

Modern Ukrainian Church Designs in Manitoba

The trend away from traditional church designs such as those created by Ruh – which depended upon an architectural vocabulary of domes, banyas, towers and traditional floor plans – began in the late 1950s and early 1960s with the rise of university-trained architects grounded in the Modern Movement in architecture.

The break with the past which pervaded most schools of architecture following World War II had its effect on the majority of subsequent buildings. Although this transition was felt in Ukrainian church design, architects on the whole found an anchor in tradition, searching for new ways in which to interpret traditional elements. New floor plans and building shapes emerged as the result of the efforts of men such as Victor Deneka, who designed the Ukrainian Catholic Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Winnipeg (Figures 60 and 61) and Holy Ghost Ukrainian Catholic Church, Beausejour (Figure 62); with Radislaw Zuk in his designs for St. Michael's Ukrainian Catholic Church, Tyndall and Holy Family Ukrainian Catholic Church, Winnipeg (Figures 63 and 64); and with Alex Nitchuk of Green, Blankstein, Russell Associates, Architects and Engineers, for the Ukrainian Catholic Church of St. Nicholas, Winnipeg (Figure 65). These Ukrainian Canadian architects combined the form and functionality of modern design with details that recalled the earliest examples of Ukrainian church architecture. In most the result has been new churches that are innovatively conceived, modernly convenient and traditionally appointed.



Top left: Figure 60.

Blessed Virgin Mary Church. The cruciform plan is evident here and the dome is an important element of the design. The chancel is integrated into the main body of the building. Although the elements are reinterpreted, the large massing characteristic of Ruh's churches is present in Victor Deneka's design.



Left: Figure 61.

Blessed Virgin Mary Church. Rectilinear forms have here replaced the arched elements common in the interiors of earlier Ukrainian.

Above: Figure 62.

Holy Ghost Ukrainian Catholic Church, Beausejour. Deneka again casts the familiar forms of Ukrainian churches – the dome, the round arches and the dramatic bulk – into striking modern idioms.

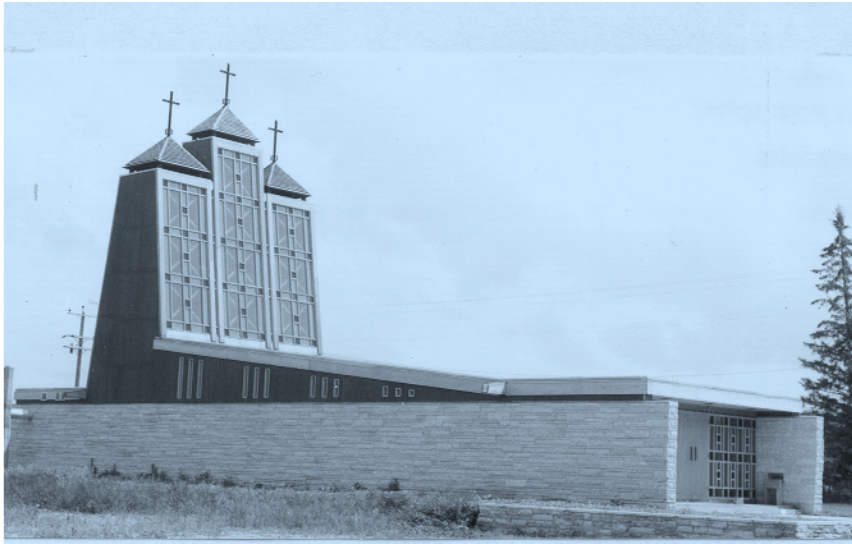


Figure 63.

St. Michael's Ukrainian Catholic Church, Tyndall. The low slung modernism apparent in this church is strongly contrasted with the vertical elements that recall the traditional dome-banya combinations of earlier Ukrainian churches.



Figure 64.

Holy Family Ukrainian Catholic Church, Winnipeg. Zuk reiterates the dynamism of horizontally and verticality in this design, crowning the towers with graceful arches.



Figure 65.

Ukrainian Catholic Church of St. Nicholas, Winnipeg. The ubiquitous dome of Byzantine churches becomes the dominant form in this design. Indeed, the building quite clearly resembles, in conception, the Church of the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople.