THE HERITAGE VALUE STATEMENT
CHURCH HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL NATIONS

CIVIC ADDRESS
4119 de Maisonneuve Blvd. West, Westmount

HERITAGE DESIGNATION
Municipal - Category 1: Important (SPA/P)
Provincial - None
Federal - None

RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION
Evangelical Christian

OVERVIEW OF THE VALUE STATEMENT

Historical Value
The historical heritage value resides in the church’s early construction in Westmount; its status as the oldest extant house of worship in the city; its continued association with the Anglican Church (as the Church of the Advent) from its construction in 1892 until 2005, when it underwent a denominational change and became the House of Prayer for All Nations; its continual use of the site for religious and community purposes.

Contextual Value
The contextual heritage value resides in its siting directly on de Maisonneuve Boulevard; its relationship to the parish hall which is atypical for the neighbourhood, making it a local landmark and the generous lawn which surrounds the complex.

Architectural and Aesthetic Value
The architectural and aesthetic heritage value resides in its associations with Cox & Amos; its fine aesthetic design in a neo-Gothic style, excellent functional design, craftsmanship and materials. This is true for both the exterior and interior of the complex, which has a high degree of authenticity and integrity. The parish hall is a building of secondary value: its volume masks views of the original Church of the Advent.

Spiritual and Community Value
The spiritual and community heritage value resides generally from the period of the Anglican use: in the soaring volume of the sanctuary; the asymmetrical plan with a side aisle on the east; the simplicity of the material palette, consistent with 19th century Anglican churches; the exposed roof trusses; the geometrically patterned and occasionally figurative stained glass windows.
SITING

The House of Prayer for All Nations is located on the northwest corner of the intersection of de Maisonneuve Boulevard and Wood Avenue, in the southeast sector of Westmount. The original church building, which dates from 1892, addresses de Maisonneuve Boulevard. Perpendicular to it, and separated from it by a small link, is the original parish hall, started in 1915.

The complex is across the street from Westmount Square and from the Dawson College campus. It is a block from the Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom. It is also fairly close to the western edge of downtown Montreal.

The church property is zoned residential, for single- and two-family homes and multiple housing.

DESCRIPTION

The House of Prayer for All Nations was originally built as an Anglican mission church, funded by a downtown Montreal church, St. James the Apostle. When it opened its doors in 1892, it was known as the Church of the Advent. The 1915 parish hall has been rented to another religious community and since 2005, has been occupied by the Grace Montreal Church. There is a basement under each building: the church and the parish hall.

The House of Prayer is the oldest surviving house of worship in Westmount. It was designed by a young firm, Cox & Amos. Its modest massing and brick walls reflect its first purpose, as a mission chapel.

FAITH AND COMMUNITY LIFE

House of Prayer for All Nations is a non-denominational Apostolic Deliverance Ministry (an emergency room for the spiritually lost and wounded individuals.) It is associated with the Independent Assemblies of God International, Canada. Core beliefs include world evangelism; the Holy Trinity; the Bible as the infallible Word of God; the importance of baptism and the celebration of the Eucharist; and speaking in tongues. According to Pastor Parris, the congregation teaches its community how to use the Bible as a compass for their spiritual and moral standards to improve the quality of their life and to enable them to be better citizens. The church was founded in 1997 in the basement of the home of the senior Pastor Juliana Daniel, with five members. As the membership grew the church moved to a location at 6484 Victoria Avenue, in Montreal. In 2005, the small congregation purchased the present location at 4119 de Maisonneuve Blvd, where the church welcomes members of all nations. As part of its mission, the church offers religious ceremonies, charitable and community activities.

