

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

### WESTWOOD EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH AND PARSONAGE

HABS IL-1268

Location: The Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage is located at 7810 Elmgrove Drive in Elmwood Park, Illinois. The building is situated on Lots 13, 14, and 15 in Block 21 in Westwood, being Mills & Sons' subdivision within the West Half of Section 25, Township 40 North, Range 12, East of the Third Principal Meridian in Cook County, Illinois.

USGS Quadrangle: Cook

Present Owner: Village of Elmwood Park

Present Use: Vacant

Significance: The Westwood Evangelical Church and Parsonage in Elmwood Park, Illinois, was built in 1929 and designed by Axel V. Teisen, a Danish-born architect whose Chicago practice focused on residential architecture, especially apartment buildings and brick bungalows. Reverend Frederick L. Schreckenbergs was the first Pastor of the young congregation, the growth of which spurred the extension of the nave and construction of a third wing for recreation/education purposes in 1954-56, a project designed by Michaelsen, Rabig, Ramp Architects, a Chicago-based firm. This building is situated in Westwood, a 243-acre subdivision developed by Mills and Sons in the late 1920s with about 1,600 brick bungalows, built at a rate of six per day, using economies of scale.

#### PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

##### A. Physical History

1. Dates of construction  
1929 (church and parsonage)  
1954-56 (extension of church and addition)
2. Architect  
Axel V. Teisen (1929 church and parsonage)  
Michaelsen, Rabig, Ramp (1954-56 extension of church and addition)

3. Contractor/Builders

Contractors hired to undertake the 1929 construction of the original church and parsonage are unknown. The following contractors were involved in the 1954-56 extension of the church and construction of the addition that housed education/recreation uses:<sup>1</sup>

Michaelsen, Rabig, Ramp (general contractor)  
H. Borre and Son (excavation and concrete work)  
H.V. McKirnan (heating)  
Ludwig H. Koepke (plumbing)  
Dahl-Olson, Inc. (steel structure)  
Arthur E.J. Ryberg (masonry and carpentry)  
Federal Windows, Inc. (steel sash)  
Timber Structures, Inc. (beams and purlins)  
Mortenson Roofing Co. (slate roofing)  
Allendorfer Roofing Co. (composition roofing)  
Parnell Iron Works, Inc. (steel stairs)  
American Glass Company, Inc. (glass and glazing)  
Austin Sheet Metal Works (sheet metal work)  
Wickum Electric Co. (electrical work)  
Herron plastering Co. (plastering)  
C.E. Korsgard Co. (tile flooring)  
Anning-Johnson Co. (acoustical work)  
Sunde Tiling Co. (hearth tiling)

4. Original and subsequent owners

The parcel upon which the Westwood Evangelical Church and Parsonage is situated was originally part of the non-sectarian Elmwood Cemetery, which was established in the 1890s. In May 1926, Mills & Sons purchased the eastern half of this cemetery for development of the “Westwood Subdivision.”<sup>2</sup> The Illinois Synod of the United Lutheran Church in America purchased Lots 13, 14, and 15 in Block 21 in the Westwood Subdivision from Mills & Sons in 1928 for construction of the Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church.<sup>3</sup> The property was purchased by New Horizon Temple of Chicago on August 10, 2001.<sup>4</sup> The Village of Elmwood Park purchased the property from New Horizon Temple on October 23, 2020.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church, “Dedication April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 6<sup>th</sup>, 1956,” unpublished booklet, 1956.

<sup>2</sup> Al Chase, “Part of Elmwood Cemetery Sold for Subdivision,” *Chicago Tribune* (May 27, 1926).

<sup>3</sup> Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church, “Dedication April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 6<sup>th</sup>, 1956,” unpublished booklet, 1956.

<sup>4</sup> Grimes Real Estate Services, “An Appraisal Report of a Church and Parsonage located at 7810 Elmgrove Drive, Elmwood Park, Illinois,” May 6, 2020.

<sup>5</sup> Email to author from Kim Parrilli, Assistant Village Manager, Village of Elmwood Park, dated January 28, 2021.

5. Original plans and construction

The Gothic Revival style building originally had an L-shaped footprint that included a church and attached two-story parsonage over a finished, raised basement featuring a large auditorium with stage. It was primarily sheathed with face brick and the church had decorative brick buttresses. The ends of the building's slate-covered gable-roofs were sheathed with stucco and wood half-timbering. A gable-roof vestibule at the south end of the church served as its main entrance. The parsonage had a separate exterior entrance on its south elevation. Fenestration was comprised of steel casement windows and wood-sash windows. The alley elevation had a service entrance to the parsonage and an attached one-car garage with brick walls. The 320-seat church sanctuary featured a pitched wood-truss ceiling.

6. Alterations and additions

The L-shaped 1929 building was enlarged in 1954-56 through the construction of a one-story-with-basement wing, which transformed its footprint to a "U" shape. The church's original entrance vestibule was razed, and the new addition was constructed at the south end of the church. The new wing was sympathetic to the original building in terms of its exterior facing materials and design, although it featured concrete block construction. It allowed for the extension of the nave southward to accommodate additional seating, a choir loft, and a narthex, and included double-loaded corridors on both levels for classrooms, offices, a recreation room, nursery, and public washrooms. Steel casement windows in the church sanctuary were replaced by the present stained glass windows in the 1940s and 1950s.

B. Historical Context

1. Early History of Elmwood Park and its Westwood Subdivision

Elmwood Park is a primarily residential community located about eleven miles northwest of Chicago's central business district known as the Loop. The approximately two square mile village is situated in the southeastern corner of Leyden Township, between Chicago and the Des Plaines River. The village is located entirely within Cook County and bounded by Harlem Avenue on the east; Belmont and Wellington avenues on the north; Thatcher and 80<sup>th</sup> avenues on the west; and North Avenue on the south.

The future village was comprised of prairie and several large farms throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, when it was locally known as Orison. In 1870, the Chicago & Pacific Railroad laid tracks in Leyden Township in a diagonal direction, parallel to Old Army Trail Road (later Grand Avenue). An informal passenger station went up around 1890 near 75<sup>th</sup> avenue, although

trains stopped only upon signal from passengers. Subdivision activity began in the early 1890s, spearheaded by two cousins—John and Henry Gnaedinger—and John Schumacher, all of whom built impressive Queen Anne style houses in the area during this decade.<sup>6</sup> The men established a real estate business under the name Schumacher & Gnaedinger, with an office at 163 Randolph Street in Chicago. In 1891, the firm advertised the sale of one-acre parcels at \$1,250 apiece in their subdivision near the corner of Grand and Riverside avenues, each of which was staked into ten lots.<sup>7</sup> Other real estate men followed over the ensuing decade.

The area's most important attraction in those early days was the non-sectarian Elmwood Cemetery, established in the late 1890s on 420-acre tract between Grand and Belmont avenues, east of the Des Plaines River. Groups traveled from the city on funeral trains, and after 1910, on the Grand Avenue streetcar, to ceremonies on the property, which was improved with macadamized drives and beautifully landscaped grounds, thanks to extensive on-site nurseries that produced thousands of trees, shrubs, and flowers.<sup>8</sup>

Elmwood Park was officially incorporated as a Village on April 8, 1914, with eighty-eight residents voting in favor, and sixty-four against.<sup>9</sup> A Village Hall, municipal jail, and the first public school were built that year. The main streets in the village were surfaced with crushed rock and sidewalks were installed along Grand Avenue, where a fledgling commercial district was clustered. The year 1914 also saw the establishment of the 190-acre Oak Park Country Club, the eastern half of which was situated within the boundaries of the newly established village.<sup>10</sup> Streets and houses in the village were wired for electricity in 1915. Elmwood Park became part of the Chicago Metropolitan Sanitary District in 1922, after which time a system of water mains and sewers were established. An official passenger station was established at 75<sup>th</sup> avenue in the mid-1920s, after which time trains were finally required to stop in the village.<sup>11</sup>

In May 1926, the *Chicago Tribune* reported that the undeveloped eastern half of Elmwood Cemetery was purchased by Mills & Sons, one of the Chicago area's largest residential builders, at a cost of \$607,000, and was slated for

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<sup>6</sup> Russell Parker, *A History of Elmwood Park: 100 Years of Community Life, 1914-2014* (Self-Published, 2016) no page numbers.

<sup>7</sup> Chicago Tribune display advertisement (February 22, 1891).

<sup>8</sup> "Elmwood Cemetery," *Chicago Tribune* (February 7, 1909).

<sup>9</sup> Parker.

<sup>10</sup> The west half of the cemetery was situated within the suburb of River Grove.

<sup>11</sup> Parker.

WESTWOOD EVANGELICAL CHURCH AND PARSONAGE  
HABS IL-1268  
(Page 5)

development of the “Westwood Subdivision.”<sup>12</sup> The 243-acre tract was situated in the northwest section of the village and bounded by 76<sup>th</sup> and 80<sup>th</sup> avenues from east to west, and from Belmont to Grand avenues from north to south. Mills & Sons had previously created Elmwood Park’s Green Fields Subdivision in 1915, selling 280 half-acre parcels in the vicinity of Harlem and Armitage avenues.<sup>13</sup> The company was established in 1887 as a small construction business by Canadian-born John Mills (1854-1941).<sup>14</sup> His sons, Laurance and Jack, later became partners in the firm, which by the 1920s had a main office at 5556 W. North Avenue in the city.

Westwood was conceived as a planned subdivision of 1,689 residential lots, each measuring 30’-0” x 125’-0”, with an additional 146 business lots arranged around a landscaped circular park, intended to entice sales, which Mills & Sons donated to the Village. The ambitious, \$25 million project was officially underway in February 1927, when ground was broken for the initial group of single-family houses, all of which were to be brick bungalows. However, one contemporary writer noted that, “Mills & Sons will use several different designs, so that there’ll be no two bungalows of the same exterior side by side.”<sup>15</sup>

Mills & Sons opened a sales office at 7603 W. Grand Avenue in Elmwood Park and advertised widely for their new Westwood subdivision, publishing full-page advertisements in the popular press from 1927 until 1931. Five-room bungalows were sold at a cost of \$8,750 with larger models at higher prices. Prospective buyers could choose from several designs, all featuring face brick detailed with terra cotta ornament manufactured by Midland Terra Cotta Company. The company took care of all infrastructure improvements, including the installation of streets, sidewalks, water mains, sewers, and ornamental street lighting. Each residential parcel included a one-car garage and landscaped back yard.<sup>16</sup>

Land was also set aside in Westwood for religious and public use. Curvilinear streets led to a five-acre community park, which John Mills donated to the Village. The circular Westwood Park featured an elaborate, French-inspired fountain in its center. Mills & Sons noted that the circular, landscaped park “adds beauty and value to every “Westwood” home.” The company also sold three lots near the subdivision’s north periphery to the Illinois synod of the

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<sup>12</sup> Al Chase, “Part of Elmwood Cemetery Sold for Subdivision,” *Chicago Tribune* (May 27, 1926).

<sup>13</sup> “Subdivisions Sales Reported Keeping Up,” *Chicago Tribune* (June 13, 1915).

<sup>14</sup> “John Mills,” *Chicago Tribune* (December 9, 1941).

<sup>15</sup> Al Chase, “Mills & Sons to Build 600 Bungalows,” *Chicago Tribune* (February 13, 1927).

<sup>16</sup> Chicago Tribune full-page display advertisements for the Westwood Subdivision, dated August 14, 1927; March 11 1928.

WESTWOOD EVANGELICAL CHURCH AND PARSONAGE  
HABS IL-1268  
(Page 6)

Lutheran Church in 1928; the Westwood Evangelical Church and Parsonage at 7810 Elmgrove Drive was erected the following year.<sup>17</sup>

Progress on the Westwood Subdivision was remarkable, with homes built at a rate of six a day, using economies of scale. By April 1928, 612 homes had been completed and 443 additional homes were underway, as reported by the *Chicago Tribune*, which also noted: “The magnitude of this project may be realized by the fact that 1,000 workmen, including artisans in every branch of the building trades, laborers, engineers, etc. are engaged in the task of putting up these homes. And this number does not include the workers in factories and plants who are turning out the materials going into the residences.”<sup>18</sup>

Thanks to Westwood, Elmwood Park was the fastest growing community in the State of Illinois in 1928. The village had a building permit volume of \$3,289,940 in March of that year, when it landed in seventeenth place among the twenty-five leading building centers in the nation. Its building permit volume of \$1,472,940 in July 1928 was a gain of 1,339 percent over its volume of \$102,305 in July 1927.<sup>19</sup> Elmwood Park experienced its greatest boom in population between 1920 to 1930, rising from 1,380 to 11,270 residents, nearly half of whom lived in the Westwood Subdivision.<sup>20</sup> Additional churches, a new Village Hall, and a public school were built in the 1920s to serving the expanding population.

Mills & Sons’ building program at Westwood—which comprised about 1,600 brick bungalows—was largely completed by 1932, the year that the company was placed in receivership due to lagging sales at the start of the Great Depression.<sup>21</sup> Laurence and Jack Alan Mills reorganized Mills & Sons following bankruptcy and the firm continued to sell homes at Westwood until at least 1962, as demonstrated by advertisements placed in the *Chicago Tribune*.

Elmwood Park experienced a population gain of nearly sixty percent between 1930 and 1950, rising to 18,801 residents.<sup>22</sup> This was due in part to the establishment of two new subdivisions south of Grand Avenue prior to World

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<sup>17</sup> “443 Homes Are Being Erected in Westwood: Entire Development Will Cost \$25,000,000,” *Chicago Tribune* (April 8, 1928); “Elmwood Park Church to Hail 25<sup>th</sup> Birthday,” *Chicago Tribune* (October 11, 1953).

<sup>18</sup> “443 Homes Are Being Erected in Westwood: Entire Development Will Cost \$25,000,000,” *Chicago Tribune* (April 8, 1928).

<sup>19</sup> “Elmwood Park Lines Up with Nation’s Biggest in Building,” *Chicago Tribune* (April 15, 1928); “Suburbs Report July Building Permit Advance,” *Chicago Tribune* (August 12, 1928).

<sup>20</sup> U.S. Census of Housing and Population, 1920 and 1930.

<sup>21</sup> Al Chase, “Mills & Sons are Placed in Receivership,” *Chicago Tribune* (February 9, 1932).

<sup>22</sup> U.S. Census of Housing and Population, 1930 and 1950.

