Holy Eucharist Church

505 Watt Street

49.917045, -97.098403

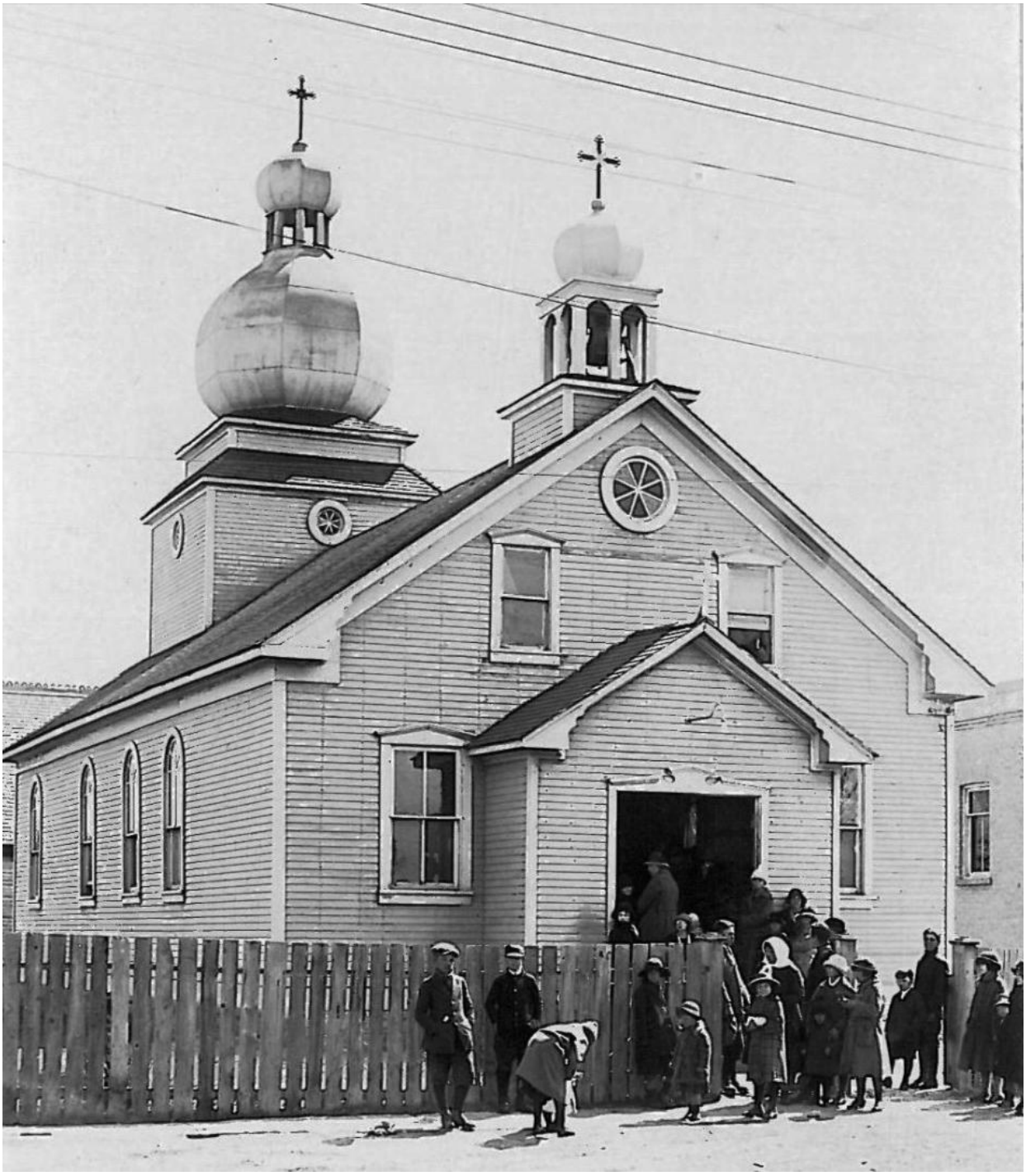
During the early 1900s, a number of Ukrainian immigrants who had come from Galicia and Bukovyna settled in the Elmwood, East Kildonan and Morse Place areas of Winnipeg. By the early 1920s, there were 700 to 1,000 Ukrainians, with most of them employed by the railway companies and in nearby meat packing plants, lumber yards, breweries, machine works and box factories.

