of Early 20th century Gothic Revival

Alfred Leslie Perry (1896-1982), a partner in the Montreal firm of Perry and Luke is credited with the design of the present Westmount Park United Church. It was designed and built between 1929 and 1930.

Although the exterior style is based on the English Decorated Style of the 14th century, and the carvings and elements reflect this source, the structure is 'modern', of reinforced concrete. The walls are of limestone, laid in a scotch-bond coursing. Much of the decorative stonework, including the window architraves, is in cast stone.

The volumes are varied, expressing the singular functions contained within: asymmetrically placed bell tower, sanctuary, porches. The detailing, with buttresses, crockets, pointed arches and lancet windows, etc. references and reinforces the Gothic revival style. The sloping roofs are covered in copper sheeting with standing seams.

The plan is a Latin cross, with a central nave, side aisles, transepts with chapels, and a separately expressed chancel. The side aisles are noteworthy for their extreme narrowness. The interior is clad in stone, with an expressed wood truss roof spanning the nave. The chancel is distinct from the nave, contained behind a pointed arch, and paneled in wood, with plastered walls above the high wainscoting. Consistent with the high degree of ornamentation found in the chancel, the ceiling is paneled and painted with heraldic shields, executed by C.W. Kelsey. The organ pipes and console are skillfully integrated behind pointed arches, on the short walls.

In 1990, the decision was made to provide offices for the Montreal Presbytery of the United Church of Canada (now the Quebec Presbytery of the United Church of Canada). This resulted in substantial modifications to the church, both in patterns of movement and in the architecture of the main sanctuary¹.

The office space was made by reassigning the narthex and a significant portion of the nave. The organ loft was extended to cover this newly created space. The original glazed colonnade that separated the narthex and the nave was advanced towards the chancel. Although the visual impact of these modifications have been subtle, there have been modifications to the entry sequence that result in the south door becoming the main entry. The west entrance is now reserved for the Quebec Presbytery.

Webster Memorial Hall: Continuing the Context

The current Webster Memorial Hall was designed in 1964 by Perry and Luke². In its scale and mass, it complements the church and provides a balanced composition. Its architecture is modest: the Gothic revival style is referenced in the continuity of the stonework palette and bonding pattern; the stone 'hoods' over the windows and the gable end. However, these references are limited to the south facade and about a quarter of the length of the east façade. Thereafter, the material changes to brick and the detailing is simplified to what would have been found on an office building of the early 1960s. (The use of small mosaics for the spandrel panels on the de Maisonneuve Boulevard façade is consistent with the architecture of this period.) The interior finishes are very simple.

¹ It should be noted that the overall impact of these changes has been modest; the interventions respectful of the original architecture and finishes and reversible.

² Architectural drawings in the possession of the Westmount Park United Church



Porch on the west transept
Photo by: Bergeron Gagnon inc.



Main facade of Webster Hall
Photo by: Bergeron Gagnon inc.



Visible roof trusses in the nave
Photo by: Bergeron Gagnon inc.



Polygonal vault in the choir with panels decorated with shields of the apostles and prophets, executed by Charles W. Kelsey
Photo by: Bergeron Gagnon inc.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC VALUE (2/3)

DESCRIPTION

The Architects for the Complex

The following information is summarized from information contained in McGill University's Canadian Architecture Collection and the Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada 1800-1950:

Alfred Leslie Perry (1896-1982) - Perry graduated from the McGill School of Architecture in 1923. In 1924, after he was awarded a travelling scholarship by the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts, Perry travelled to England, France and Italy to study architectural ornament, sculpture and decoration. In addition to a solo practice, Perry was a partner in the architecture firms of Perry & Luke (with Morley C. Luke) and Perry, Luke & Little (with Morley C. Luke and Harold Butler Little). Throughout his career, Perry produced designs for numerous residences, commercial and industrial buildings, churches, and schools across Quebec. Many of Perry & Luke's residential designs were created for houses built in the City of Westmount. A list of Perry's works can be found on the Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada 1800-1950 website.