War II. “River Forest Manor” was a 200-home development bounded by Dickens, 78<sup>th</sup>, Harlem and North avenues, with five- to seven-room homes priced from \$8,000 to \$12,000. The Green Oaks Forest development was situated on the east side of the Oak Park Country Club. Forty modest brick houses in the price range of \$7,500 were constructed near Palmer Street and 77<sup>th</sup> Court.<sup>23</sup>

Elmwood Park’s population increased by about twenty-seven percent between 1950 and 1960, rising to 23,866 residents who lived in single-family houses erected during its post-war building boom.<sup>24</sup> The Village reached its peak population of 26,160 in 1970, as new residents found industrial employment in the nearby suburbs of Melrose Park, Franklin Park, and in Chicago’s Galewood community, which had a sprawling Zenith plant. Retail businesses and restaurants were strung out along the commercial thoroughfares of North, Harlem, and Grand avenues. A new civic center and a library were built in 1974-75 on the Village Circle (Westwood Park), which was later renamed Conti Circle in honor of longtime Village President Elmer Conti.<sup>25</sup> The 1975 library eventually became the Early Childhood Center after the current library was completed across from Conti Circle in 2002.

Today, Elmwood Park’s population stands at about 24,000.<sup>26</sup> This primarily bedroom community includes an abundance of 1920s brick bungalows in the Westwood Subdivision, as well as a variety of modest brick houses from the late 1930s/early 1940s and post-World War II gable-front cottages, ranch houses, split-level houses, two- and three flats, and low-rise apartment buildings.

2. History of the Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage  
The origins of Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church date to 1927, when representatives of the United Lutheran Church in America made an initial, door-to-door canvas of the new and rapidly developing Westwood Subdivision in the northwest section of Elmwood Park regarding interest in a new church. The results of this canvas proved so promising that the Illinois Synod of the United Lutheran Church in America secured an option on three lots at the corner of Elm Grove Drive and 78<sup>th</sup> Ave. A contract was entered into with Mills and Sons in 1928 for the purchase of these lots at a cost of \$14,200.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Parker.

<sup>24</sup> U.S. Census of Housing and Population, 1950 and 1960.

<sup>25</sup> “Civic center opens to public,” *News Journal* (Chicago) (December 15, 1974).

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/elmwoodparkvillageillinois> (Accessed January 30, 2021).

<sup>27</sup> Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church, “Dedication April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 6<sup>th</sup>, 1956,” unpublished booklet, 1956.

WESTWOOD EVANGELICAL CHURCH AND PARSONAGE  
HABS IL-1268  
(Page 8)

The Reverend Paul Gerberding, field missionary for the Illinois Synod, began the work of gathering prospective members for the new congregation on March 12, 1928. The first worship service was held on the following Sunday, March 18, in the basement of a bungalow at 7729 Westwood Drive with fifty-five individuals present.<sup>28</sup> Rev. Gerberding was appointed Acting Pastor on April 15, 1928. The formal organization of Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church took place on October 12, 1928 with seventy-two charter members.<sup>29</sup>

Chicago architect Axel V. Teisen was hired to design an interconnected church and parsonage for the new congregation, the plans of which were approved on December 4, 1928. Ground was broken on March 24, 1929 and the cornerstone was laid on April 28 of that year. The building was constructed at a cost of \$40,931 (including furnishings) and dedicated on September 22, 1929.<sup>30</sup>

The Westwood Evangelical Church and Parsonage had an L-shaped footprint and featured brick walls with Gothic buttresses, stone detailing, and steeply-pitched roofs with stucco and wood half-timbering in the gable ends. The church wing included a vestibule, nave, and a chancel, which provided access to the parsonage, featuring a kitchen, living and dining rooms, and a study on the first floor, as well as three bedrooms and a full bathroom on the second floor. The basement of the building included a large auditorium with stage directly below the church wing, which connected to the kitchen, boiler room, and laundry beneath the parsonage.

The congregation raised \$15,000 in cash contributions for land acquisition and construction; the remaining costs were financed through loans received from the following organizations/companies: Westwood State Bank (\$2,000; paid 1930); Women's Missionary Society-Illinois Synod (\$1,000; paid 1947); Illinois Synod (\$5,000; paid 1950); Board of American Missions (\$10,000; paid 1950); and William C. Heinemann and Company (Bond Issue of \$30,000; paid 1948).<sup>31</sup>

Reverend Frederick L. Schreckenber was appointed the first regular Pastor of the young congregation in late October 1929 and remained during the difficult early years of the Great Depression. He left in the Fall of 1934 to serve other parishes in the United Lutheran Church in America. Reverend Theodore

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<sup>28</sup> Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church, "The Fifteenth Anniversary Directory and Telephone Register," 1944.

<sup>29</sup> Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church, "50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary: Westwood Lutheran Church, 1928," unpublished booklet, 1978.

<sup>30</sup> Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church, "The Fifteenth Anniversary Directory and Telephone Register," 1944.

<sup>31</sup> Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church, "Dedication April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 6<sup>th</sup>, 1956," unpublished booklet, 1956.

Brosche began his thirty-year stint as Westwood's second pastor on January 1, 1935.<sup>32</sup>

Growth in church membership necessitated plans in 1953 to enlarge the building by expanding the nave to accommodate additional seating, and constructing a third wing to accommodate educational/recreational uses. On September 27, 1953, the decision was made to accept the preliminary plans of Michaelsen, Rabig, and Ramp, architects, for this project, and to engage the firm as the general contractor, in charge of supervising the work of the sub-contractors.<sup>33</sup>

Construction began in August of 1954 and the enlarged building—now with a U-shaped footprint—was dedicated on April 15, 1956. Extension of the nave allowed for the installation of seven additional rows of pews on both sides of the aisle, thereby expanding seating capacity to 320 people.<sup>34</sup> Another five pews were installed in the newly created choir loft. The nave opened onto a spacious narthex that enabled members to greet one another before and after services. The narthex also provided internal access to the new wing of the building, which included the church office, pastor's study, parlor, and recreation room on the first floor, as well as public bathrooms, two classrooms, and a nursery in the basement. The church was also graced with new stained-glass windows, which replaced the original steel-casement windows.

The new parlor was used for small group meetings, while the recreation room was a venue for choir practice and activities for the youth of the parish, including basketball, after a hoop was installed. The basement auditorium was used for larger functions, including those that involved dining, as it was adjacent to a well-equipped kitchen. Children of the parish met each Sunday in the basement classrooms and nursery for religious instruction.

The total cost of the building program was \$100,185, which included furnishings and the architect's fee of \$5,083. A three-year fundraising campaign that began in December 1953 secured cash contributions and a loan of \$50,000 from the First National Bank of Skokie.<sup>35</sup>

Pastor Brosche retired from the ministry on April 30, 1965, and Reverend David Roth began his ministry at the church on December 1 of that year. By

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<sup>32</sup> Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church, "50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary: Westwood Lutheran Church, 1928," unpublished booklet, 1978.

<sup>33</sup> Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church, "Dedication April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 6<sup>th</sup>, 1956," unpublished booklet, 1956.

<sup>34</sup> Pews were provided by the Ossit Church Furniture Company. Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church, "Dedication April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 6<sup>th</sup>, 1956," unpublished booklet, 1956.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

1978—a year that marked its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary—Westwood had registered 1,614 Baptisms, 1,130 Confirmations, 764 Marriages, and 1,228 Funerals. Many seminarians served Westwood over the years as interns and student assistants.<sup>36</sup>

Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church was absorbed by Grace Lutheran Church, located at 2700 N. Harlem Ave., Elmwood Park, in 2001. Its property at 7810 Elm Grove Drive was sold in that year to New Horizon Temple of Chicago, a congregation founded in 1982 by Pastor David J. Sagil. The Village of Elmwood Park purchased the church property from New Horizon on October 23, 2020 with the intention of replacing the then-vacant church and parsonage with a public park.

3. Architect Axel V. Teisen

Westwood Evangelical Church and Parsonage was designed by Axel Valdemar Teisen (1886-1961), a Chicago-based architect whose practice focused on residential architecture. He was born on July 6, 1886 in Denmark and immigrated to the U.S. in 1910, as did his future wife, Danish-born Ingefred Peterson, who he married on June 27, 1914 in Chicago. The couple resided at 3402 Lyndale in Chicago when Teisen completed his World War I draft registration card, in which he claimed exception from the draft on grounds of “wife and child.” He identified his occupation as a self-employed architect with an office at 3325 Fullerton Ave.<sup>37</sup>

Teisen became an American citizen on June 12, 1919.<sup>38</sup> He was active in the Dania Society of Chicago during the 1920s, according to a Centennial History of this ethnic organization, which noted: “After attending evening school for several years [Teisen] became an architect in 1915 and in his later years was Assistant to Chicago’s school architect, John C. Christensen. Christensen, who was Dania’s president in 1916-18, and Teisen were not only associated professionally but were card-cronies, and both spent many evenings around Dania’s card tables.”<sup>39</sup> It is likely that Teisen’s connections in Chicago’s Swedish and Danish communities, and especially his friendship with

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<sup>36</sup> Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church, “50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary: Westwood Lutheran Church, 1928,” unpublished booklet, 1978.

<sup>37</sup> Ancestry.com, *Cook County, Illinois, U.S., Marriages Index, 1871-1920* [database on-line]. Ancestry.com, *U.S., World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918*. Axel and Ingefred Teisen eventually had four daughters: Laura (b. 1916); Jeanette (b. 1918); Eleanore (b. 1920); and Myrtle (b. 1929). They lived at 3400 W. Fullerton in the 1920s, moving to a brick bungalow at 5332 N. Spaulding by 1930, where they resided for at least 30 years. U.S. Census for Housing and Population, 1930 and 1940.

<sup>38</sup> Ancestry.com, *U.S., Naturalization Record Indexes, 1791-1992 (Indexed in World Archives Project)*.

<sup>39</sup> Hans Einar Mose, *Dania Society of Chicago: The Centennial History, 1862-1962* (privately printed, 1962) 22.

Christensen, helped the young architect obtain commissions, as many of his clients had Scandinavian last names.

The earliest project by Teisen identified for this report was for a “one-story paint shop for auto trucks at 905 W. North Ave.,” in 1918.<sup>40</sup> Two years later, he was designing large apartment buildings, as attested by a building permit for a sixty-unit building at Clark and Diversey.<sup>41</sup> Teisen received numerous commissions for apartment projects during the ensuing decade. In 1921, he was the designer of “one of Chicago’s largest flat projects,” which involved twelve buildings with a total of 276 apartments, facing Pine Grove Ave., between Addison and Cornelia. The \$1.5 million project included four corner apartment buildings of fifteen flats each as well as eight large courtyard buildings, with twenty-seven apartments each, on the inside lots.<sup>42</sup>

Teisen’s 1922 design for a \$900,000 apartment-hotel in Chicago’s fast-growing Albany Park neighborhood was claimed to shatter records for length. The three-story building was on the south side of Foster Ave., fronting 266 feet between St. Louis and Drake avenues, with a 125-foot frontage on each of those thoroughfares. It contained 100 apartments, seventy of which were one-room kitchenettes and the rest two and three rooms. The building included “a large lobby, dining room, smoking room, library, and shops along the Foster Ave. frontage.”<sup>43</sup>

In 1924, Teisen was hired by Carl Thorgersen and Hans C. Ericksen to draw plans for a \$400,000 apartment building with 80 units at the southeast corner of Kedzie and Ainslie.<sup>44</sup> Two years later, he designed a three-story apartment building with sixty-five units ranging from two to five rooms at the northwest corner of Linder and Lawrence avenues, to be built at a cost of \$300,000. It was intended to be the largest apartment building in the Jefferson Park community.<sup>45</sup> In 1928 Teisen was hired by another Scandinavian client—Vendel E. Lindeberg—to design a courtyard apartment building with units of three and four rooms at the southeast corner of Parker and North Kostner avenues, across from Kelvyn Park.<sup>46</sup>

Teisen was also a major figure in the realm of bungalow design, having designed many residences of this type in Chicago and especially communities

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<sup>40</sup> “Building Permits,” *The Economist* (August 31, 1918) 371.

<sup>41</sup> “Building Permits,” *The American Architect* (July 7, 1920) 808.

<sup>42</sup> “Work Starts on 276 Apartment House Project,” *Chicago Tribune* (June 24, 1921).

<sup>43</sup> “Albany Park to Have \$900,000 Arcade-Hotel,” *Chicago Tribune* (April 16, 1922).

<sup>44</sup> Al Chase, “Plan \$400,000 Apartments at Kedzie-Ainslie,” *Chicago Tribune* (November 22, 1924).

<sup>45</sup> “300,000 Flats for Jefferson Park,” *Chicago Tribune* (April 6, 1926).

<sup>46</sup> “Plans 20 Flat Building,” *Chicago Tribune* (November 2, 1928).

on the Northwest Side of the city, where he lived and work. He resided for thirty years in a brick bungalow at 5332 N. Spaulding in the North Center community, which was located near his office at 4804 N. Kedzie Ave. Bungalows designed by Teisen can be found in the nearby community areas of Norwood Park (5730 N. Newcastle Ave.), Albany Park (4930 N. Bernard St.), Irving Park (3626 N. Avers St.), and Logan Square (3030 W. Palmer Blvd.).

Teisen was one of two architects hired by real estate developer Albert J. Schorsch in the 1910s to design a total of 600 brick bungalows in Chicago's Portage Park community, a development now listed on the National Register of Historic Places under the name "Schorsch Irving Park Gardens Historic District." Schorsch worked with both Teisen and architect Ernest Newton Braucher to create different bungalow designs that would give variety and rhythm to each block of his subdivision, which was developed from 1917 through the mid-1920s.<sup>47</sup>

Schorsch turned to Teisen again in 1929 to design another 600-home development, this one on an 80-acre tract in Dunning, a community just west of Portage Park. The first section of the development, consisting of twenty-five homes, rose in September 1929 on both sides of Oak Park Ave., north of Belmont. Teisen created distinctive, Tudor Revival style brick cottages featuring gable-front facades that were distinct from typical "Chicago style" bungalows of the era, which had a horizontal orientation.<sup>48</sup> One contemporary article described the appearance of the modest, Teisen-designed homes:

Take a look over one home. It is of English cottage design—as are the rest. Stucco and half-timber work lend their part in giving the English atmosphere. There is a high-pitched roof, a dormer window, chimney pots and other Old World wrinkles. The front elevations of all the houses will be finished in multi-colored face brick, with deep returns on the sides.<sup>49</sup>

Teisen's ecclesiastical work—in addition to the 1929 Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church in Elmwood Park—included the design of a Gothic Revival style church at 5009 W. Wellington Ave. in the Belmont-Cragin community for the Evangelical Baptist Church (1920s).

Commercial designs by Teisen include two stone-fronted Classical Revival banks in Chicago: the West Irving State Bank at 6001-09 W. Irving Park Road

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<sup>47</sup> "Bungalow: Chicago houses' place in history is now official," *Chicago Tribune* (April 25, 2004).