A small branch of the Ukrainian section of the Social Democratic Party of Canada was established in May of 1912 by party organizers in the North End of Winnipeg. Twenty-four men and six women held meetings in private homes and subscribed to four Ukrainian radical and socialist newspapers. By 1913 the branch had collapsed due to a fear of reprisals, but was revived again in March, 1914 with eleven members, who continued until disbanding in September, 1918. Members had been involved in meetings, electoral rallies, lectures and May Day parades. As the group could not afford their own facility, meetings were held in private homes and space at Morrow Hall on Talbot Avenue was rented for larger events.

As the Ukrainian population continued to increase, an interest was expressed in building a Ukrainian Catholic Church and Ukrainian Heritage School of their own. They had previously attended services at St. Vladimir and Olga or St. Nicholas parishes on the west side of the river, which was difficult, especially during the cold winter months.

Space was rented from St. Alphonsus Church on Munroe Avenue and Brazier Street for the sum of $7.00 per month and Ivan Diuk, a student of St. Boniface College was hired to teach. By June of 1918, the Reading Club had forty-four adult members, and fifty-three children were enrolled in the Heritage School. Tuition was fifty cents a month.

On April 21st, 1918 twenty members of the community met in the house of Andrew Smaha at 464 Montrose Avenue (now Larsen Avenue) and the Ukrainian cultural society of Chytalnia Prosvita was organized. Four months later a meeting was held for the purpose of organizing a parish. Sixty-four people attended and plans were made for the founding of Holy Eucharist Ukrainian Catholic Church, with each person in attendance donating $25. This would be the third Ukrainian Catholic Church in Winnipeg, and Masses were initially held twice a month, then every Sunday and all Holy Days after 1924.



Ukrainian Organization in Elmwood & East Kildonan in the early 20th century on Watt St. at Larson Ave. – Source Canadian Ukrainian Centennial 1891 -1991 by Paul Maluga, C.Ss.R. / digitally restored by Eric de Schepper

A building committee was named and it was decided that the Parish priest would be the head of the Parish in the capacity of President. Property at the corner of Watt Street and Montrose Avenue (now Larsen Avenue) was purchased for the sum of $1,240. A small shanty was on the site at the time and this was used for meetings, the Ukrainian School and Catechism classes. In July of 1919, the shanty was torn down and a 100 foot by 25 foot rectangular wooden building with seating for 300 people was built. Built in the Byzantine architectural style, the church boasted two cupolas, one large one above the altar and a smaller one housing the bell over the entrance, two side altars, a main altar and twenty-two pews built by Messrs. Wawrysh and S. Komaranski. The building was completed at a cost of $6,000. Bishop

Nykyta Budka blessed the church on October 29th of that year, and the first parish priest was Reverend Michael Pelech, who had been the first Ukrainian Catholic priest educated and ordained in Canada.



Father Michael Pelech in 1940, a close friend of the Petryk family – Source A biography of Doctor Stephanie Petryk on the occasion of the Canadian Ukrainian Centennial 1891 -1991 by Paul Maluga, C.Ss.R.

In 1921 the parishioners set out to build a parish hall next to the church. Made of brick, the 74 foot by 28 foot building was constructed at a cost of $6,480 and housed a stage for concerts and theatrical productions and a closet. Known as the Taras Shevchenko Prosvita Reading Room, this new building became the centre of Ukrainian activities for all the parishioners, young and old alike. Several groups flourished, such as a cultural society of Taras Shevchenko, a Candle Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a Women's Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary, an insurance society of St. Nicholas, the Marian Sodality, a Congregation of Our Blessed Mother Mary for teenage girls, the Olha Kobylianska Organization, a Youth club, the Children of Mary, an Altar Boys Club and a Parish Choir. There was also a Parish Library which contained 500 books. The Heritage School held their classes in the basement with the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate teaching ninety children. Later in the 1930s a Sick Benefit Society was established with a membership of 330.