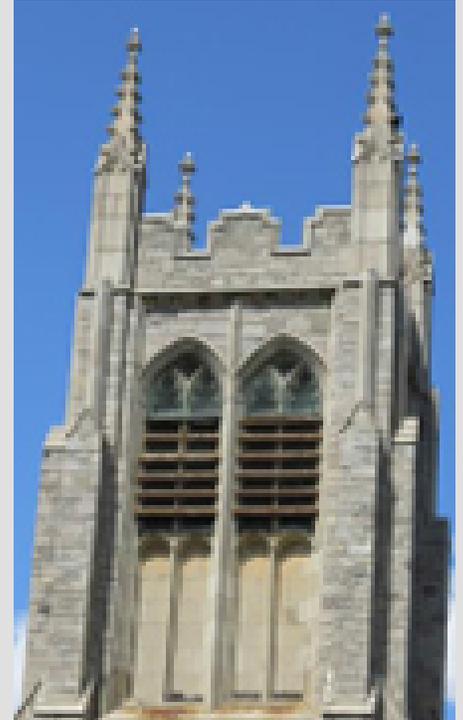
Morley C. Luke (1901-1967) - Luke apprenticed with architects Frank Peden in 1920, John S. Archibald in 1921, Nobbs and Hyde in 1922, and John T. Windrim from 1923-1924. After obtaining his degree in 1923, he worked for Bell Canada. In 1927, Luke partnered with A. Leslie Perry to form the architecture firm Perry & Luke. When Harold Butler Little joined the firm, it was renamed Perry, Luke & Little. Perry became a sole practitioner in the early 1940s. Several years later, his former partners, Luke and Little formed a new partnership with Thomas Henry Mace.

The Charles W. Kelsey Stained Glass Windows

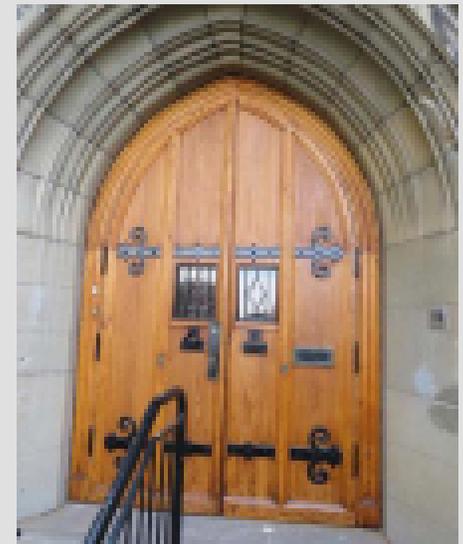
Charles William Kelsey (1877-1975) - C. W. Kelsey was a prominent stained-glass artist, who worked primarily in Canada. Born in England, he trained there in the Arts and Crafts tradition. Kelsey arrived in Canada in 1922 and soon set up his studio in Westmount. He designed windows mainly for churches, but also for private buildings.

The themes of the church windows are either ecclesiastical or commemorative, memorials to the dead of both world wars. Aside from those in Westmount Park United Church, his windows can be found on the Montreal island, in the Anglican churches of Saint- Stephen, Mountainside United Church, Saint-George and Saint- Matthias; the Ascension of Our Lord Church; the former Erskine and American Church (now the Bourgie Hall, as part of the Montreal Museum of Fines Arts); and St. James United Church. He also provided the stained glass windows for the Memorial Chapel at McGill University and the Chateau Frontenac Hotel in Quebec City.

The thirteen stained-glass windows, some of which are triptychs, found in the Westmount Park United Church and Webster Hall, are said to be the largest single collection of Kelsey windows in the country. Kelsey also designed and painted the shields on the chancel ceiling.



The bell tower with pinnacles
Photo by: Bergeron Gagnon inc.