RELEVANT DATES

1892
Construction of the Church of the Advent as a mission church. Cox & Amos architects

1896
Construction of the chancel

1897
Construction of the south transept

1915-1924
Construction of the parish hall and link

1940
Interior modifications and re-roofing

1998
Re-roofing

2003
The parish hall is converted into a refugee shelter

2005
Property is purchased by an evangelical community and renamed House of Prayer for All Nations

2007
The parish hall is leased to the Grace Montreal Church
GOVERNANCE

The House of Prayer is an autonomous, self-financing organization. It is directed by a Board, whose members are elected for six year terms. The Pastor is appointed by the Senior Pastor, Mrs. Daniel.
HISTORICAL VALUE (1/2)

DESCRIPTION

The Evolution of the Church
The early development of Westmount began in the south-east sector, as the tramway lines were extended from Montreal, and building lots began to be laid out in consequence. The decision by St. James the Apostle to build a mission church on Western Avenue in 1892 was not revolutionary. St. Georges had already built its wooden mission in 1874, on land donated by the Raynes family (See: St. Matthias’ Anglican Church) and the Methodists had established a mission church in 1889 (See: Westmount Park United Church).

However, St. James was the first Protestant church to establish a permanent house of worship in the eastern sector, with the opening of the Church of the Advent in 1892. The other two churches which quickly followed are Bethel Gospel Chapel in 1893 and St. Stephen’s Anglican Church in 1898, with the present construction dating from 1902.

These three churches are associated with the first major waves of settlement that occurred in Westmount between 1890 and 1910. In ten years 1891-1901, the population more than doubled and in the next decade, 1901-1911, it nearly doubled again. Fully 84% of the population was Protestant, and these churches were located to serve the burgeoning population of middle-class families who were buying/building houses in the suburb of Westmount.

At the time of the construction of the three mission churches, Westmount had yet to become an exclusive enclave. In her doctoral thesis, Mobile Mansions, Protestant Church Relocation and Extension in Montreal, Rosalyn Trigger noted: “Although the upper elevations of Westmount would later take precedence as the setting of choice for new mansions, in the early years of the twentieth century Westmount remained, in the words of Stephen Leacock, “too rich for the poor but too poor for the superrich””. She estimated “(...) that approximately 12 to 13 % of Montreal ‘society’ lived in Westmount by 1888, and that this percentage had risen to between 23 and 24 % by 1914. However, from the beginning of this settlement it was to be in the vast majority, English-speaking and Protestant, and of the managerial class.

As their parishioners began to shift westward, the Protestant churches which chose not to relocate from the downtown core were faced with a practical problem. If the church did not move, then it needed to establish a mission outpost or risk losing its membership to other denominations. According to Aline Gubbay, the Church of the Advent was first known as a “Chapel of Ease”; since it provided a convenient house of worship to its Westmount membership who were not forced to journey to Mackay and St. Catherine Streets to worship. However, others have suggested that this term is not correct, since a chapel of ease must be in the same geographical area as its main church.

The Church of the Advent expanded twice in the 1890s, the enlargements no doubt an explicit indication of its establishment within the neighbourhood. In 1915, the construction of a parish hall was begun. The date of its completion is subject to some discussion – the Conseil du patrimoine religieux du Québec provides 1924, leaving one to speculate if construction was halted due to the war, and perhaps funding problems. The architect is unknown.
HISTORICAL VALUE (2/2)

At the beginning of the 21st century, the congregation began to decline in numbers; the parish hall became a refugee shelter. Between 1994 and 2005, the Romanian Orthodox Church of St. Nicolas also worshipped in the complex.

In 2005, the church was sold to the House of Prayer for All Nations, who remains the owner. The House of Prayer takes its name from Isaiah 56:7. It is an evangelical Christian community.

The parish hall is now used by the Montreal Grace Church, which is a non-denominational, evangelical church.