Holy Eucharist Church & Parish Hall on Watt St. at Larson Avenue – Source Canadian Ukrainian Centennial 1891 -1991 by Paul Maluga, C.Ss.R.

Veterans of the defunct Social Democratic Party of Canada established a branch of The Ukrainian Labour Temple Association in December, 1920. It was later renamed the Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association in 1924. With 34 men and women joining, a Worker Children's School was soon founded, with 50 pupils attending. Before long plans were made to erect a Ukrainian Labour Temple in Elmwood and on September 17th, 1921 a building at the corner of Watt Street and Jamieson Avenue was formally opened. In the next few years a Women's section, a children's mandolin orchestra, a 40-member choral and dramatic society, a 50-member Youth section and a branch of the Workers' Benevolent Association were established. Before the onset of the Depression, the Labour Temple building was valued at $12,000 and most of the debts had been settled.

During World War II, one hundred and forty-four men from the parish served in the armed forces.

The first residence for the parish priest was located at 480 Montrose Avenue (now Larsen Avenue), where Father Shpytkovsky lived. As he did not do any of his own cooking, he took all his meals with his sister and her family in their home on Jamison Avenue. The residence was later sold to Mrs. Kay Kormylo.

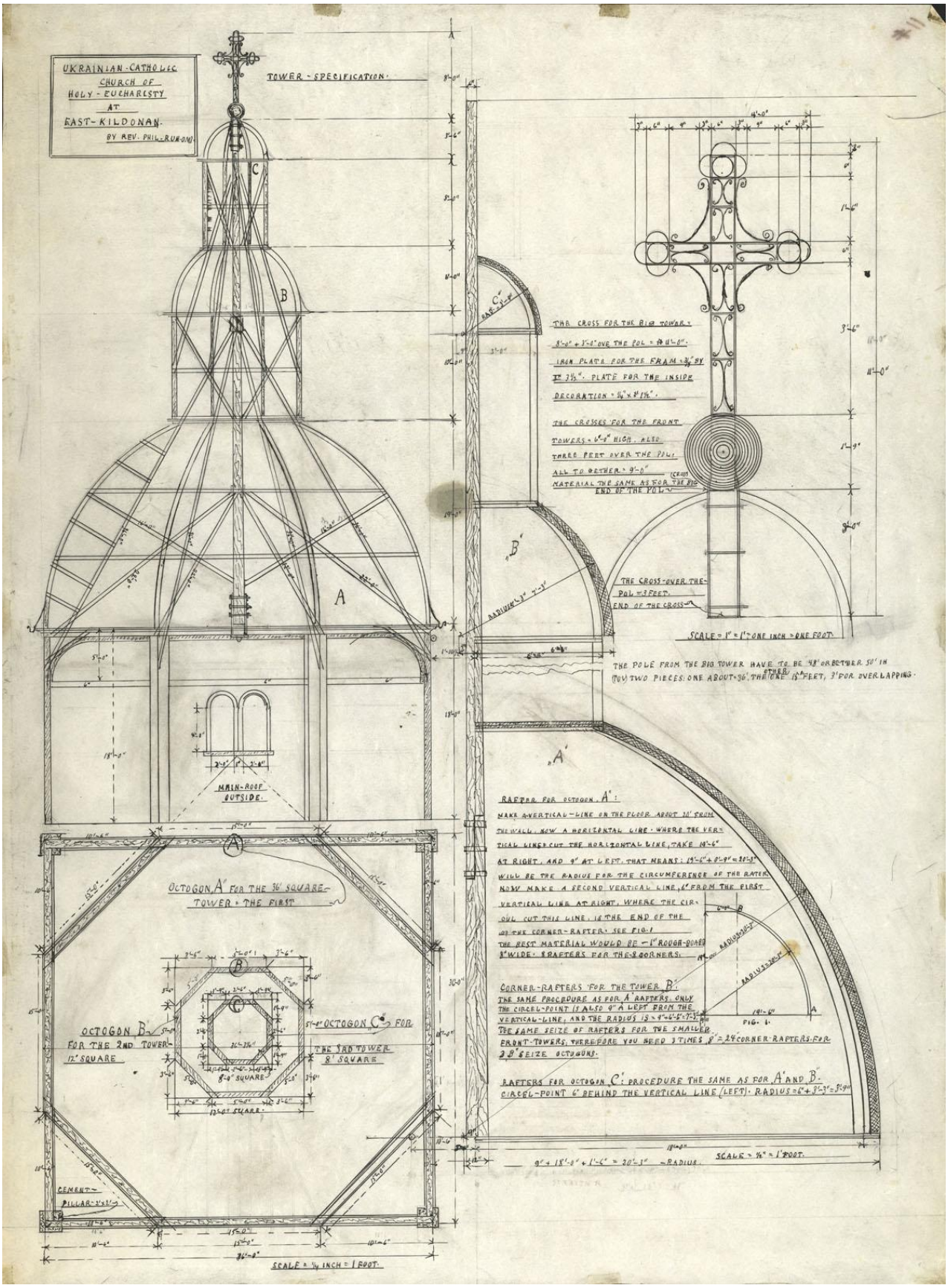
Father Shpytkovsky left Holy Eucharist in 1966. Although when he arrived in 1940 he had been told this would be his parish for the remainder of his life, it didn't work out that way. The Parish Council tried to implement the practice of having members of the congregation pledge a certain amount of their earnings to the church. As many of the members could not afford to commit to a specific amount, but would give what they could, Father Shpytkovsky disagreed with this decision, and he was soon sent to a parish in Brandon, Manitoba, where he would also be responsible for the surrounding rural communities. This was an extreme hardship for Father Shpytkovsky, as he did not drive or own a car at the time. Once arriving in Brandon, he had to learn how to drive and then purchase a vehicle so he could get around and visit members of his congregation.

