

Heritage Citation

St Andrew's Lutheran Church

Key details

Addresses	At 25 Wickham Terrace, Spring Hill, Queensland 4000
Type of place	Church
Period	Late 20th Century 1960-1999
Style	Brisbane Regional
Lot plan	L2_RP118622; L1_RP152576
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 December 2017 Date of Citation — May 2014
Construction	Walls: Face brick
Criterion for listing	(E) Aesthetic; (F) Technical; (G) Social

St Andrew's Lutheran Church was completed in 1976. It was the last church to be built in the inner-city area, and it is designed in the Late Twentieth Century Ecclesiastical style. This modern design fitted the its small location, for, in 1969, the Lutheran Church had lost two-thirds of the original land grant from Queen Victoria to make way for the extension of Turbot Street. The resumption of the church land was part of the Riverside Expressway Project that radically altered the road system in Brisbane.

History (previous revision)

The site of this church was part of a larger block of Brisbane land that was granted by Queen Victoria in 1858, to the Lutheran denomination, prior to Queensland's separation from the colony of New South Wales in 1859. This grant specified that Lot 155, a total of 1 acre, 2 roods and 17 perches of land, was allotted to the Lutherans for the purpose of erecting a church building, a school and an adjacent church minister's residence. Title was granted to trustees Charles F.A.F. Schirmeister, Ivan F. De Caesaroweiz, Edward Augustein, Charles Frederick Weller and Sebastian Heussner. Pastor Schirmeister (1814-87) had come to Brisbane from the Gossner Mission at the Chatham Islands in New Zealand.

The first building, named St. Andreas Lutheran Church, was constructed on the land grant in 1861. In 1882, a masonry church with adjacent pastor's residence was built to replace the small, timber 1861 building. In 1885, the first convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Queensland (ELSQ) was held at the church, with Schirmeister elected as foundation president. By 1904, the second St Andreas Church as the leading Lutheran church in Brisbane had five trustees in Jacob G. Gross, Carl L. Rudolf plus Fabian and Fritz Lemke, who represented some of the prominent families in the local German community.

By 1923, St. Andreas Church occupied a prominent City location, bounded by Wickham Terrace, Wharf Street and Astor Terrace, with rear access to the church land available through Cousins Lane. In 1928, a dispute over property divided the St Andreas congregation. The resulting eviction and court action split the congregation, with one group leaving St Andreas to form a new congregation, based in Fortitude Valley. They built the Bethlehem Church in Warren Street, Fortitude Valley. It was dedicated on 1 December 1929. The Spring Hill and Fortitude Valley church congregations became rivals, with the Bethlehem Church attracting US servicemen during World War II and specialising in German-language services for post-war migrants. St. Andreas Lutheran Church changed its name to St. Andrew's Church on 1 January 1956. Due to its central, inner-city location, the church land was gradually eroded in size as the surrounding roads were widened to handle Brisbane's increasing traffic. The Brisbane City Council resumed land for an easement on 3 October 1962 and for the realignment of the corner of Wharf Street and Astor Terrace on 16 April 1963.

The Spring Hill site was affected by the building of Brisbane's first US-style expressway – the Riverside Expressway (later renamed the South East Freeway). Turbot Street was proposed as one of the northern exits of the new freeway, with an off-ramp to be constructed linking the Riverside Expressway with Turbot Street. With Turbot Street about to become a major arterial road, it had to be widened to handle the heavy volume of traffic. As a result, the Queensland Government used the *Acquisition of Land Act of 1967* to resume nearly two-thirds of the St Andrews property. The state government undertook the resumption on behalf of the Brisbane City Council, which then paid the Lutheran Church \$250,000 in compensation on 22 August 1969.

The resultant roadworks, over the next few years and commencing in 1969, were noisy and disruptive. Turbot Street was extended through the Central Station site so that it joined and replaced Wickham Terrace at the Creek Street intersection. Beyond this new, wider Turbot Street, a disjointed section of the original Wickham Terrace remained where it still connected to Ann Street. The church site lost its Wharf Street and Astor Terrace corner, as well the land accessed via Cousins Lane. The disruption ceased with the completion and opening of the Riverside Expressway by the Queensland Governor Air Marshal Sir Colin Hannah on 26 July 1976.

The resumption of the church land prompted a review of the remaining site. Only 2 roods and 4.7 perches remained. It had become a small triangular block of land that was bounded by the Wickham Terrace remnant and Wharf Street plus the new extension of Turbot Street. The rift between the St Andrews and the Bethlehem congregations was healed and they agreed to combine into a single parish. This led the Lutheran Synod to decide, on 24 November 1974, to build a new church on the smaller grounds to replace the 1882 church. The tender for the design of the new church was awarded to Barry John Walduck and John Uscinski of the architectural firm of Walduck & Uscinski. Barry Walduck had become one of the five trustees of St. Andrews Church in 1961.