CHARACTER-DEFINING ELEMENTS

- The continued use of the property for community worship and social activism.
- The associations with the Anglican church and its decision to establish a mission chapel during the early development of Westmount.
- The associations with the evangelical movement.
CONTEXTUAL VALUE

DESCRIPTION

An Unconventional Siting
Generally, 19th century houses of worship in Montreal are set back from the street, separated from the secular world by a yard or a band of greenery. The House of Prayer is unique in Westmount for its siting immediately adjacent to the sidewalk. A review of Montreal insurance maps demonstrates that this situation is not a result of road widening. This placement may be a result of the initial philosophy of the building as a “chapel of ease”. In other words, it was conceived as a mission chapel, a wayfarer’s rest and therefore it was not in need of a formal frontage. The property was assembled through the purchase of 4 separate building lots, which are shown subdivided on the Goad Insurance map of 1890.

A Complementary Oasis of Greenery
Although the church aligns closely with the street, it has a generous setback to the east, where the parish hall sits amid trees and shrubbery. This situation relates well to the Dawson College grounds directly across the street, and provides a pleasant gateway of greenery to those pedestrians and vehicles moving north on Wood Avenue.

A Local Landmark
The churchyard to the west allows the property to be distinct from its residential neighbours, and contributes to it being a landmark in the area, in a way that the overall modesty of the built form does not.

CHARACTER-DEFINING ELEMENTS

- The siting of the House of Prayer right at the sidewalk, consistent with its original intention as a mission chapel.
- The generous setback on the east, allowing for a mature canopy of trees and shrubbery which complements the Dawson College grounds and also makes the property distinct from its neighbouring residential fabric.
ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC VALUE (1/4)

DESCRIPTION

A Mission Chapel Expressed in Architecture
Perhaps in response to the social awareness of the immense chasm between the middle class and the poor (see Herbert Ames: The City below the Hill), the late 19th c. mission churches were more modest than their downtown counterparts. For one thing, they were built of brick and not stone, which was reserved only for enrichments. In the case of the Church of the Advent, the massing was deliberately low, so that the building immediately signaled to the passerby that it was a ‘chapel’, rather than a church. It has no soaring front façade, marked by a tower or gable. Its presence on the street is minimized by the shed roof that meets its entry porch. Its scale is not imposing. As noted earlier, it is sited very close to the street as well, in the manner of non-conformist chapels.

The Church of the Advent is said to have been the first commission done by Alfred Arthur Cleaver Cox and Louis-Auguste Amos, who began their architectural practice in 1892, the year that the church was built. The very early extensions, evidence of the growth of the church congregation, were also designed by Cox & Amos. In 1899, they executed a major addition to the mother church of St. James the Apostle, indicating that the church wardens remained happy in their choice of professionals. By 1912, the partnership was no more, Cox having decamped for Vancouver. The architects of the 1915-24 parish hall are unknown.

Talented Architects and Craftsmen
The following biographical information is reproduced, somewhat condensed from two sources: Cox’s biography is in progress at the Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada 1800-1950. In consequence, his is from the WestEndVancouver website. Amos’s biography is taken from the Biographical Dictionary entry.

“COX, Alfred Arthur Cleaver (1860-1944): Alfred Arthur Cleaver Cox (often called "Arthur") was an architect (...) born in Oxfordshire, England in 1860 (...) In 1881 (...) he began his architecture training with William Henry Syme (1845-1926), a [Scottish] architect who...spent most of his life in England. In 1885, [Cox] became an associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects. After winning the Godwin Bursary Scholarship in 1890, he travelled in the United States and Canada. In 1890, he moved to Montreal, where he had an architectural partnership with Louis Auguste Amos (1869-1948).

In 1908, Arthur moved to Vancouver, where he continued his architectural practice. He first appeared in the Vancouver directories in 1910 as “A Cox, architect, 635 Granville.” The street directory for 635 Granville Street referred to “Cox & Ames arch”; presumably, this refers to Louis Amos of Montreal, who was still Arthur’s partner in 1910.