Plagued by health issues, Father Shpytkovsky left Canada in 1968 and headed to Australia, where he was first appointed to a parish in Brisbane and later in 1978 to a parish in Adelaide. Years later, Father

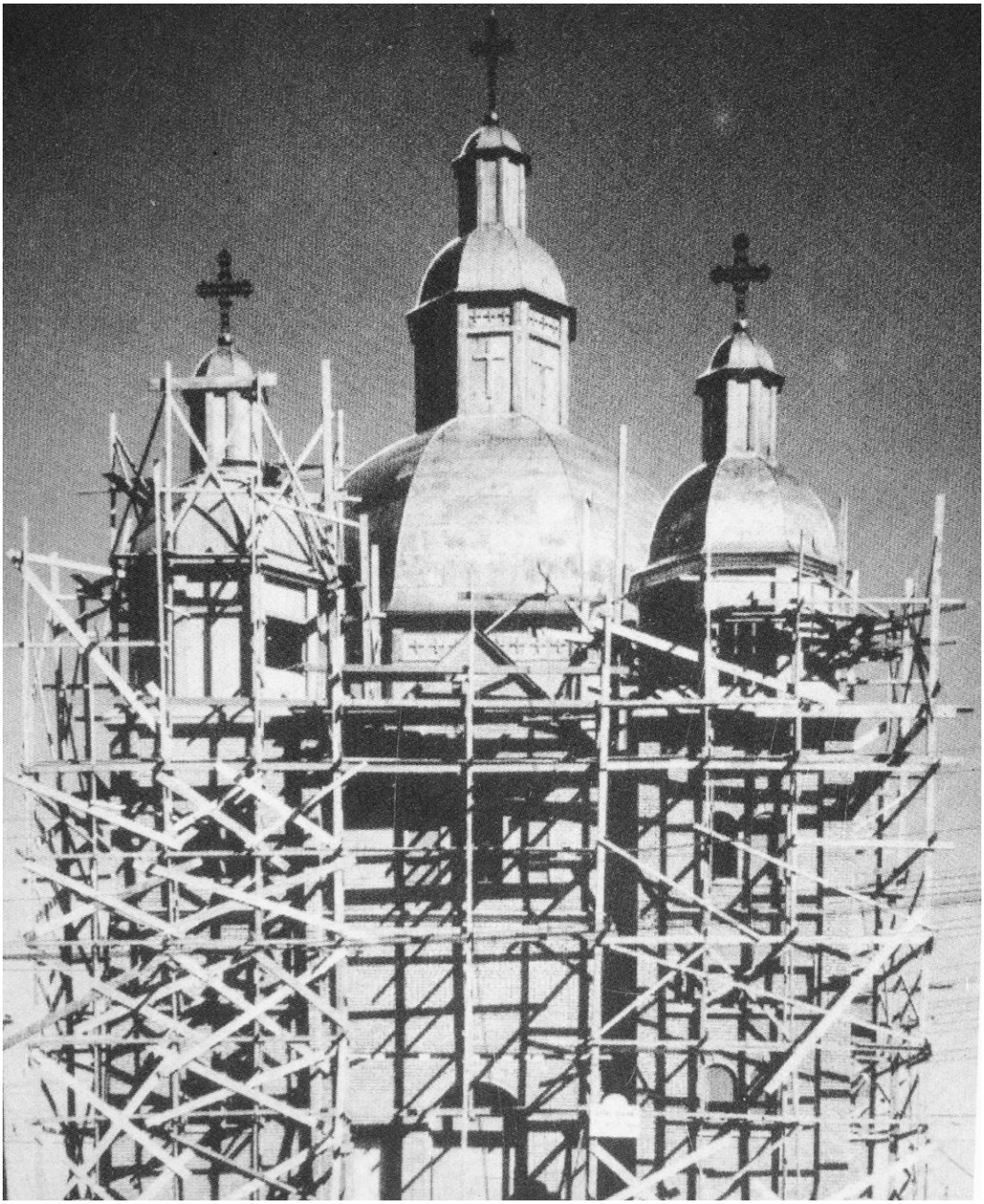
Shpytkovsky returned to Canada, hoping to retire. However, due to a shortage of priests, he was immediately sent to a parish in Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, where he remained for a number of years.

Father Shpytkovsky died at Holy Family Nursing Home in Winnipeg on February 8th, 2004 at the age of 88 years.

By the early 1950s, as the East Kildonan area continued to expand, the building became inadequate to meet the needs of the growing congregation and the parishioners began to campaign for a new church. Under the leadership of Father Ihor Shpytkovsky, a triangular parcel of land was purchased six blocks north at the corner of Watt Street and Munroe Avenue where the East Kildonan Police and Fire Department station had previously stood. Plans were made to build a brick church at a cost of $3,500 with a seating capacity of 400 people. The site was blessed by Archbishop Maxim Hermaniuk on Sunday June 20th, 1954 and East Kildonan Mayor J.L. Bodie turned the first sod.



Blue Print Drawing of the present Holy Eucharist Church – Source Canadian Ukrainian Centennial 1891 -1991 by Paul Maluga, C.Ss.R.