"Schorsch Irving Park Gardens," in:

<https://www.chicagobungalow.org/current-bungalow-historic-districts> (accessed January 29, 2021).

<sup>48</sup> "Section of Schorsch Company Development," *Chicago Tribune* (September 15, 1929).

<sup>49</sup> "600 Homes to Rise in West Portage Park," *Chicago Tribune* (September 15, 1929).

(1900s) and the Capital State Savings Bank at 5435 N. Clark St. (1921). The former was adjacent to the Schorsch Irving Park Gardens development.<sup>50</sup> The latter served the large Swedish population that settled around Clark St. in the Edgewater community, between Foster and Bryn Mawr avenues, which became known as Andersonville.

Teisen was hired by Christ Nielsen in 1928 to design an undertaking establishment and flat building at the southwest corner of Fullerton and Spaulding avenues. The buff brick building featured elaborate Gothic and Classical-inspired detailing in terra cotta.<sup>51</sup> Another late-1920s design was for Salem Mission Home at 2817 W. McLean Avenue, which was intended as a headquarters for the Scandinavian Alliance mission and as a temporary home for missionaries visiting this county. The Georgian Revival style brick building included offices, an assembly hall seating about 100 and nine one-room apartments.<sup>52</sup>

Although it appears that Teisen's work was predominantly in Chicago, he also had two projects in Oak Park, Illinois: a courtyard apartment building at 112-122 S. Maple St. (1920s), and a house at 719 Iowa St. (1930s), both of which were designed in the Tudor Revival style.<sup>53</sup>

One especially notable project by Teisen was the 1934 Abraham Lincoln Log Cabin, constructed in the 400-acre Rebild National Park, Denmark, entirely of material sent from the United States, for use as a museum. Many of the logs were cut by Danes living in America and shipped at their expense, in evidence of the personal sentiment that went into the project. The building was intended to symbolize the close ties between the countries. A contemporary article in the *New York Times* briefly described the edifice:

The cabin, seventy feet long by about thirty-five feet wide, was designed by the Chicago architect, Axel V. Teisen, after the manner of America's first log houses. In it will be assembled a collection of relics associated with immigrant life in this country. Forty-eight flags, the gift of Governors of the American States, will mark the path leading to the cabin.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Chicago Historic Resources Survey: <https://webapps1.chicago.gov/landmarksweb/web/historicsurvey.htm>.

<sup>51</sup> *Chicago Tribune* rendering and caption (July 15, 1928).

<sup>52</sup> "Scandinavians Plan Home for Boys and Girls," *Chicago Tribune* (November 29, 1925); "Mission Erects \$125,000 Home on McLean Ave.," *Chicago Tribune* (November 10, 1929); "Salem Mission Home," *Chicago Tribune* (November 29, 1925).

<sup>53</sup> Village of Oak Park, Illinois, architectural survey: <https://www.ruskinarc.com/oakpark/search/list>.

<sup>54</sup> "Danish Park Celebrates Our Independence Day," *New York Times* (July 1, 1934).

Axel V. Teisen worked as an assistant architect for the Chicago Board of Education from 1932 to 1958, when he retired. Services were held at the Danish Trinity Lutheran Church at 2846 Cortez St. in Chicago.<sup>55</sup>

4. Architects Michaelsen, Rabig, Ramp

The church extension and its addition, built 1954-56, was designed by Michaelsen, Rabig, Ramp, a Chicago-based architecture firm located at 3256 Franklin Blvd. Christian S. Michaelsen (1888-1960) was born in Chicago, the son of a building contractor of Norwegian descent. He attended the public schools and received his first training in the building trades working with his father. In 1905 he began training as a draftsman in the office of Arthur Huen, and then from 1910 to 1913 worked for Chicago's most prolific "society architect," Howard Van Doren Shaw. While in Shaw's employ, Michelsen's previous experience in construction led him to focus on structural engineering for the office.<sup>56</sup>

In 1920, Michaelsen formed a partnership with Sigurd Rognstad—a Chicago-born architect of Danish descent—that would last seventeen years. Michaelsen and Rognstad served as architects for Chicago's West Park Commission from 1927 to 1929. This period was an especially productive one in the history of the West Park Commission, as the agency embarked upon an ambitious building program in its parks, thanks to the passage of a \$10 million bond issue in 1927. The partners produced twelve distinctive buildings for the West Park Commission, including its Administration Building in Garfield Park in the Spanish Baroque Revival style and fieldhouses for both Humboldt and Douglas Parks, both in the Georgian Revival style.<sup>57</sup>

During the 1920s, Michaelsen and Rognstad designed the On Leong Merchants' Association Building (2216 S. Wentworth Ave.; 1928), a designated Chicago landmark. Other notable Chicago buildings by the firm include the Cabaret Metro (Northside Auditorium Building, 2730 N. Clark St.; 1928), the Austin Town Hall Park Field House (5626 W. Lake St.; 1929), and the former Midwest Athletic Club Building, located across the street from Garfield Park (3800 W. Madison St.; 1926).<sup>58</sup>

Michaelsen & Rognstad's partnership ended in 1937 following the death of Sigurd Rognstad that year at the age of forty-six. The firm continued under

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<sup>55</sup> "Axel V. Teisen," *Chicago Tribune* (July 6, 1961).

<sup>56</sup> Jean L. Guarino, "Garfield Park Fieldhouse," Final Landmark recommendation adopted by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks, September 3, 2009.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> Chicago Historic Resources Survey: <https://webapps1.chicago.gov/landmarksweb/web/historicsurvey.htm> (Accessed January 31, 2021).

Christian Michaelsen's supervision and was renamed Michaelsen, Rabig, Ramp in 1940, with the addition of Karl Rabig and Albert Ramp as partners. In that year, the firm designed a large Art Moderne style "recreation building" to be located at 3204 W. Armitage Ave.

The firm's work for Westwood Evangelical Church in Elmwood Park was in keeping with their post-World War II commissions, which mainly focused on the design of churches and associated educational buildings. In 1949, the firm designed a Georgian Revival style school for Santa Maria del Popolo, a Catholic parish in Mundelein, to adjoin its church. Other projects included a \$50,000 educational building for the Neighborhood Methodist Church at 19<sup>th</sup> Ave. and Washington Blvd. in Maywood, and a single-story addition to Community Church in LaGrange Highlands. In 1958, the firm designed a Contemporary-style church for the First Church of Christ Scientist, built at Oak Park Ave. and Riverside Drive, in Berwyn, which was sheathed in Lannon stone. The firm dissolved in 1960 following the death of Christian Michaelsen in June of that year.<sup>59</sup>

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement

The Gothic Revival style building with raised basement has a U-shaped footprint comprised of a church with a two-story parsonage and one-story education/recreation wing projecting from either end. It is primarily sheathed with face brick and has decorative brick buttresses. The ends of its slate-covered gable-roofs are sheathed with stucco and wood half-timbering. Main entrances to the church and parsonage feature oak doors with stained glass insets. Fenestration is comprised of stained-glass windows, steel casement windows, and wood-sash windows. The alley elevation has an attached one-car garage with brick walls. The 320-seat church sanctuary features a peaked wood-truss ceiling and groups of stained-glass windows.

### B. Description of Exterior

#### 1. Over-all dimensions

The building measures about 127'-0" (east-west) and 125'-0" (north-south).

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<sup>59</sup> "West Side Recreation Building," *Chicago Tribune* (July 21, 1940); "Work Started on Mundelein Parish School," *Chicago Tribune* (July 31, 1949); "Break Ground Today for New Church Building," *Chicago Tribune* (September 14, 1952); "Break Ground for W. Suburb Sunday School," *Chicago Tribune* (January 15, 1953); "New Berwyn Church," *Berwyn Life* (December 5, 1958); "Christen Michaelsen," *Chicago Tribune* (June 29, 1960).

2. Foundations

The building has a reinforced concrete foundation that is mainly at 6'-0" below grade.

3. Walls

The walls of the building are primarily sheathed with face brick laid in a running bond. The alley elevation and a portion of the lot line (west) elevation of the church are faced with common brick laid in a running bond. The gable ends of the church, the addition, and the second floor of the parsonage, are sheathed in stucco with decorative wood half-timbering. The main entrance to the church on the south elevation is surrounded by Lannon stone. Walls of the building are also ornamented with brick buttresses; concrete sills, sill courses and beltcourses; stone window hoods; jack arch lintels; brick rowlock sills; and decorative brickwork in the spandrels beneath the first-floor parsonage windows facing 78<sup>th</sup> Ave.

4. Structural system

The original building (church and parsonage) was constructed with loadbearing brick walls. The 1956 addition was constructed with concrete block walls.

5. Stairways/stoops

The main entrance to the church on the south (Elmgrove Drive) elevation is accessed via three concrete steps. A flight of eight concrete steps faced with brick is situated alongside the north elevation of the addition, which leads to the first-floor recreation room entrance.

6. Openings

a. Doorways and doors

The south (Elmgrove Drive) elevation has a pair of round-arch oak doors, each with a stained glass inset, metal strapwork hinges, and metal handles, that serve as the main entrance to the church. The west (lot line) elevation of the church and the north elevation of the addition each have a single oak door with inset of stained glass and clear glass, respectively, and metal handle. The south elevation of the parsonage has a segmental-arch oak door with stained glass inset and metal handle, which is fronted by a glass storm door with decorative metal detailing. The north (alley) elevation of the parsonage has a single metal door with glass inset. This elevation also has a 7'x7' overhead metal door on the attached one-car garage.

b. Windows

The building's fenestration is primarily comprised of multi-paned steel casement windows with steel muntins that are arranged alone, in pairs, or in groups of three. The first floor of the church has stained glass windows arranged alone, or in groups of three, in steel frames. The parsonage also has some double-hung wood-sash windows in wood frames. Window openings above the main entrance to the church on the south elevation are infilled with wood louvers.

7. Roof

a. Shape, covering

The building has steeply pitched, gable roofs covered with slate tiles, except for a portion of the 1956 addition and the attached garage, which have composition covered flat roofs.

C. Description of Interior

1. Floor plans

The U-shaped building has a finished basement with a large auditorium and stage (beneath the church); a kitchen, boiler room, and laundry (beneath the parsonage); and a double-loaded corridor with two public washrooms, a nursery and two classrooms (1956 addition). The raised first floor of the building has an entrance vestibule, narthex, and 320-seat sanctuary with choir loft in the church wing. The narthex provides access to the 1956 addition, which has a double-loaded corridor flanked by the church office, pastor's study, parlor, and recreation room. The parsonage is internally connected to the chancel of the church and features a kitchen, study, dining room, and living room on the first floor, and three bedrooms and a full bathroom on the second floor.

2. Stairways

A reverse-flight concrete staircase at the south end of the church extends from the basement to the first floor. It has metal railings and newell posts as well as vinyl-covered risers and treads. The parsonage has two reverse-flight wood staircases: one links the basement and first floor, and the other links the first and second floors of the living quarters. Both have squared wood railings and newell posts; the former has vinyl-covered treads and risers.

3. Flooring

The basement has concrete flooring that is covered with vinyl tile except in the washrooms, which are ceramic tiled. The first floor has hardwood flooring in the original church and parsonage sections, and concrete flooring in the

addition, which is primarily covered with wall-to-wall carpeting. Exceptions are the addition's recreation room and the parsonage kitchen (vinyl tile flooring) and the first and second floor washrooms (ceramic tile flooring).

4. Wall and ceiling finish

Basement walls are painted concrete block or plaster. First floor walls in the church and parsonage are plaster or drywall; those in the addition are concrete block. Exceptions are the parsonage kitchen and bathroom, and the two public washrooms in the basement, where walls are covered with ceramic tiles.

The church sanctuary (comprised of nave and chancel) has a pitched, wood truss ceiling with 26'-9" peak height and 10'-0" height at the eaves. The first-floor recreation room in the addition has a pitched, wood-covered ceiling. Ceilings in the church narthex and on both floors of the parsonage are plaster; those on the first floor of the addition are concrete. Basement ceilings are plaster or attached 1'-0" x 1'-0" acoustical tiled ceilings, with painted concrete ceilings in the basement of the addition.

5. Openings

a. Doorways and doors

Interior doors throughout the church and parsonage are paneled wood with wood frames. The double-doors that open onto the nave have stained glass insets. Basement and first floor doors in the addition are metal with metal frames.

6. Decorative features and trim

Walls in the parsonage have wood baseboard and crown molding. The partition wall separating the narthex from the nave features two stained glass windows depicting scenes from the life of Jesus. The first-floor parlor in the addition has a brick fireplace with paneled wood surround. The basement auditorium has a simple wood stage.

7. Mechanical equipment

a. Heating

Heating is provided by two gas fired "Weil McLain" boilers, providing steam heat to the original sections and hot water heat to the addition.

b. Lighting

Lighting is provided by ceiling-suspended incandescent fixtures in the nave. The remainder of the building features either ceiling-attached incandescent fixtures or ceiling-attached fluorescent strip fixtures.

c. Plumbing

There are two public washrooms in the basement of the addition: a men's room with one toilet stall, two urinals and one sink, and a women's room with three toilet stalls and two sinks in a vanity. The basement nursery and the first-floor pastor's study each have a private bathroom with toilet and sink. The parsonage has a bathroom on the second floor with one toilet, one sink in vanity, and a tub with overhead shower; its kitchen has a double stainless-steel sink. A shower stall is provided in the basement laundry room beneath the parsonage.

Additional plumbing serving the building consists of a slop sink and a washer connection in the laundry room, a double stainless-steel sink in the commercial-grade kitchen, and one closet-located janitor's sink each on the first floor and the basement level of the addition.

D. Site

1. General setting and orientation

The building is situated on an irregular shaped corner site that is about a quarter-acre in size with frontages of 127'-15" on the north side of Elmgrove Drive and 121'-45" on the west side of 78<sup>th</sup> Ave., plus the 40'-0" arc at the intersection of these streets at the corner of the site. The 72'-3" north (rear) lot line abuts a sixteen-foot-wide, asphalt paved public alley.<sup>60</sup> The west lot line abuts a residential parcel that features a brick bungalow.

The building's Elmgrove Drive elevation is set back about twenty-four feet from the street and is fronted by a lawn with shrubbery, concrete sidewalk, and a public parkway. A concrete paved walk extends from the sidewalk to the church's main entry. The east side courtyard facing 78<sup>th</sup> Ave. is mainly asphalt paved to provide parking. This elevation has a concrete sidewalk and paved, marked, diagonal parking in lieu of a grassy parkway.

The property is situated within Elmwood Park's Westwood Subdivision, a residential neighborhood in the northwest corner of the Village that is comprised of brick bungalows constructed in the late 1920s. Elmgrove Drive is a curvilinear street and 78<sup>th</sup> Ave. runs in a north-south direction. Both are two-lane, asphalt-paved, one-way residential streets and have concrete curbs, gutters and sidewalks, and overhead streetlights.