The Walduck & Uscinski design followed the Late Twentieth-Century Ecclesiastical style of church construction practiced in Australia. The building made exploitative use of modern brick and concrete materials. The traditional church vertical motif that represented a finger pointing towards God and Heaven was reproduced in a curved, brick steeple topped with a cross. Due to shrinking congregations and tight budgets, the Late Twentieth-Century Ecclesiastical style featured:

“ a general tendency to make the nave broader and shorter, sometimes using a 'wrap-around' plan-shape similar to that of a Greek theatre....A natural desire was evident to ensure that a church was both 'distinctive' and an integral part of the community it served. 'Distinctiveness' came from what were sometimes rather contorted manipulations of shape and space to create drama...”¹

The new St. Andrews Church appears consistent with these criteria.

The nineteenth century St. Andrews Church was demolished to make way for a modern twentieth century building, while the Bethlehem Church was put on the market for leasing. The foundation stone for the new church was laid by Lutheran District President Pastor F.H. Schmidt on 7 September 1975. The cost of the new building was \$275,000. The dedication ceremony was held on Palm Sunday on 11 April 1976 by Pastor N.C. Shultz.

The church interior featured a Wall Hanging that depicted the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. It was hung behind the modern altar. A modern pulpit and Baptismal dish were included in the construction. Prior to Easter services in 1978, a memorial sculpture that depicted the Descent of the Holy Spirit was placed on the right chancel wall. A Baptismal candle holder placed near the Baptismal dish was also added. A new pipe organ was added and it was dedicated on 19 August 1990. The organ was given the title 'Bethlehem' in honour of the former Bethlehem congregation.

This building is located very near to the boundary of Spring Hill and Brisbane City. Its close proximity to Cathedral Square and the St. John's Anglican Church precinct means that it is viewed by the public as a C.B.D. church. St. Andrews Lutheran Church has a modern, brick design that reflects its status as the most recent place of worship to be constructed in the inner-city. There is a nearly twenty year gap between the completion of St. Andrews Church in 1976 and the construction of the Christadelphian Church at 134 Petrie Terrace in 1957 and a further thirty-six year gap between St Andrews and the 1940 building of the First Church of Christ Scientist in the City.

Description (previous revision)

The vestibule entrance to the church is located off Wickham Terrace. Beside this entrance is the Foundation Stone that carries this inscription:

This stone was laid on 7.9.1975

Previous churches were built on this site in 1861 and 1882.

TO GOD ALONE ALL GLORY

Statement of significance

Relevant assessment criteria

This is a place of local heritage significance and meets one or more of the local heritage criteria under the Heritage planning scheme policy of the *Brisbane City Plan 2014*. It is significant because:

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

for its pleasing organic sculptural form that demonstrates a modernist interpretation of a traditional Christian architectural form, and for its status as a highly-attractive local landmark.

Technical

CRITERION F

The place is important in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technological achievement at a particular period

as a modern church designed by Barry Walduck and John Uscinski and constructed with curved, core-filled brick walls.

Social

CRITERION G

The place has a strong or special association with the life or work of a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons

Located on a site granted to the Lutheran Church in 1858, this church was built at the time of the reunification of the two inner-city Lutheran congregations; and was constructed as the principal Lutheran church building in Brisbane, and has remained in continuous use for that purpose to the present day.

References

1. Apperly, Richard & Irving, Robert & Reynolds, Peter, *A Pictorial Guide To Identifying Australian Architecture – Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, (North Ryde: Angus & Robertson, 1989), p.230
2. Apperly, Richard, Robert Irving and Peter Reynolds. *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*. North Ryde: Angus & Robertson, 1989
3. Brisbane City Council, aerial photographs 2001 & 2009
4. Brisbane City Council, post-1946 Building Cards
5. De Gruchy, Graham. *Architecture in Brisbane*. Brisbane: Boolarong, 1988
6. Department of Natural Resources, Queensland. Certificates of Title and other records
7. Ford, Dr. Jonathan, site visit notes, 3 November 2003
8. Kraatz, Eric, *A Brief History of Bethlehem Lutheran Church*, Brisbane 1925-1976

9. *Queensland Post Office Directories, 1868-1949*
 10. Schubert, Helen, *Pictorial History – Lutheran Church in Australia*
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Note: This citation has been prepared on the basis of evidence available at the time including an external examination of the building. The statement of significance is a summary of the most culturally important aspects of the property based on the available evidence, and may be re-assessed if further information becomes available. The purpose of this citation is to provide an informed evaluation for heritage registration and information. This does not negate the necessity for a thorough conservation study by a qualified practitioner, before any action is taken which may affect its heritage significance.

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