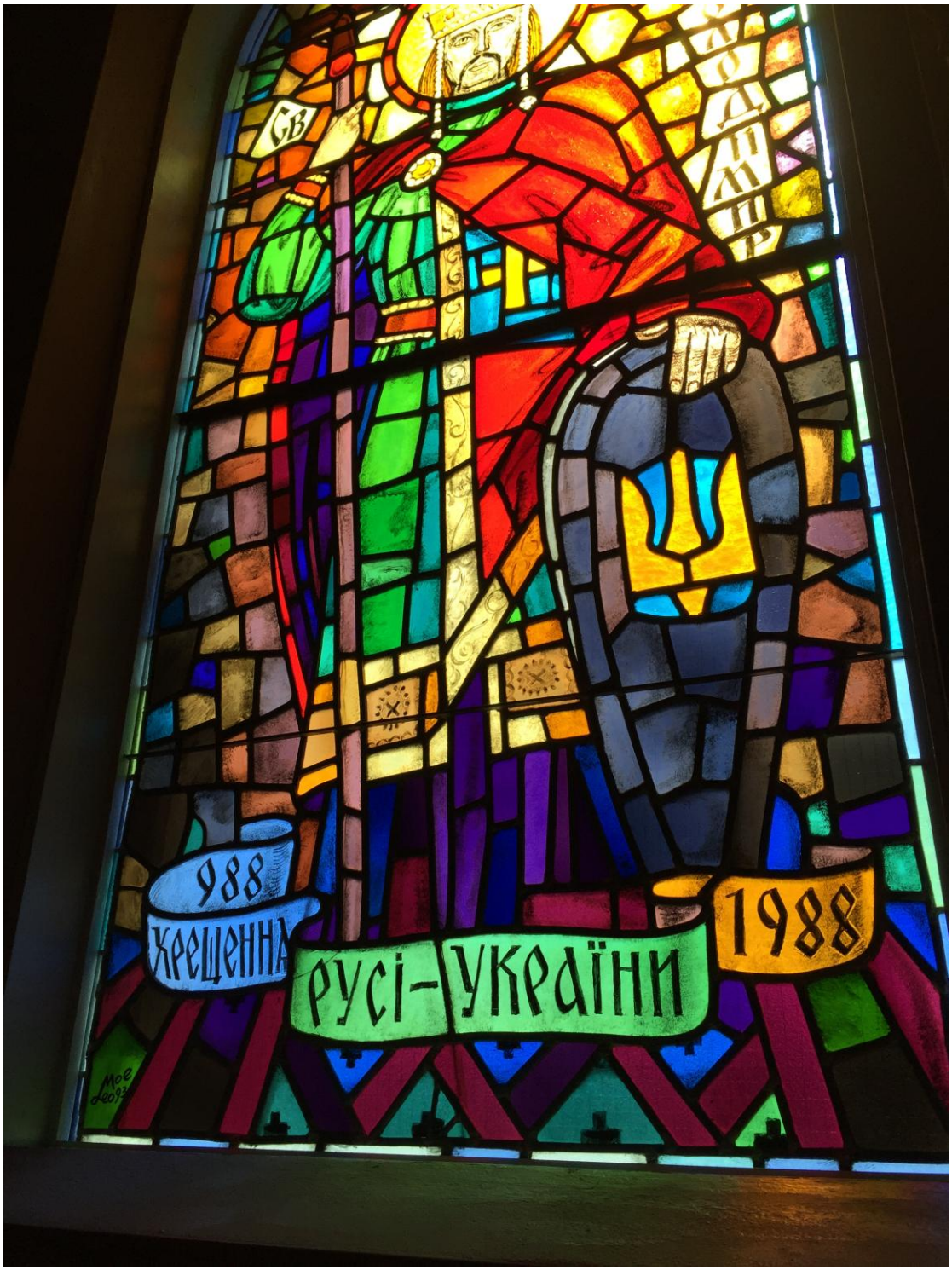


Church under construction 1954 – Source Canadian Ukrainian Centennial 1891 -1991 by Paul Maluga, C.Ss.R.

Designed by Very Canon Philip Ruh, O.M.I., the new church was constructed by Steve Zulak, a parish member, at a cost of $66,844.48. Zulak also built five other churches in both Winnipeg and rural Manitoba, along with the Immaculate Heart of Mary Ukrainian School. The cruciform brick church has an open central cupola with two small, decorated cupolas on the front towers. Three-sided concrete stairs with handrails lead, under a canopy, into the vestibule where there are two entrances to the choir as well as other doors to the church grounds. To the right in the vestibule is an exit to the fully completed basement.

There was some dissention amongst parish members regarding the money spent on all this new construction and this resulted in some members transferring to the new Mother of Perpetual Help Church at 580 Talbot Avenue in the Elmwood district (now St. Sava Serbian Orthodox Church) and later to St. Anne Ukrainian Catholic Church at 35 Marcie Street in the North Kildonan district.