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<sup>60</sup> Dimensions obtained from: McTigue & Spiewak, Inc., Plat of Survey, May 14, 2001.

2. Historic landscape design

The property originally featured a grassy front lawn that was replaced in the mid-1950s by the education/recreation wing and an asphalt-paved courtyard used for parking. The grassy public parkway on 78<sup>th</sup> Ave. was later replaced by the current paved, marked parking spots.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Architectural Drawings

Axel V. Teisen & Co., 4804 N. Kedzie Ave., Chicago. Final drawings for Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage, dated January 21, 1929 that include the following: North 78<sup>th</sup> Ave. Elevation; Elm Grove Drive Elevation; Lot Line Elevation; Alley Elevation; Plan of Basement; First Floor Plan; Plan of Second Floor of Parsonage.

Michaelson, Rabig, Ramp, 3256 Franklin Blvd., Chicago. First Floor Plan blueprint for Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church Addition, dated June 10, 1954.

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Howard B. Richter & Associates, Inc., "Appraisal, 7810 Elmgrove Drive, Elmwood Park, Illinois," August 31, 2005.

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1956," unpublished booklet, 1956.  
Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church, "50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary: Westwood  
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2. Newspaper and Magazine Articles and Website Content

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"Axel V. Teisen," *Chicago Tribune*, July 6, 1961.  
"Break July Records for Three Years at Westwood," *Chicago Tribune*, August  
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Chase, Al. "Plan \$400,000 Apartments at Kedzie-Ainslie," *Chicago Tribune*,  
November 22, 1924.  
\_\_\_\_\_. "Part of Elmwood Cemetery Sold for Subdivision," *Chicago  
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\_\_\_\_\_. "Mills & Sons to Build 600 Bungalows," *Chicago Tribune*,  
February 13, 1927.  
\_\_\_\_\_. "Mills & Sons are Placed in Receivership," *Chicago Tribune*,  
February 9, 1932.  
"Christen Michaelsen," *Chicago Tribune*, June 29, 1960.  
"Civic center opens to public," *News Journal* (Chicago), December 15, 1974.  
"Danish Park Celebrates Our Independence Day," *New York Times*, July 1,  
1934.  
"Elmwood Cemetery," *Chicago Tribune*, February 7, 1909.  
"Elmwood Park Lines Up with Nation's Biggest in Building," *Chicago  
Tribune*, April 15, 1928.  
"Elmwood Park Church to Hail 25<sup>th</sup> Birthday," *Chicago Tribune*, October 11,  
1953.  
"443 Homes Are Being Erected in Westwood: Entire Development Will Cost  
\$25,000,000," *Chicago Tribune*, April 8, 1928.  
"Fourth of July is National Celebration Day in Denmark," *The Sheboygan  
Press* (Sheboygan, Wisconsin), July 23, 1948.  
"John Mills," *Chicago Tribune*, December 9, 1941.  
"Mills to Erect 200 residences at Westwood," *Chicago Tribune*, January 13,

1929.

- “Mission Erects \$125,000 Home on McLean Ave.,” *Chicago Tribune*, November 10, 1929.
- “New Church for Elmwood Park,” *Chicago Tribune*, December 20, 1953.
- “New Berwyn Church,” *Berwyn Life*, December 5, 1958.
- “Part of Elmwood Cemetery Sold For Subdivision,” May 27, 1926.
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- “300,000 Flats for Jefferson Park,” *Chicago Tribune*, April 6, 1926.
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C. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated

Additional materials on the Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage in Elmwood Park, Illinois, are on file at the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) Region 5 Archives, located in Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa. They include the following:

Membership Records: Book 1 (1929-1957) and Book 2 (1958 up to dissolution in 2001)

Nine boxes of index card records. Membership A-Z, wedding, inactive, and a box of transferred, deceased, and inactive.

Council Minutes: 1928-1981

Dorcas Society minutes: 1955-1962

Westwood Constitution and Endowment

Real Estate Appraisal 2000

Westwood Annual Reports, 1994-1999

Bequests

Westwood Confirmation class identified photos 1940-1988

Warranty Deed 1929

Application to join Westwood ELC

Corporation—religious affidavit of organization 1928

D. Sketch Plans

Sketch plans for the Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage are attached to this report.

E. Supplemental Material

The following materials are attached to this report:

- Figure 1: Site Plan of the Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage, drawn by Lucas Howser, January 2021.
- Figure 2: Basement Floor Plan of the Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage, drawn by Lucas Howser, January 2021.
- Figure 3: First Floor Plan of the Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage, drawn by Lucas Howser, January 2021.
- Figure 4: Second Floor Plan of Parsonage, drawn by Lucas Howser, January 2021.
- Figure 5: Main entrance to church with addition to the right, looking northeast.
- Figure 6: Church addition (left) and parsonage (right), looking north.
- Figure 7: View of church (left) and parsonage (right), looking northwest.
- Figure 8: View of addition (left), church (center), and parsonage (right), looking northwest.
- Figure 9: Detail of brickwork and the stucco and wood half-timbering on parsonage wall.
- Figure 10: Detail of brickwork and stone detailing on parsonage wall.
- Figure 11: View of addition (left), with raised entrance to recreation room.
- Figure 12: View of church, flanked by addition (left) and parsonage (right).
- Figure 13: Front façade of parsonage, looking north.

- Figure 14: Alley elevation of parsonage and church.
- Figure 15: Alley elevation of parsonage and church with garage door on far right.
- Figure 16: Lot line elevation of church.
- Figure 17: Interior view of main entrance to the church with lancets depicting "Jesus Blessing the Children."
- Figure 18: View toward narthex looking into nave.
- Figure 19: View of nave looking toward chancel.
- Figure 20: Detail view of pew.
- Figure 21: Stained glass window on wall separating narthex from nave depicting "The Crucifixion."
- Figure 22: Stained glass window on wall separating narthex from nave depicting "Jesus in Gethsemane."
- Figure 23: Stained glass window group in nave with center window depicting "The Nativity."
- Figure 24: Stained glass window group in nave with center window depicting "Jesus in the Temple."
- Figure 25: Stained glass window group in nave with center window depicting "The Baptism."
- Figure 26: Stained glass window group in nave with center window depicting "Jesus Blessing the Children."
- Figure 27: Stained glass window group in nave with center window depicting "The Lord's Supper."
- Figure 28: Stained glass window group in nave with center window depicting "The Resurrection."
- Figure 29: Stained glass window group in nave with center window depicting "The Ascension."
- Figure 30: Stained glass window group in nave with center window depicting "Jesus Knocking at the Door."
- Figure 31: Chancel furniture, including the reredos, a screen of carved wood.
- Figure 32: View of nave looking toward narthex.
- Figure 33: Parsonage living room, looking toward dining room.
- Figure 34: Living room in parsonage.
- Figure 35: Oak staircase in parsonage.
- Figure 36: Bedroom in parsonage.
- Figure 37: Another bedroom in the parsonage.
- Figure 38: Double-loaded first floor corridor in the 1956 addition.
- Figure 39: Church office in the addition.
- Figure 40: Pastor's study in the addition.
- Figure 41: Parlor in the addition.
- Figure 42: Recreation room in the addition.
- Figure 43: Basement kitchen.
- Figure 44: Stage in basement auditorium.

- Figure 45: Basement auditorium, looking toward stage.
- Figure 46: Basement staircase leading to narthex.
- Figure 47: Looking toward double-loaded corridor in basement of the addition.
- Figure 48: Nursery in basement of the addition.
- Figure 49: Classroom in basement of the addition.
- Figure 50: Basement classroom in the addition.
- Figure 51: Display advertisement for the Westwood Subdivision in Elmwood Park, Illinois.
- Figure 52: Axel V. Teisen & Co., Architects, Chicago. Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage: North 78<sup>th</sup> Avenue Elevation, final drawing dated January 21, 1929.
- Figure 53: Axel V. Teisen & Co., Architects, Chicago. Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage: Elm Grove Drive Elevation, final drawing dated January 21, 1929.
- Figure 54: Axel V. Teisen & Co., Architects, Chicago. Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage: Lot Line Elevation, final drawing dated January 21, 1929.
- Figure 55: Axel V. Teisen & Co., Architects, Chicago. Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage: Alley Elevation, final drawing dated January 21, 1929.
- Figure 56: Axel V. Teisen & Co., Architects, Chicago. Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage: Basement Plan, final drawing dated January 21, 1929.
- Figure 57: Axel V. Teisen & Co., Architects, Chicago. Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage: First Floor Plan, final drawing dated January 21, 1929.
- Figure 58: Axel V. Teisen & Co., Architects, Chicago. Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage: Second Floor Plan of Parsonage, final drawing dated January 21, 1929.
- Figure 59: Michaelson, Rabig, Ramp, First Floor Plan for Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church Addition, dated June 10, 1954.
- Figure 60: Photo of Westwood Evangelical Church and Parsonage, ca. 1928, showing how it originally looking prior to construction of the 1956 addition.
- Figure 61: Photo of Westwood Evangelical Church and Parsonage (top) as it appeared prior to construction of 1956 addition, shown in drawing at bottom.
- Figure 62: Photo of nave as it appeared in 1956 following its extension.
- Figure 63: Photos of various first floor rooms in the addition, 1956.
- Figure 64: Photos of various rooms in the basement, 1956.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

A. Research Strategy

The research strategy was to review a variety of primary and secondary sources, including books, newspaper articles, and historic photos, in order to develop a thorough history of the Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage, placing the building within the context of Elmwood Park in the early twentieth century. Site visits to the project area were planned, in order to conduct photographic documentation for use in developing a physical description of the building.

B. Actual Research Process

The newspapers.com database was extensively searched for information related to the history of Elmwood Park as well as Westwood Church and its architects. The Village of Elmwood Park does not currently have a functioning historical society. However, a collection of historic photographs, along with some news clippings/display advertisements, are on file at the Elmwood Park Public Library. This collection has been digitized under the name: "A Village Grows – Fifty Years of Life in Elmwood Park" and is available online through the Illinois Digital Archives website at this address: <http://www.idaillinois.org/digital/collection/eppl>. The collection includes one exterior photo of Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church from 1960, as well as numerous historic photos (including aerials) of its Westwood neighborhood from the late 1920s.

Information on the history of the Westwood Church was mainly obtained from several unpublished church histories on file at the Evangelical Church in America Archives at 321 Bonnie Lane, Elk Grove Village, Illinois, and at the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) Region 5 Archives, located in Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa. Archivists at both repositories sent these materials in PDF form to the author of this report via email.

The ancestry.com database was also reviewed for information related to architect Axel V. Teisen.

C. Archives and Repositories Used

Elmwood Park Public Library at Conti Parkway, Elmwood Park, Illinois;  
Evangelical Church in America Archives at 321 Bonnie Lane, Elk Grove Village, Illinois; Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) Region 5 Archives, located in Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa.

D. Project Team

1. Supervision

All aspects of this project were supervised and assembled by Jean L. Guarino, Ph.D., Principal of Guarino Historic Resources Documentation, Oak Park, Illinois. Dr. Guarino also served as project historian and authored all written aspects of the report.

2. Sketch Plans and Digital Field Photography

Lucas Howser developed the sketch floor plans for this building using CAD. He also produced the site plan.

3. HABS photographer

All black and white HABS photography was undertaken by Leslie Schwartz, Leslie Schwartz Photography, Chicago.

This HABS documentation project was undertaken to mitigate the adverse effects of a proposed project by the Village of Elmwood Park to raze this building and install a public park on the property. The terms of the mitigation were agreed upon and executed to ensure compliance with the Illinois State Agency Historic Resources Preservation Act (20 ILCS 3420).

**INDEX TO BLACK AND WHITE PHOTOGRAPHS**

Leslie Schwartz, photographer, November 2020

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| IL-1268-1  | View of building with Elm Grove Drive on left and 78 <sup>th</sup> Ave. on right, looking northwest. |
| IL-1268-2  | View of main entrance to church on Elm Grove Drive and addition to the east, looking northeast.      |
| IL-1268-3  | View of addition on left, church in the center, and parsonage on the right, looking west.            |
| IL-1268-4  | View parsonage in the foreground, looking southwest.   |
| IL-1268-5  | View of church on the left and parsonage front façade on the right, looking northwest.               |
| IL-1268-6  | Detail view of main entrance to church on Elm Grove Drive.   |
| IL-1268-7  | View of west (lot line) façade, looking northeast.   |
| IL-1268-8  | Interior view of main entrance doors to church with stained glass windows above.                     |
| IL-1268-9  | View into nave, from the narthex.  |
| IL-1268-10 | View of nave, looking toward chancel.  |
| IL-1268-11 | View of nave, looking toward main entrance on Elm Grove Drive.                                       |
| IL-1268-12 | View of chancel and lancet windows.  |
| IL-1268-13 | View of first floor recreation room in the addition.   |
| IL-1268-14 | View of basement auditorium with stage that are situated directly below the nave and chancel.        |
| IL-1268-15 | First floor hallway in parsonage with oak staircase and newell post.                                 |

WESTWOOD EVANGELICAL CHURCH AND PARSONAGE  
HABS IL-1268  
(Page 29)



HABS IL-1268-1

WESTWOOD EVANGELICAL CHURCH AND PARSONAGE  
HABS IL-1268  
(Page 30)



HABS IL-1268-2

WESTWOOD EVANGELICAL CHURCH AND PARSONAGE  
HABS IL-1268  
(Page 31)



HABS IL-1268-3

WESTWOOD EVANGELICAL CHURCH AND PARSONAGE  
HABS IL-1268  
(Page 32)



HABS IL-1268-4

WESTWOOD EVANGELICAL CHURCH AND PARSONAGE  
HABS IL-1268  
(Page 33)



HABS IL-1268-5

WESTWOOD EVANGELICAL CHURCH AND PARSONAGE  
HABS IL-1268  
(Page 34)



