

Perth Avenue Methodist Church

Description

The property at 243 Perth Avenue is worthy of inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties for its cultural heritage value. Located on the northeast corner of Perth Avenue and Wallace Avenue, the building was completed in 1913 as Perth Avenue Methodist Church.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

Perth Avenue Methodist Church has design value as a representative example of an early 20th century church designed in the Neo-Gothic style. Distinguished by the use of medieval-inspired elements such as pointed-arch openings, buttresses and towers, the style was popular for churches in the early 1900s.

The site has been associated for nearly a century with congregations of the Methodist Church in Canada, the United Church of Canada, and the Seventh Day Adventist Church. According to the United Church Archives, the origins of Perth Avenue Methodist Church date to the late 19th century when a Methodist congregation was established in the neighbourhood northeast of Bloor Street West and Dundas Street West. In 1892, the church became known as Perth Avenue Methodist Church, and in 1913 the current building was completed. The congregation joined the newly formed United Church of Canada in 1925. Perth Avenue United Church amalgamated with Davenport Road United Church at 1900 Davenport Road as Davenport-Perth United Church in the early 1970s. Since that time, the Toronto Perth Seventh Day Adventist Church has occupied the site at 243 Perth Avenue.

Perth Avenue Methodist Church was designed by the Toronto architectural firm of G. M. Miller and Company, according to plans dated 1910. After forming a private practice in the late 1800s, George Miller was noted for his association with Toronto's prominent Massey family, for whom he co-designed Massey Hall (completed in 1894). Among his many well-known commissions are the Lillian Massey Building (1908-1912) at 153 Bloor Street West, the former Havergal Ladies College (1898) at 354 Jarvis Street, and the Gladstone Hotel (1889-1890) at 1204 Queen Street West, all of which are designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Contextually, with its prominent location on a corner lot, Perth Avenue Methodist Church is a local landmark in the neighbourhood northeast of the intersection of Bloor Street West and Dundas Street West. The community developed within the triangle outlined by the three railway lines that were extended through the district in the late 19th century, attracting factories, workers' housing, and schools and churches.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of Perth Avenue Methodist Church related to its design, associative and contextual value as a representative example of an early 20th century church designed in the Neo-Gothic style that is an institutional and local landmark are:

- The scale, form and massing
- The materials, with red brick cladding, and brick, stone and wood trim
- The gable roof that covers the main body of the church, with coping and a chimney
- The west façade on Perth Avenue, which features a monumental pointed arch window opening flanked by buttresses with weatherings
- On the long side elevations (south and north), the pointed-arch window openings that are organized by buttresses with gablets
- The tower at the southwest corner, which features entrances set in pointed-arch surrounds on the west and south faces, pointed-arch window openings above, beveled corners with stone detailing and, under the flat roof, a stone band course and paired openings with louvered shutters
- On the southeast corner, the tower with a pointed-arch entrance on the south face, corner buttresses, pointed-arch window openings, and a flat roof with crenelles
- The fenestration on all the elevations, with segmental-arched openings in the basement level, and various sized pointed-arch openings above
- The narrow gable-roofed wing on the rear (east) wall, the small gable-roofed entrance porch on the north elevation, and the multi-sided turret on the northwest corner
- The position of the building on a corner lot with the main façades facing Perth Avenue (west) and Wallace Avenue (south)