In 1966 a main altar mural and two side murals were painted in the church by Mr. Sviatoslaw Hordynsky, an accomplished iconographer, at a cost of $32,160. Twenty-six stained glass windows adorn the church, eight of them created by world famous artist and sculptor Leo Mol (formerly Leonid Moldazhanyn), one by Roman Kowal and the remaining seventeen by artist Lucinda Doran from Prairie Stained Glass in Winnipeg.



Leo Moi stain glass window in the Holy Eucharist Church – Source Donna Cudmore 2016

After the new church was built property at the northeast corner of Watt Street and Munroe Avenue was purchased for the sum of $85,680. Two houses were on the property and the corner house at 501 Munroe Avenue became the second parish residence. An ice rink was also built to be used by the children and youth of the parish. In 1974 the present parish rectory with the parish office on the lower

level was built on the west side of Watt Street at the corner of Winterton Avenue. The house at 501 Munroe was later demolished and in 1977 the Kildonan Horizons apartment complex was built on the property.

During Father V.J. Bozyk's term (he was later promoted to the rank of Monsignor), the present Parish Centre at 460 Munroe Avenue was built in 1983 at a cost of $800,000, including furnishings, and in 1987/1988 an addition of classrooms for religious instruction was completed at a cost of $400,000. A wood frame building known as the Polson School Annex had once been on this property and this was where girls from Grades 8 to 11 were taught Home Economics.

Father Bozyk did not think the mortgage would ever be paid off, but with a lot of hard work by the congregation the debt was satisfied in record time. A focal point of the parish, this busy facility has been steadily booked for wedding receptions, fundraising events, clergy conferences, gala banquets, parish bingos and various community events.

In 1990 Phase I renovations were made to the church. The pews were refinished, the floor recovered, the walls and choir loft repainted around the art work, the front entrance doors were replaced, an elevator was installed, new wheelchair accessible washrooms were added, a fireproof vault for church records was built, janitorial and mechanical rooms were added and new pavement was laid around the church.

During Phase II in 1991, the church basement was upgraded to the present auditorium. The concrete walls were paneled, exposed ceiling pipes were covered and the concrete floor was tiled. The kitchen and annex were renovated and stainless steel fixtures were installed. The stage was redone, folding doors were added, a storage room with temperature control was built and two forced air furnaces and air conditioning were installed.

In 1994 the Parish Office was added to the lower level of the Rectory and two years later a Secretary was hired to take over administrative duties from the volunteers. In 2002 additional property on Winterton Avenue was purchased for future parish needs.

A number of groups continue to serve the needs of the congregation, including the Ukrainian Catholic Women's League of Canada (UCWLC) (established in 1946), Ukrainian Catholic Brotherhood of Canada (established in 1934), Knights of Columbus Holy Eucharist Council #11330 (established in 1994), Parish Council, Parish Finance Board, Parish Centre Board, Millennium Seniors Club (established in 1988), Youth Group, Altar Guild, Altar Boys, Children of Mary, Ukrainian and English choirs, Rosary Leaders, Extra Ordinary Ministers of the Holy Eucharist, Lectors and Ushers. The parish also participates annually in the Pilgrimage to Cooks Creek.

A bookstore located in the basement of the Church auditorium was created by Walter and Elizabeth Turchyn to specialize in Eastern Christian books, children's books, Saint's lives, spiritual writings and scripture study aids. Greeting cards for celebrations of life and Church feasts, music CDs of Slavic, Greek, and English chant, and a variety of icons are available for purchase and special orders can be made.

Bingo started in 1946 under Father Ihor Shpytkovsky at the old church and was played every Sunday. It was moved to the Church auditorium in 1954 and later to its current location at the Parish Centre in 1983, where it changed to Tuesday evenings. Memberships were initially twenty-five cents each and hard cards sold for ten cents each. As there was a lack of tables, many of the players had to hold the cards on their lap. Following the implementation of the Manitoba Lotteries Foundation in 1985, which took over control of all Bingo games in the province, paper Bingo cards were introduced and in 1988 a Bingo machine with a flashboard was purchased for the sum of $5,885. The average weekly crowd is about 200 people and thirty regular members of the Social Club volunteer their time to help it run smoothly.