HABS IL-1268-6



HABS IL-1268-7



HABS IL-1268-8



HABS IL-1268-9



HABS IL-1268-10



HABS IL-1268-11



HABS IL-1268-12



HABS IL-1268-13



HABS IL-1268-14



HABS IL-1268-15

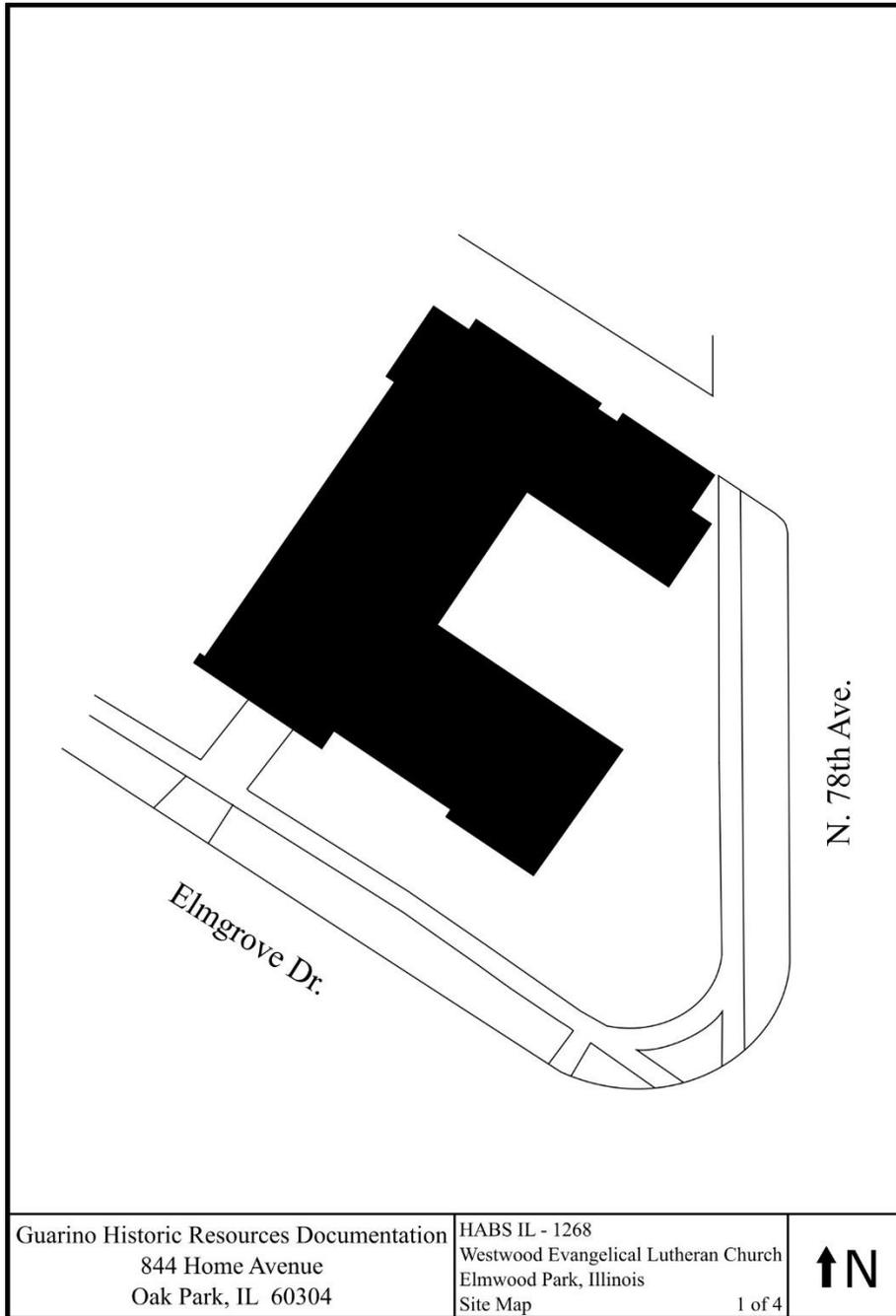


Figure 1: Site Plan of the Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage, drawn by Lucas Howser, January 2021.

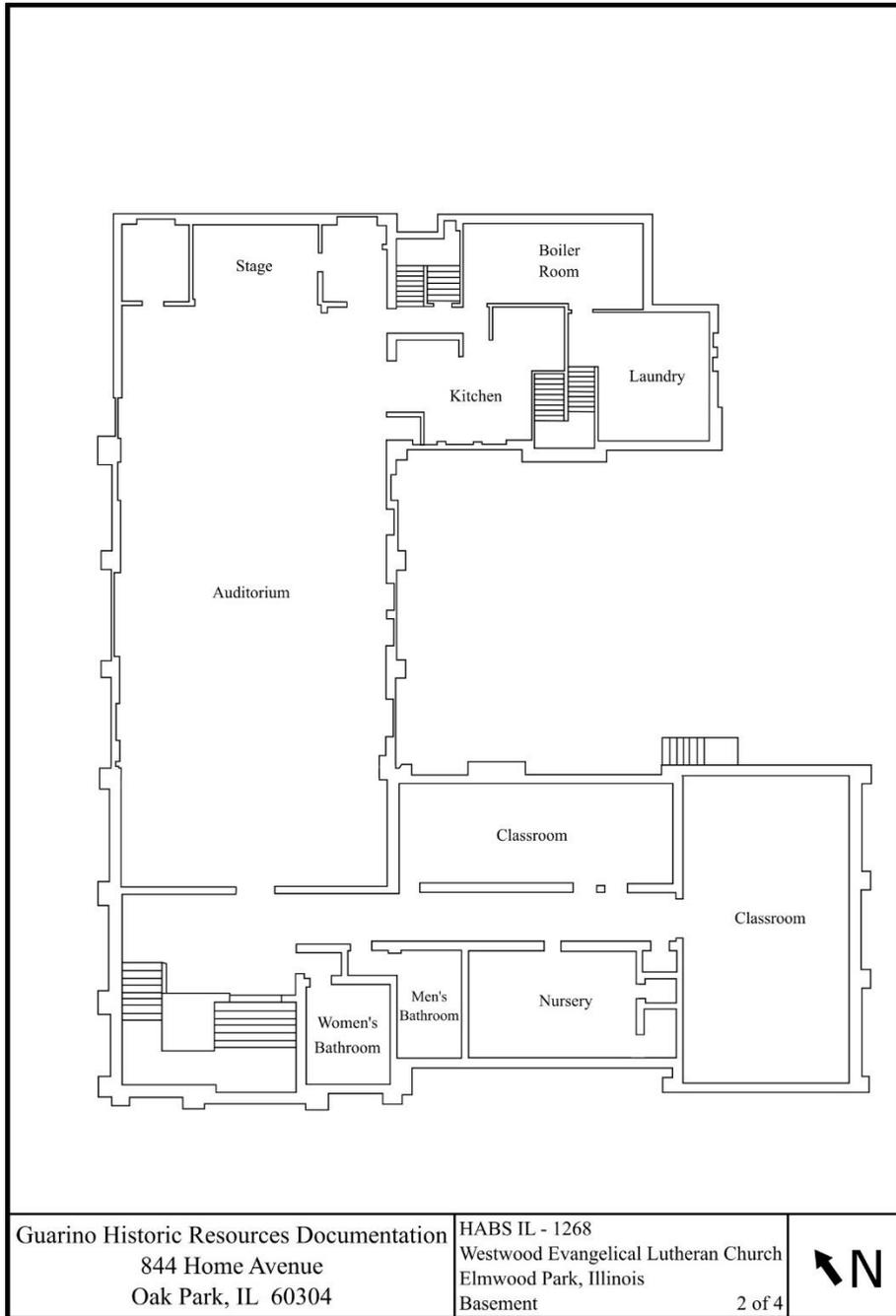


Figure 2: Basement Floor Plan of the Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage, drawn by Lucas Howser, January 2021.

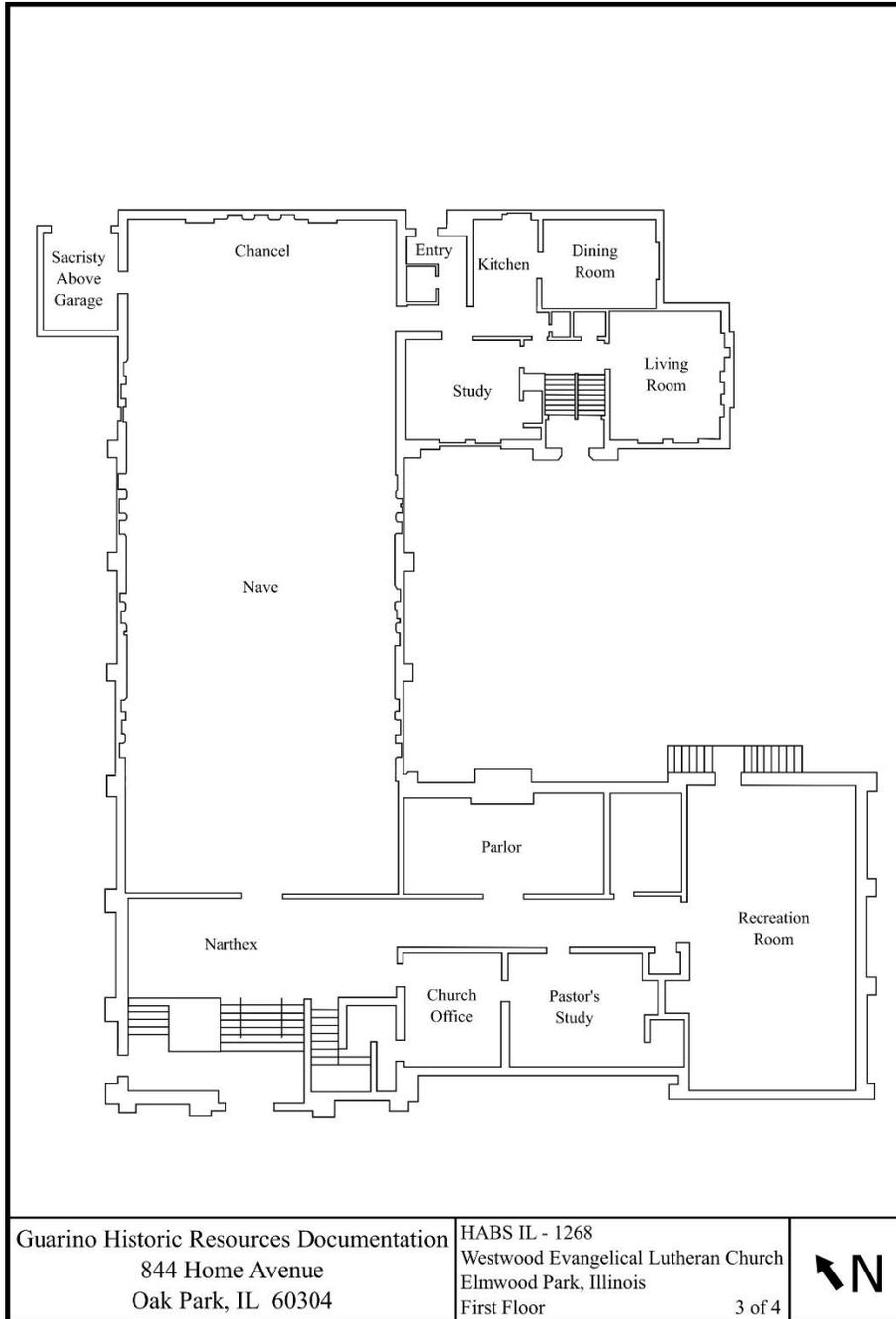


Figure 3: First Floor Plan of the Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage, drawn by Lucas Howser, January 2021.

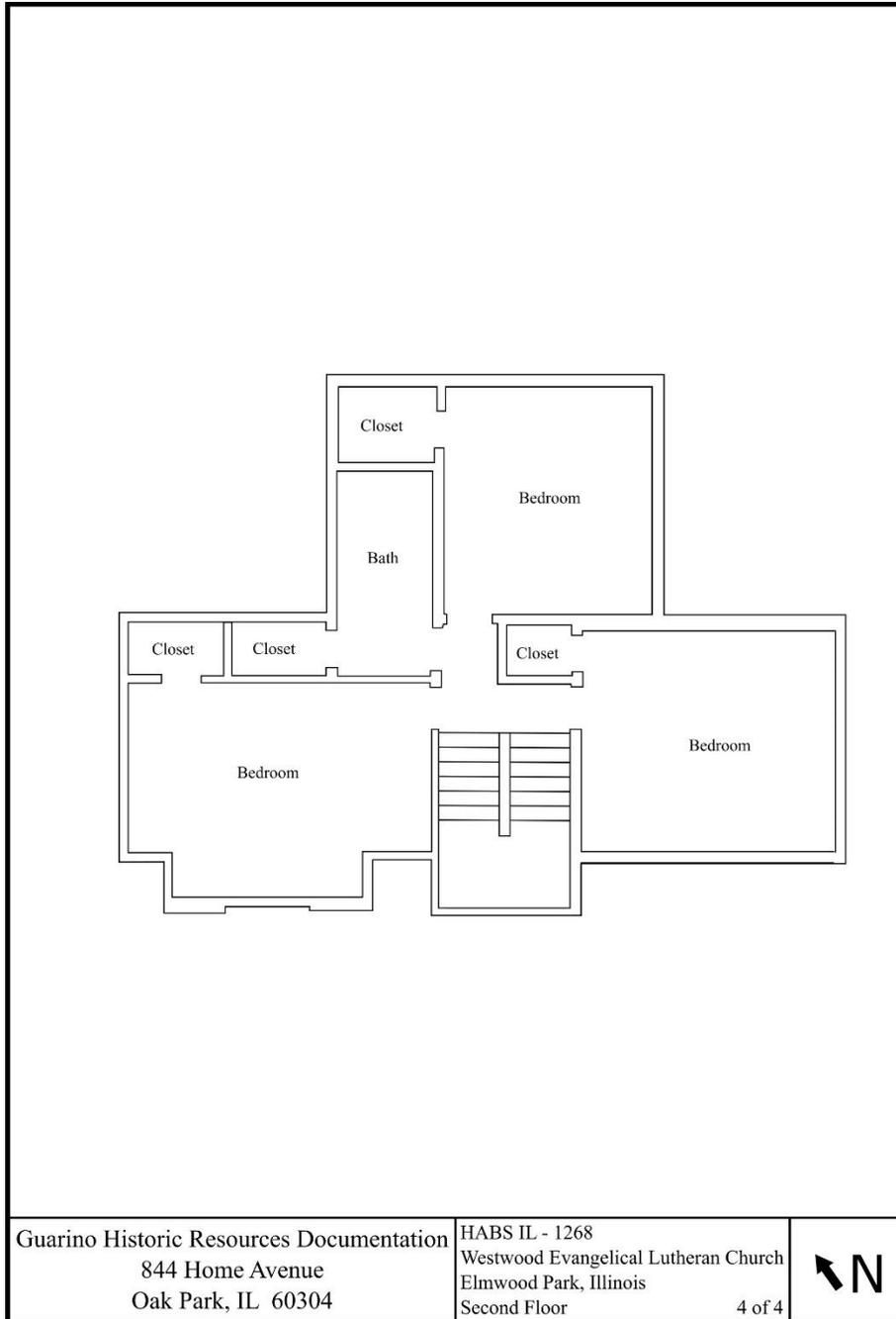


Figure 4: Second Floor Plan of Parsonage, drawn by Lucas Howser, January 2021.