Arthur designed several Vancouver office buildings, including the Carter-Cotton Block, the Daily Province Building, and the Canada Life Building. He also designed some private houses, including one in 1912 at 1790 Angus Drive in Shaughnessy Heights for railway official William Ferriman Salsbury (1847-1938). In 1917, Arthur became the advisory architect to the Provincial Military Hospitals Commission. After the war, Arthur continued his architecture practice in Vancouver (...)
ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC VALUE (2/4)


“AMOS, Louis Auguste (1869-1948) was a talented architect and engineer of Montreal who distinguished himself as both a designer, local politician, and as a respected member of the Engineering Institute of Canada. Born in Montreal on 18 August 1869 he attended the Plateau Academy from 1879 until 1884 and the Montreal High School from 1884 to 1886. He was sent to Kingston, Ont. to attend the Royal Military College from which he graduated with honours in engineering, and received the Governor General’s Silver Medal for his studies. He returned to Montreal and joined the staff of the civil engineering department of the Grand Trunk Railway in 1890, working directly under E.P. Hannaford for two years. He travelled in Europe and studied architecture there and in 1892 formed a partnership with Alfred A. Cox in Montreal. For the next 18 years the firm of Cox & Amos became renowned for its distinctive designs for bank buildings in Quebec and Ontario for the Eastern Townships Bank, the Bank of British North America, and for the Quebec Bank (see list of works under Cox & Amos). Cox moved to Vancouver in 1910 but the firm continued to list itself as Cox & Amos until 1912; at this point Louis Amos began to operate his own successful practice in Montreal until 1925 when he was joined by his son Pierre C. Amos. He successfully campaigned to become an alderman in Lachine in 1913 and was elected to the office of Mayor there in 1915 while continuing to operate his busy office which specialized in the design of brewery facilities for the National Breweries Ltd., the Dawes Co., the Dow Breweries and the Ekers Breweries of Montreal and Lachine. He was one of the founding members of the Province of Quebec Association of Architects in 1894, and became its president in 1934. He was elected as a Fellow of both the Royal Institute of British Architects and the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada in 1935. While it can be assumed that much of the design work from his early partnership with Alfred A. Cox could be attributed to Cox, it is evident that Amos was a capable designer in his own right as can be seen in the sophisticated Beaux Arts design he produced for the Knights of Columbus Hall on Mountain Street (1922-23), a finely proportioned essay in Montreal limestone. His most accomplished residential design is, without question, the spectacularly sited mansion for Aimé Geoffrión (1930-31), a scheme executed in collaboration with his son Pierre C. Amos. He was seriously injured in an automobile accident in June 1935 (…) and had resigned from active practice by 1940. He died in Lachine on 20 August 1948 and the practice was continued by his son (…)”

The Charles W. Kelsey Stained Glass Windows
Charles William Kelsey (1877-1975) was an internationally recognized 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.

His oeuvre includes about 70 windows in this country. Their themes are either ecclesiastical or commemorative, memorials to the dead of both world wars. Aside from those in the House of Prayer, his windows can be found on the Montreal island, in Saint-Stephen’s Anglican Church, Westmount Park United Church, Saint-Georges and St. Matthias’ Anglican Church; the Ascension of Our Lord Church; the former Erskine and American Church (now part of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts), and St. James United Church. He also provided

View of the nave, looking toward the main entrance
Photo: Bergeron Gagnon Inc.

The bay, facing north, ceiling with wood-panelled brackets
Photo: Bergeron Gagnon Inc.

The tall archways that separate the nave from the bay
Photo: Bergeron Gagnon Inc.

Clerestory windows in the nave
Photo: Bergeron Gagnon Inc.
ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC VALUE (3/4)

the stained glass windows for the Memorial Chapel at McGill University and the Chateau Frontenac Hotel in Quebec City.

An Exercise in the Gothic Revival
Cox and Amos chose a conventional language with which to build the church. At the end of the 19th century, Gothic Revival was still favoured by English Protestants. The overall massing and detailing are consistently and elegantly proportioned. As noted earlier, the need for a modest rendition probably influenced the simplicity of the overall massing: a pitched roof covers a single volume of the nave. Unusually, there is a single side aisle, under a lowered roof.

The disposition and types of the windows also relate to the style: the lancet, rose and pointed arch forms reinforce the reading of a Gothic Revival church.