In 1960 a Bowling League was established, with games initially played at Roxy Lanes and then later at Rossmere Lanes, both on Henderson Highway. A Curling Club was formed in 1976 and games were played at the East St. Paul Curling Club before moving to the Rossmere Curling Club on Watt Street.

The Perogy Project was started in 1967 by Jean Slobodian, President of the UCWLC. In the beginning, mashing potatoes and making and rolling the dough was all done by hand. In 1984 a dough mixer machine was purchased and later a dough rolling machine was added. This equipment lightened the workload for the volunteers considerably. Perogies are made weekly, with work beginning before 7:00 am on Wednesdays and Thursdays. On average, between 800 and 1,000 dozen perogies are produced and a Perogy Hotline had to be established to take care of the many orders. Perogies are also donated to various organizations such as Ukrainian Park Children's Camp, Immaculate Heart of Mary School, St. Mary's Academy and Welcome Home. As well, donations are made to the UCWLC Fall Dinner, Craft and Bake Sale and annual Daffodil Tea.

Since 2015 the current priest, Father Michael Kwiatkowski agreed to have Holy Eucharist Church participate in the Doors Open Winnipeg event which is held annually, free of charge, on the last weekend of May. A number of people were welcomed in to view the building's architecture and stained glass windows and hear a brief summary of the church's history. A community Fun Day was held in the parking lot of the Parish Centre, where food, games and entertainment were enjoyed by all. Visitors to the various venues featured in Doors Open Winnipeg are asked to vote on a number of categories, and in 2015 and 2016 Holy Eucharist won for Best Architecture and in 2018 they won for being voted as The Hidden Gem.

Many descendents of the original area pioneers and founding families of Holy Eucharist Church continue to be actively involved in the various groups and social gatherings held at the church.

Divine Liturgy services are held daily, Monday to Saturday at 9:00 am. Sunday Divine Liturgy services are held at 8:00 am (in Ukrainian) and 10:00 am (in English).

Our Pastors

Fr. Peter Oleskiw, 1918-1922
Fr. Michael Hryhorichuk, 1922-1925
Fr. Michael Olenchuk, 1925-1926
Fr. Nicholas Bartman, 1925-1926
Fr. Jospeh Fylyma, 1926-1927
Fr. Paul Suliatecky, 1927-1929
Fr. John Holowka, 1929-1930
Fr. Anthony Luhovy, 1930-1932
Fr. Canon Panteleimon Bozyk, 1932-1938
Fr. Michael Syrnyk, 1938-1940
Fr. Ihor Shpytkovsky, 1940-1966
Mitrat Stephen Semczuk, 1967-1972
Fr. Joseph Fornalchuk, 1967-1972
Msgr. Vladimir Bozyk, 1972-1994
Mitrat Gregory Oucharyk, 1994-1999
Fr. Darren Kawiuk, 1999-2005
Fr. Michael Winn, 2005-2009
Rev. Dr. Michael Kwiatkowski, 2009-2021
Rev. Fr. Michael Winn, 2021-present

Assistant Pastors
Fr. Marian Dawydko
Fr. Alexander Baran
Fr. Eugene Rudachek
Fr. Vladimir Olach
Fr. Roman Zakrewsky
Fr. John Sholdak
Fr. Andrew Zayac
Fr. Edward Kwiatkowski

Deacons
Fr. John Melnyk
Fr. Michael Strilec
Fr. Morris Kowalchuk
Fr. Nicholas Kohuch
Fr. Victor Humniski
Fr. Myroslaw Tracz
Fr. Patrick Firman

List of Pastors, Assistant Pastors & Deacons – Source About | Holy Eucharist Parish





Holy Eucharist Church – Source Eric de Schepper 2026

Source: Holy Eucharist Ukrainian Catholic Church
Source: Canadian Ukrainian Centennial 1891 -1991 by Paul Maluga, C.Ss.R.