WESTWOOD EVANGELICAL CHURCH AND PARSONAGE  
HABS IL-1268  
(Page 48)



Figure 5: Main entrance to church with addition to the right, looking northeast.



Figure 6: Church addition (left) and parsonage (right), looking north.

WESTWOOD EVANGELICAL CHURCH AND PARSONAGE  
HABS IL-1268  
(Page 49)



Figure 7: View of church (left) and parsonage (right), looking northwest.



Figure 8: View of addition (left), church (center), and parsonage (right), looking northwest.



Figure 9: Detail of brickwork and the stucco and wood half-timbering on parsonage wall.



Figure 10: Detail of brickwork and stone detailing on parsonage wall.

WESTWOOD EVANGELICAL CHURCH AND PARSONAGE  
HABS IL-1268  
(Page 51)



Figure 11: View of addition (left), with raised entrance to recreation room.



Figure 12: View of church, flanked by addition (left) and parsonage (right).



Figure 13: Front façade of parsonage, looking north.



Figure 14: Alley elevation of parsonage and church.



Figure 15: Alley elevation of parsonage and church with garage door on far right.



Figure 16: Lot line elevation of church.



Figure 17: Interior view of main entrance to the church with lancets depicting “Jesus Blessing the Children.”



Figure 18: View toward narthex looking into nave.



Figure 19: View of nave looking toward chancel.



Figure 20: Detail view of pew.



Figure 21: Stained glass window on wall separating narthex from nave depicting “The Crucifixion.”



Figure 22: Stained glass window on wall separating narthex from nave depicting “Jesus in Gethsemane.”



Figure 23: Stained glass window group in nave with center window depicting “The Nativity.”



Figure 24: Stained glass window group in nave with center window depicting “Jesus in the Temple.”



Figure 25: Stained glass window group in nave with center window depicting "The Baptism."

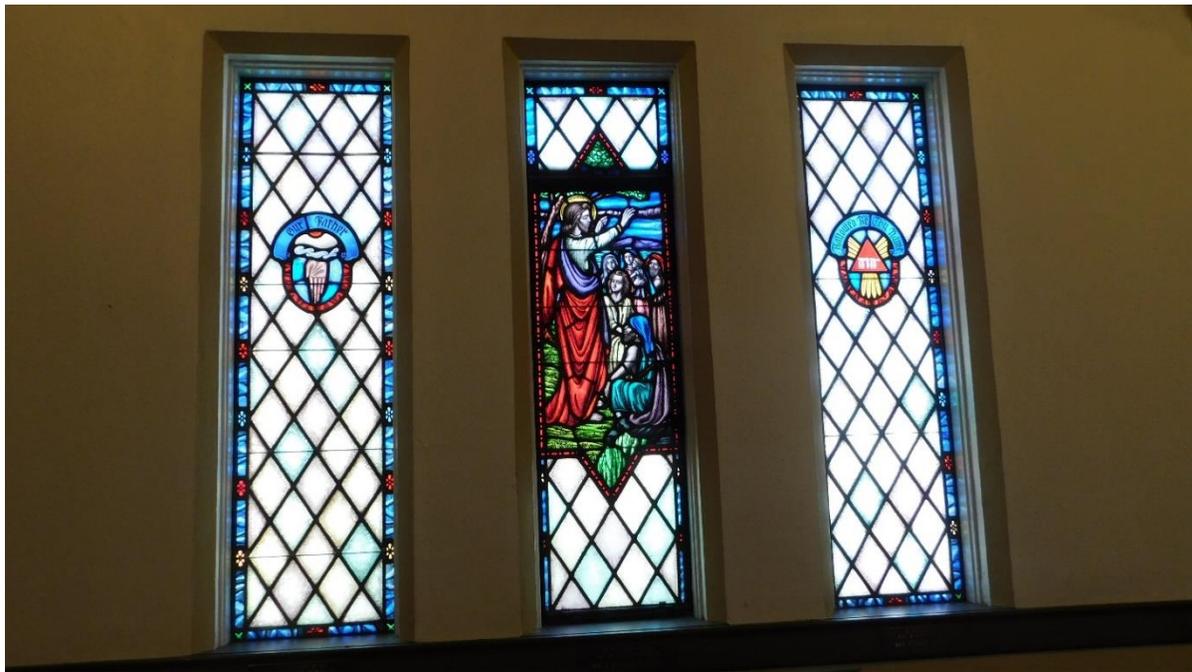


Figure 26: Stained glass window group in nave with center window depicting "Jesus Blessing the Children."



Figure 27: Stained glass window group in nave with center window depicting "The Lord's Supper."



Figure 28: Stained glass window group in nave with center window depicting "The Resurrection."



Figure 29: Stained glass window group in nave with center window depicting “The Ascension.”



Figure 30: Stained glass window group in nave with center window depicting “Jesus Knocking at the Door.”



Figure 31: Chancel furniture, including the reredos, a screen of richly carved wood.



Figure 32: View of nave looking toward narthex.



Figure 33: Parsonage living room, looking toward dining room.



Figure 34: Living room in parsonage.



Figure 35: Oak staircase in parsonage.



Figure 36: Bedroom in parsonage.



Figure 37: Another bedroom in the parsonage.



Figure 38: Double-loaded first floor corridor in the 1956 addition.



Figure 39: Church office in the addition.



Figure 40: Pastor's study in the addition.



Figure 41: Parlor in the addition.



Figure 42: Recreation room in the addition.



Figure 43: Basement kitchen.



Figure 44: Stage in basement auditorium.



Figure 45: Basement auditorium, looking toward stage.



Figure 46: Basement staircase leading to narthex.



Figure 47: Looking toward double-loaded corridor in basement of the addition.



Figure 48: Nursery in basement of the addition.

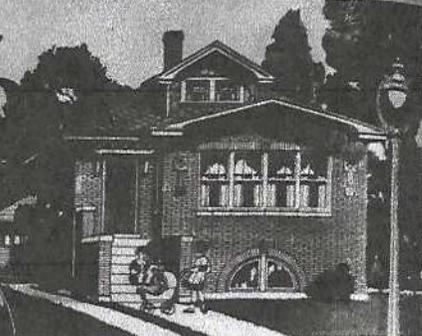


Figure 49: Classroom in basement of the addition.



Figure 50: Basement classroom in the addition.

Chicago Sunday Tribune



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Figure 51: Display advertisement for the Westwood Subdivision in Elmwood Park, Illinois.  
Source: Chicago Tribune, August 14, 1927.

WESTWOOD EVANGELICAL CHURCH AND PARSONAGE  
HABS IL-1268  
(Page 72)

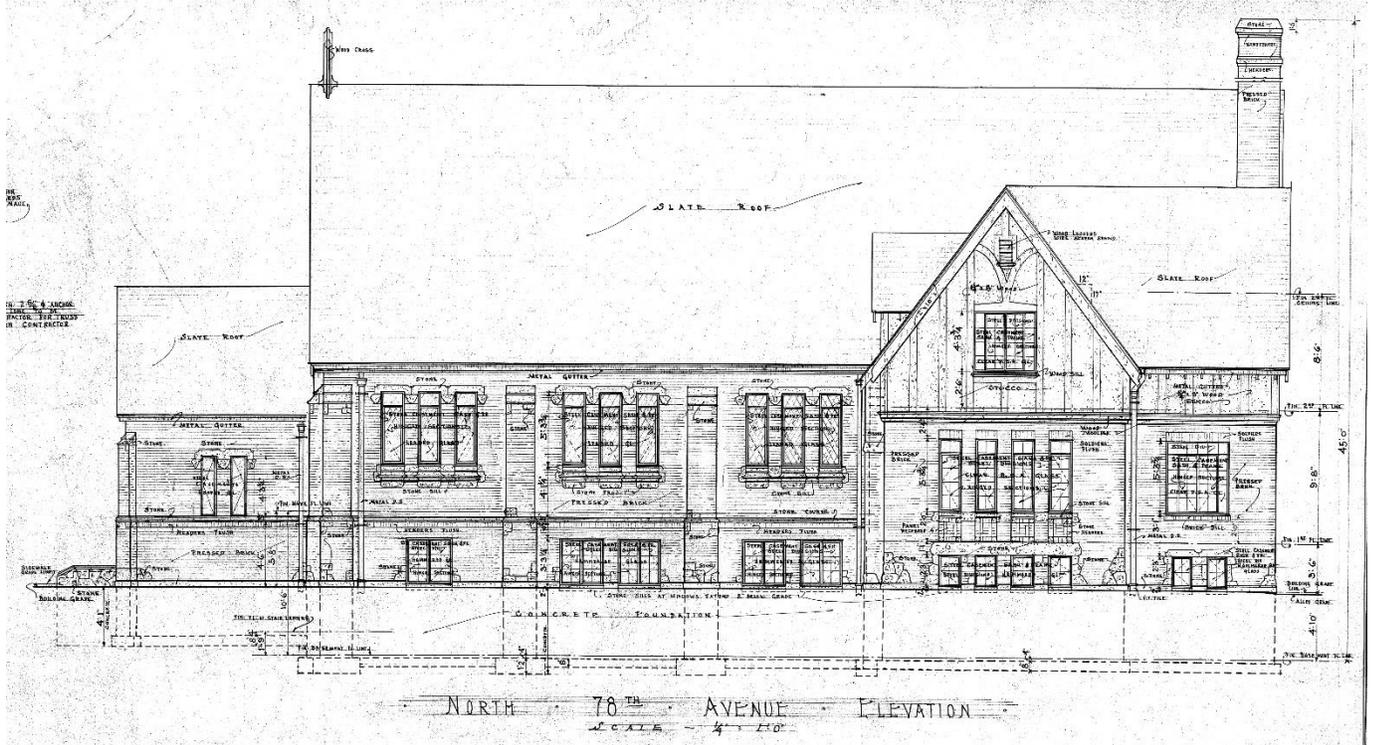


Figure 52: Axel V. Teisen & Co., Architects, Chicago. Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage: North 78<sup>th</sup> Avenue Elevation, final drawing dated January 21, 1929.

WESTWOOD EVANGELICAL CHURCH AND PARSONAGE  
HABS IL-1268  
(Page 73)

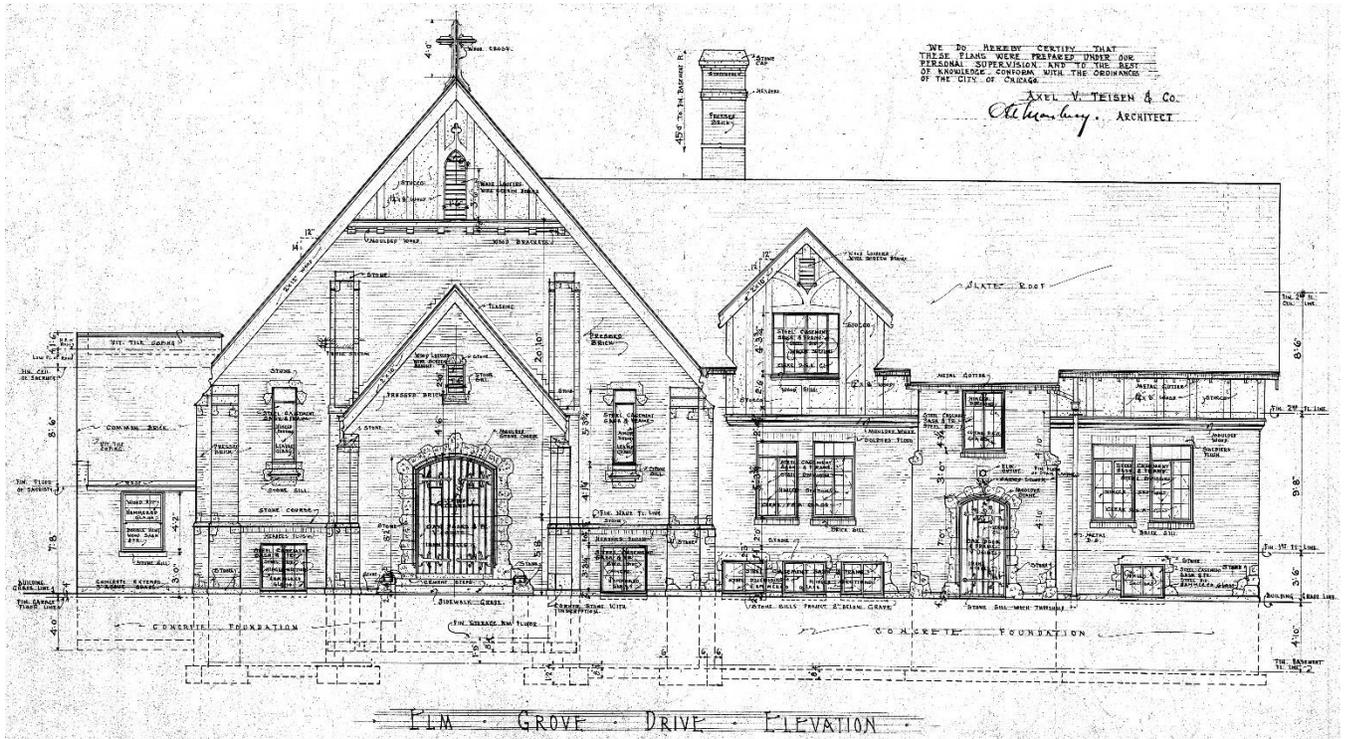


Figure 53: Axel V. Teisen & Co., Architects, Chicago. Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage: Elm Grove Drive Elevation, final drawing dated January 21, 1929.