Door on tower porch
Photo by: Bergeron Gagnon inc.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC VALUE (3/3)

DESCRIPTION

The Liturgical Furniture and Integrated Elements

There are a number of liturgical furnishings and integrated elements that are designed in the Gothic revival style (the wood paneling in the chancel, the wood paneling on the ceilings, the stencil work, the choir seats, baptismal font, and the pulpit. The organ designed and built by the Frères Casavant (1930), and reconditioned in 1968. These elements are integrated into the architecture of the building.

Architectural Authenticity

The building demonstrates a high degree of architectural authenticity and integrity on both its exterior and interior.

CHARACTER-DEFINING ELEMENTS

Exterior features of the church

- Asymmetrical play of volumes, rising from a rectangular footprint in the form of a Latin cross.
- The exterior materials, including the hammered cut-stone walls, the smooth cast-stone of the trim, and the wooden doors and frames; the copper roofs.
- The external features influenced by the Gothic Revival style, such as the tall bell tower with its crenellations and crockets, buttressed walls; the windows with cast-stone mullions and tracery; the deep embrasures and archways on the entrances; the niches for statuettes.

Interior features

- The interior layout, including the nave, narrow side aisles, transepts, and separate chancel.
- The uninterrupted soaring volume of the sanctuary.
- The Gothic Revival interior, including the plaster walls, pointed archways between the nave and the bays; the visible roof framing and the painted panels on the vault of the chancel; the altarpiece; the wood paneling in the chancel, with its grape-cluster frieze and capping of finials.
- The relocated, glazed colonnade that once separated the narthex from the nave. This wall still retains its original relationship to the balcony railing above it, even though the assembly has been considerably advanced into the nave, shortening it and causing some of the stained glass windows to be hidden from general view.

Liturgical Furnishings

- The distinctive elements of the furniture and décor, including the choir seats with paneled hand rests and carved finials; the pulpit and lectern integrated into the chancel balustrade.

Interior decoration / integrated art

- The thirteen stained-glass windows by Charles W. Kelsey, including those in Webster Hall.
- The painted panels of the chancel ceiling depicting symbols of the twelve tribes of Israel and the Apostles, also by Kelsey.



The partition that now separates the nave from the administrative space with The Frank Simons Memorial Clock

Photo by: Bergeron Gagnon inc.



Detail of altarpiece

Photo by: Bergeron Gagnon inc.



Stained-glass window in the west transept, that incorporates themes of the natural world

Photo by: Bergeron Gagnon inc.

SPIRITUAL AND COMMUNITY VALUE

DESCRIPTION

A Building that Represents the Tenets of the Protestant Religion

The use of Gothic Revival architectural language and detailing reinforces the tenets of the Protestant Church. The quality of natural light, which illuminates the soaring sanctuary, and the themes of the stained glass windows – both Christian and natural – contribute to the sense of spirituality.

A vibrant place for Religious and Community Activities

This house of worship provides place for a diverse number of religious and community activities. These are in keeping with the spiritual mission of the United Church of Canada, to promote tolerance; mutual understanding; and engagement with contemporary life; and to have concern for the well-being of others. Programs support Contactivity (a seniors' day centre), a pre-school, and diverse community groups

CHARACTER-DEFINING ELEMENTS

- Symbolic religious components, integrated into the ornamentation of the stonework and woodwork.
- Liturgical furniture, such as the chancel pews with the paneled hand rests and carved finials, the pulpit and lectern integrated into the chancel balustrade, and the stone baptismal font.
- Symbolic and religious themes of the memorial stained glass windows.
- Religious associations with the painted emblems of the chancel ceiling.
- Assembly spaces for religious celebrations, community gathering and activities, including the performance facilities in Webster Hall.



Communion table with the altarpiece
Photo by: Bergeron Gagnon inc.



Communion table in front of the choir
Photo by: Bergeron Gagnon inc.



Pulpit built into the choir balustrade
Photo by: Bergeron Gagnon inc.

PROCESS

This Value Statement is based on a visit made in autumn of 2016, analysis and a group discussion held on October 3rd, 2017.

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