In contrast to other churches of this time, little effort was made to supply the nave with natural lighting. There is a triptych of windows on the south façade and a scattering of dormers.

Noble Materials
The exterior material palette, of Montreal grey limestone for the foundations, red clay brick for the walls, ashlarp Miramichi sandstone for the trim and ornamentation are all capably used to express the conventional elements of the Gothic Revival style. The detailing is crisp and measured, again in keeping with the low-key nature of the building.

The sloped roofing was originally in slate, with galvanized iron flashings and valleys. Today, the roofs have been redone in asphalt shingle. These cost savings, like the quality of the brick repairs and repointing, are detrimental to the heritage value of the church; however these interventions can be reversed.

Interior Design and Finishes
On the interior, Cox and Amos followed the traditional approach set out in the middle of the 19th century for Anglican churches, which favoured a return to the simplicity of medieval church forms and detailing. The interior finishes are simple and even austere: plastered walls and arches; wood architraves around the doors and windows.

The ceiling is rendered in wood; wood plank panelling is supported by expressed trusses, carried on large wooden brackets. There is a thin ferrous rod which forms the lower chord of the truss and has been added to reinforce the original structure. The panelling is continued in the side aisle and the chancel, where it is arranged in geometric patterning. The colour palette is also simple: white plaster, dark stained wood. Only the coloured glass in lead came provides accents. Stencilling is limited to a recent inscription around the arch defining the chancel.

The Organ, the Furnishings
Organ: The organ is a Casavant, dating from 1943. It is recessed into the chancel wall.

Liturgical Furniture: the altar, communion table, the pulpit and pews are original and repositioned. The provenance of the light fixtures is to be determined.
ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC VALUE (4/4)

Parish Hall, now Grace Montreal Church
This brick building, sheltered under a simple pitched roof is modest in architecture and detailing.

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

CHARACTER-DEFINING ELEMENTS

Exterior features

The church
- The volume, including the rectangular footprint, the pitched roof, the huge shed roof over the narthex, meeting the gabled main entrance; the roofing is not original and not of heritage value.
- The Gothic Revival influences, including the expression of the gable on the front façade, the buttresses on the porch; the ogee openings and archways; the use of Gothic symbols, such as the trefoil and the quatrefoil.
- The materials, including the rusticated stone base, the red clay brick walls, the Miramichi sandstone decorative elements and carvings, the wood frames, doors and windows
- Parish hall (now Grace Montreal Church): the parish hall is a modest building whose scale and mass is complementary to the original church.

Interior features

Space division
the central nave and the single side aisle separated by large archways.

Structural elements
The visible roof framing (trusses, brackets and rods) and the dark varnished wood planking.

Furnishing
the furniture, including the pews, the pulpit, ornamented with delicately curved, finely carved Gothic Revival motifs. The organ and wind chest.

Interior decoration / integrated art
- The austere decoration (apart from the stained glass windows).
- The clerestory windows.
- Stained glass windows made by Charles W. Kelsey in opaque geometric patterns.
SPIRITUAL AND COMMUNITY VALUE

DESCRIPTION

A Place of Faith and Community Outreach

Religious celebrations: The church provides a place for religious celebrations, such as weekly services, marriages, funerals; associated religious activities such as bible study and adult Sunday school.

Charitable Works: food banks (delivery driver), shelter and charitable donations.

Community Activities: cultural activities and leasing of space to a dance school (since the purchase of the building), concerts and activities to generate funds.

CHARACTER-DEFINING ELEMENTS

- Christian religious references such as the use of the triangle, symbolic of the Trinity.
- The liturgical furniture.
- Stained glass windows featuring symbolic and religious themes.
- Prayers and worship activities (music: tambourine, drums).
- Assembly spaces for religious celebrations, community gathering and activities (such as musical performances).
PROCESS

This Value Statement is based on a visit made in autumn of 2016, analysis and a group discussion held on August 22, 2018.

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