WESTWOOD EVANGELICAL CHURCH AND PARSONAGE  
HABS IL-1268  
(Page 74)

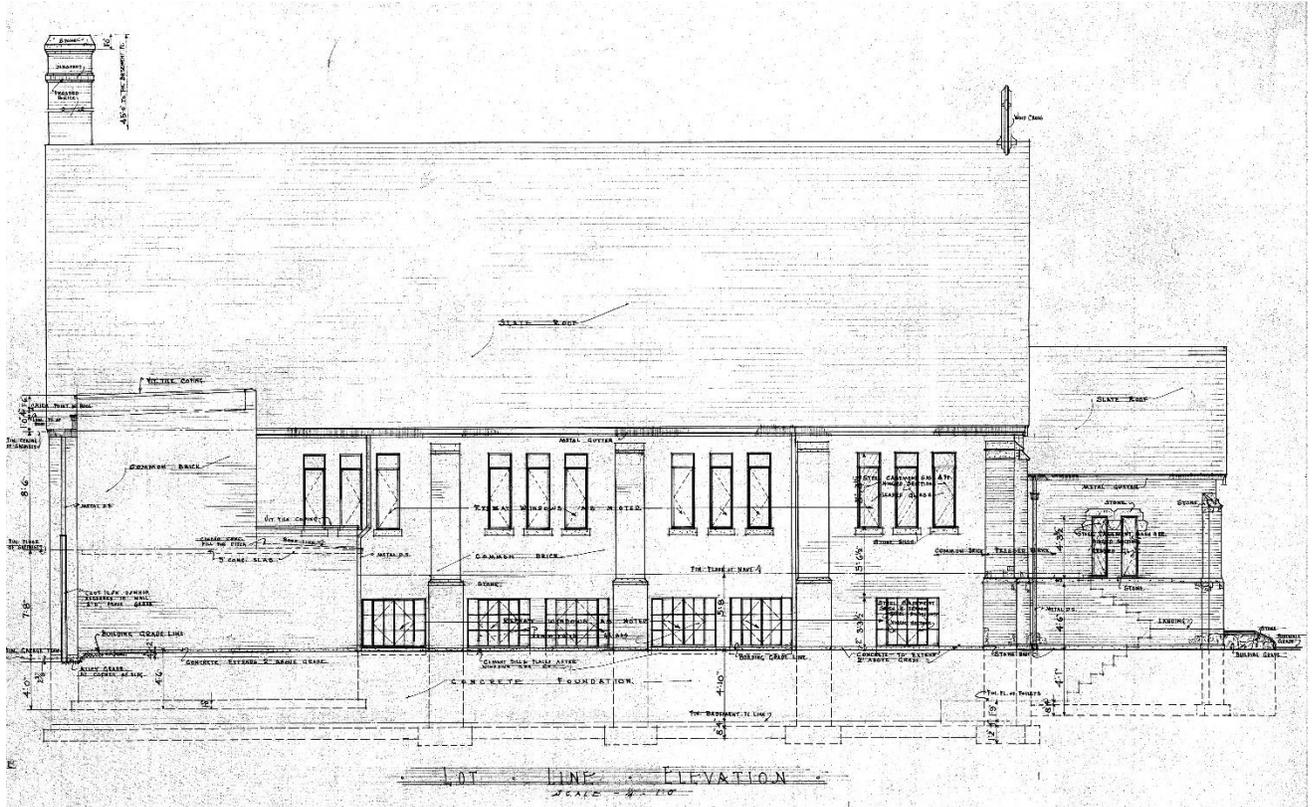


Figure 54: Axel V. Teisen & Co., Architects, Chicago. Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage: Lot Line Elevation, final drawing dated January 21, 1929.

WESTWOOD EVANGELICAL CHURCH AND PARSONAGE  
HABS IL-1268  
(Page 75)

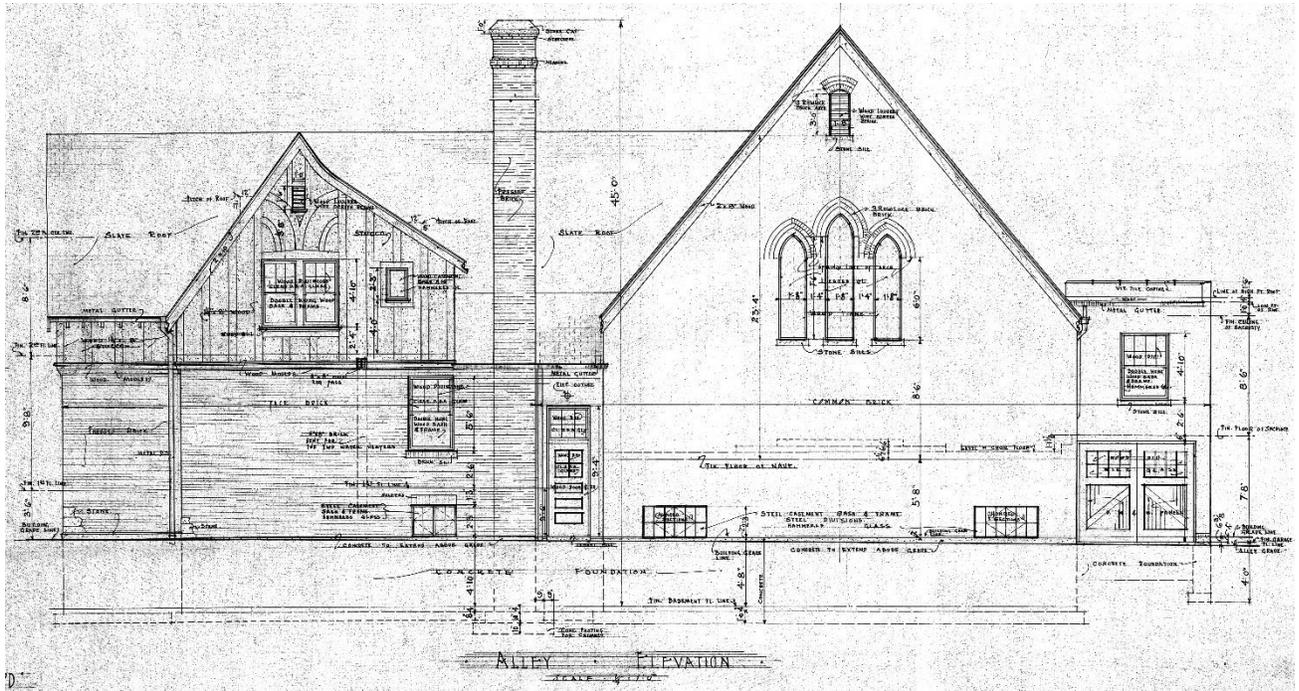


Figure 55: Axel V. Teisen & Co., Architects, Chicago. Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage: Alley Elevation, final drawing dated January 21, 1929.

WESTWOOD EVANGELICAL CHURCH AND PARSONAGE  
HABS IL-1268  
(Page 76)

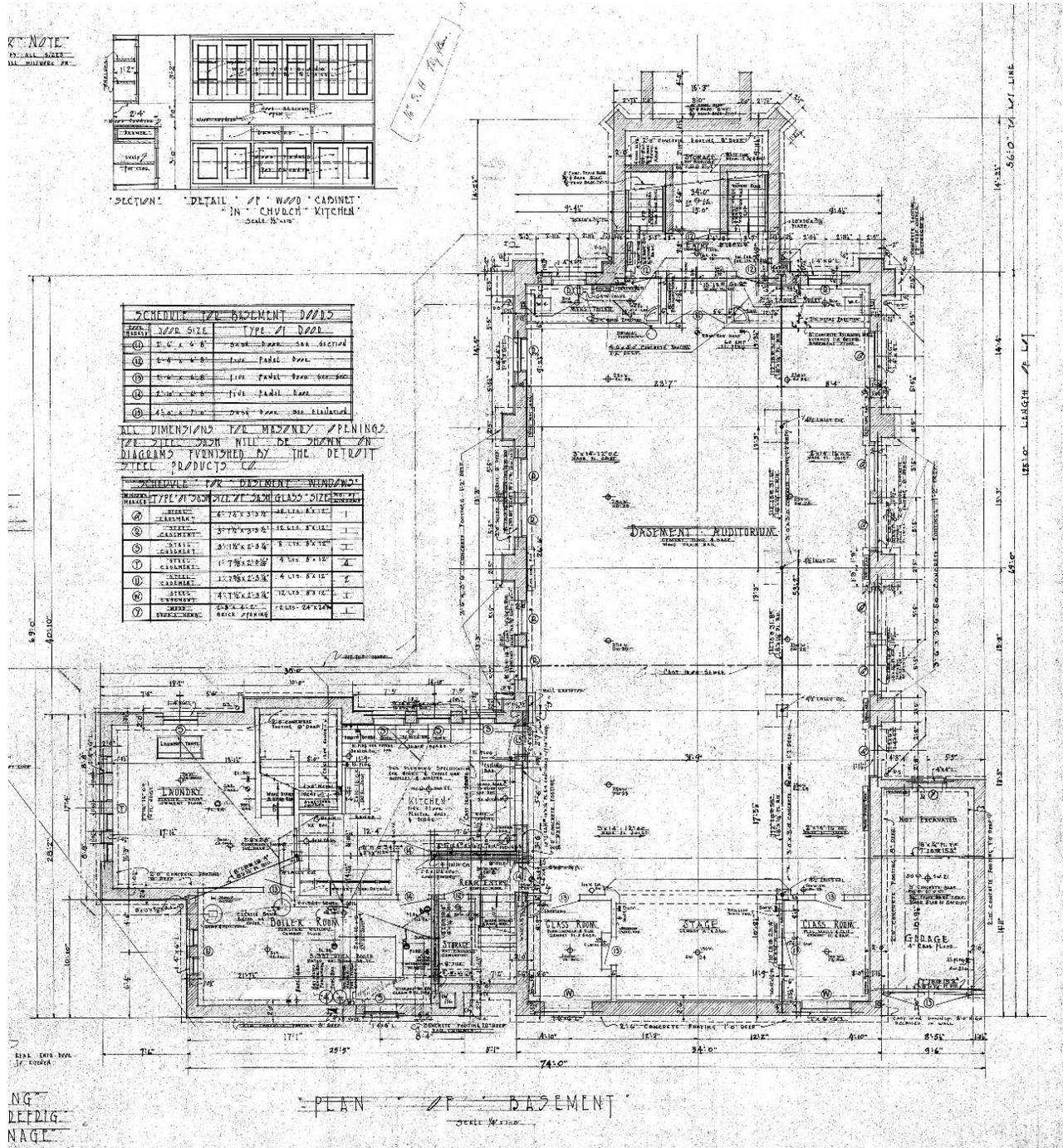


Figure 56: Axel V. Teisen & Co., Architects, Chicago. Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage: Basement Plan, final drawing dated January 21, 1929.

WESTWOOD EVANGELICAL CHURCH AND PARSONAGE  
HABS IL-1268  
(Page 77)

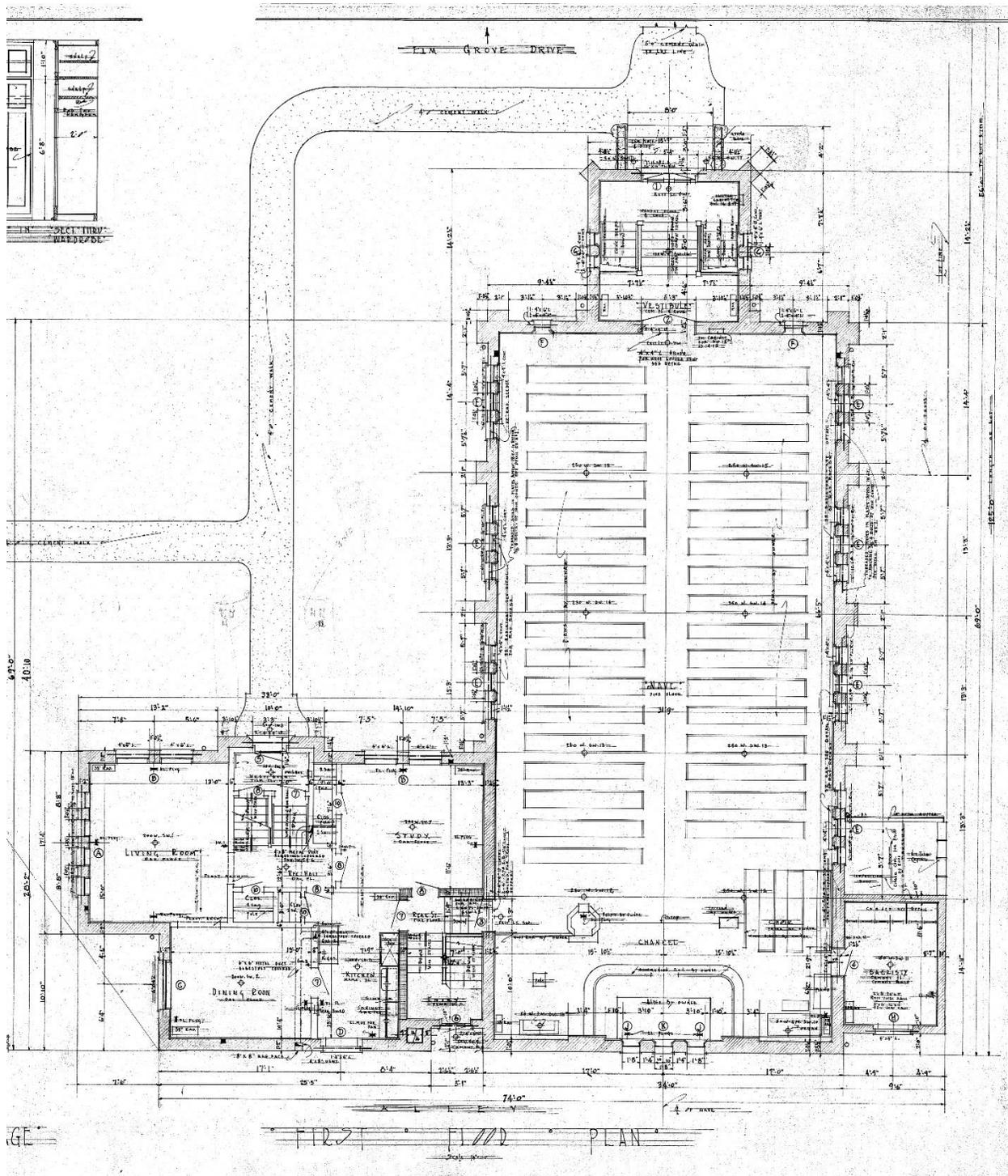


Figure 57: Axel V. Teisen & Co., Architects, Chicago. Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage: First Floor Plan, final drawing dated January 21, 1929.

WESTWOOD EVANGELICAL CHURCH AND PARSONAGE  
HABS IL-1268  
(Page 78)

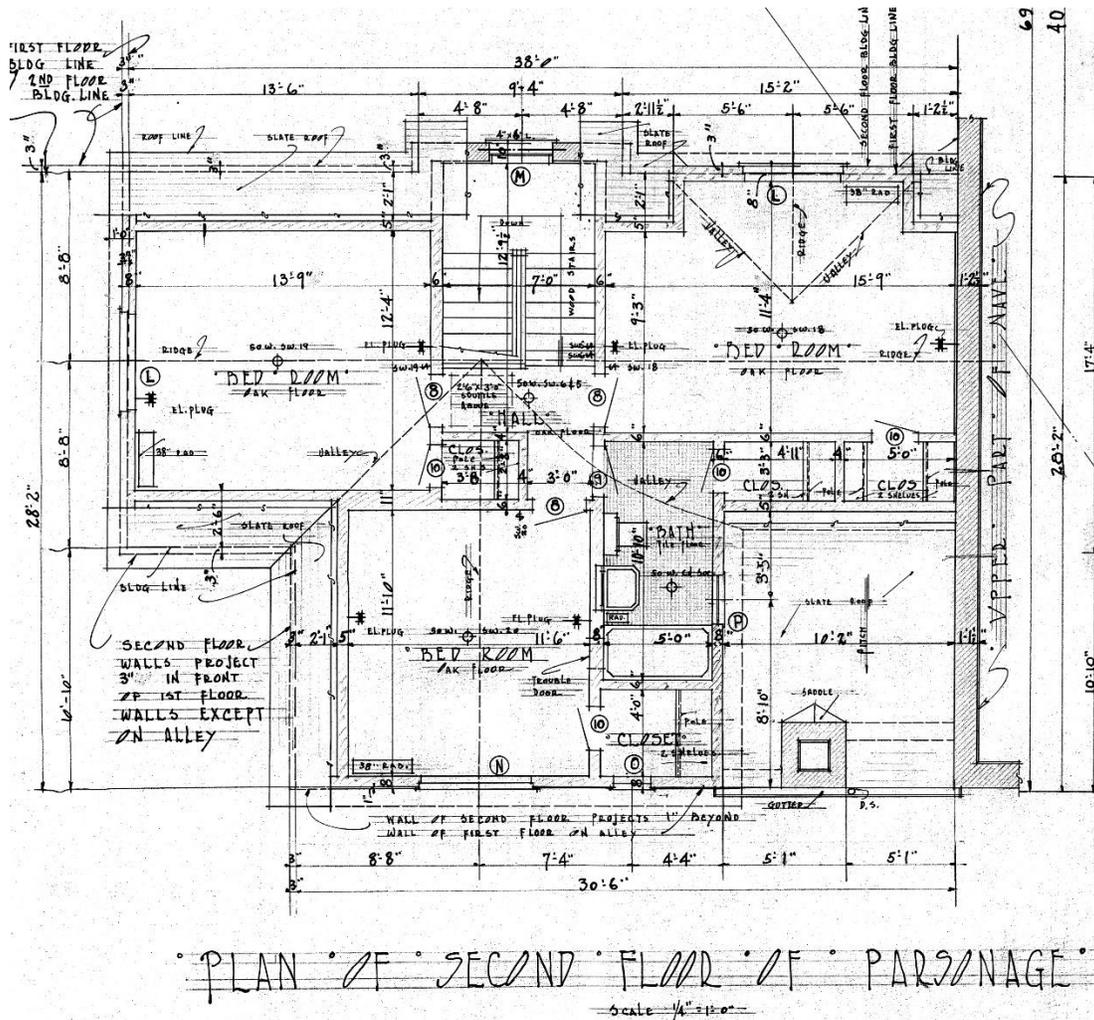


Figure 58: Axel V. Teisen & Co., Architects, Chicago. Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage: Second Floor Plan of Parsonage, final drawing dated January 21, 1929.

WESTWOOD EVANGELICAL CHURCH AND PARSONAGE  
HABS IL-1268  
(Page 79)

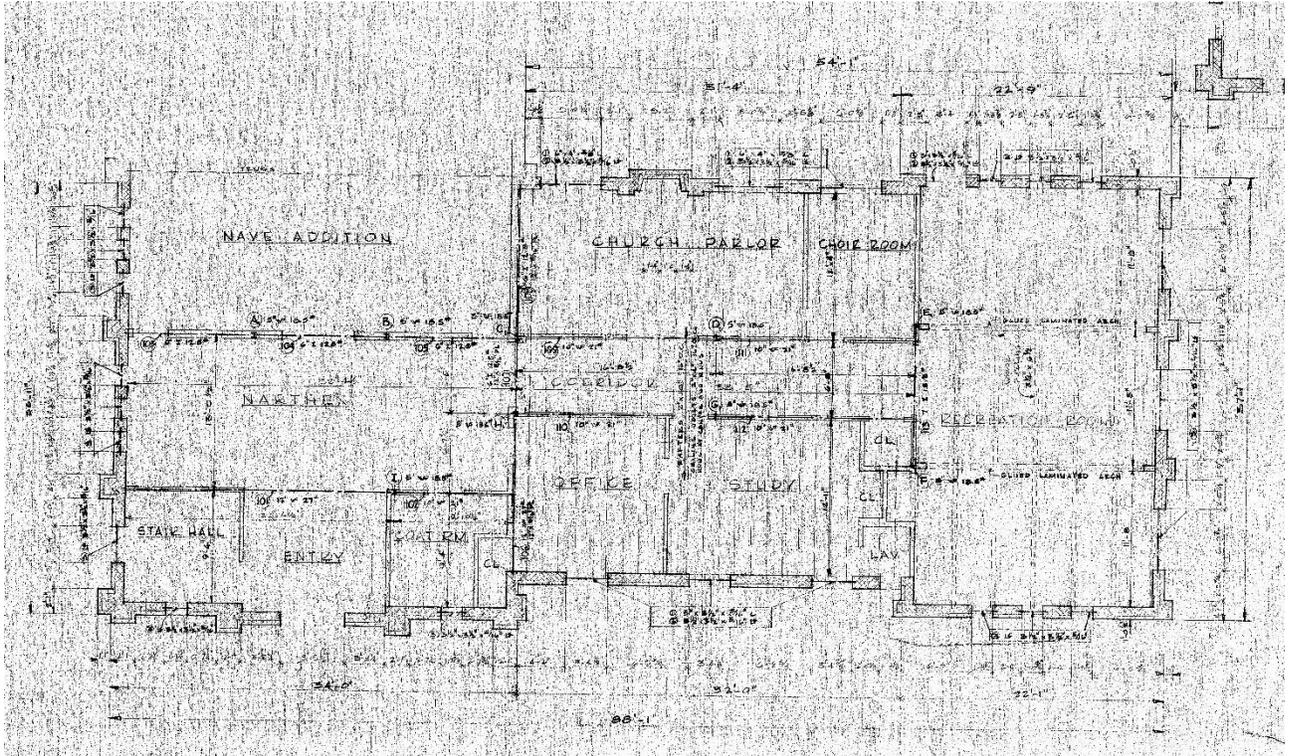


Figure 59: Michaelson, Rabig, Ramp, First Floor Plan for Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church Addition, dated June 10, 1954.

WESTWOOD EVANGELICAL CHURCH AND PARSONAGE  
HABS IL-1268  
(Page 80)

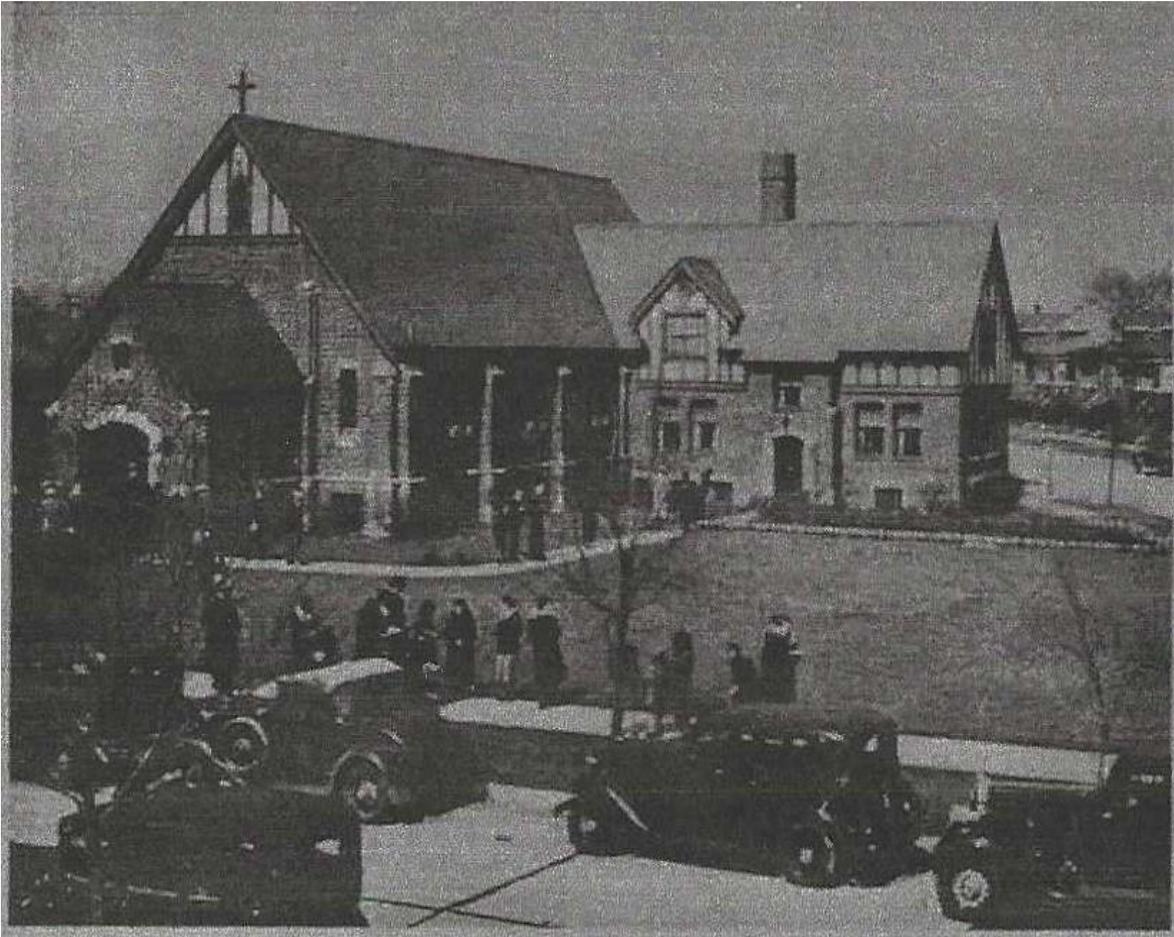
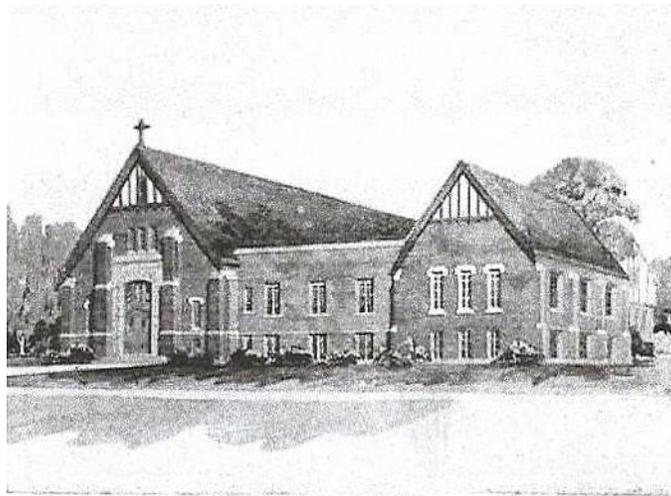


Figure 60: Photo of Westwood Evangelical Church and Parsonage, ca. 1928, showing how it originally looking prior to construction of the 1956 addition. Source: Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church, "50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary: Westwood Lutheran Church, 1928," unpublished booklet, 1978.



THE OLD LOOK



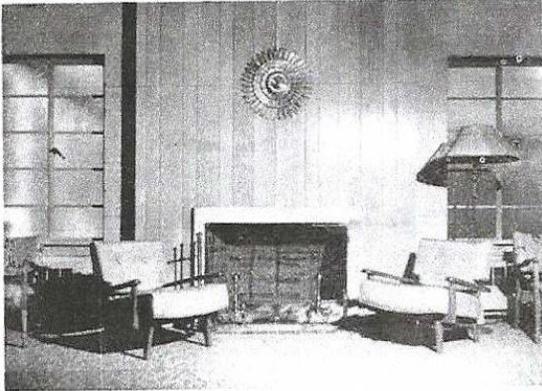
THE NEW LOOK

Figure 61: Photo of Westwood Evangelical Church and Parsonage (top) as it appeared prior to construction of 1956 addition, shown in drawing at bottom. Source: Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church, "Dedication April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 6<sup>th</sup>, 1956," unpublished booklet, 1956.



Figure 62: Photo of nave as it appeared in 1956 following its extension. Source: Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church, "Dedication April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 6<sup>th</sup>, 1956," unpublished booklet, 1956.

WESTWOOD EVANGELICAL CHURCH AND PARSONAGE  
HABS IL-1268  
(Page 83)



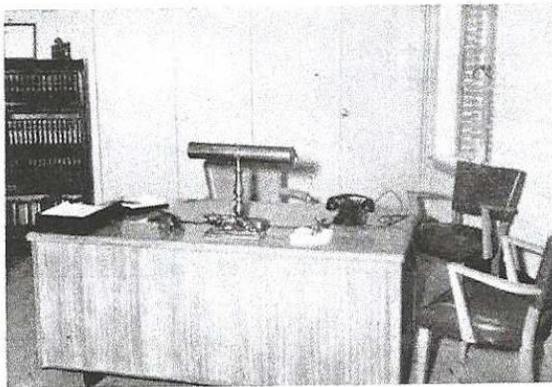
*The Parlor*



*The Recreation Room*



*The Parlor*



*The Pastor's Study*

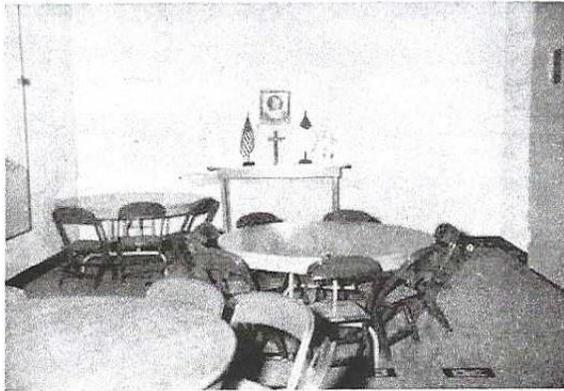


*The Church Office*

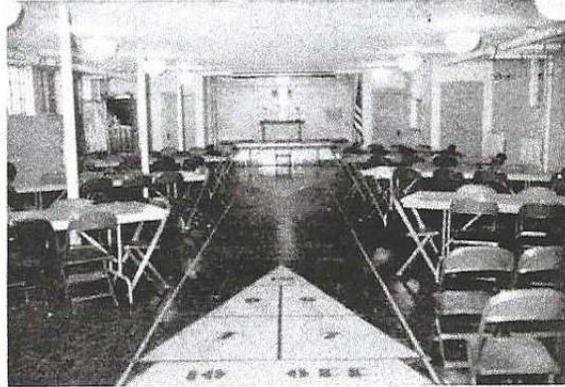
Figure 63: Photos of various first floor rooms in the addition, 1956.

Source: Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church, "Dedication April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 6<sup>th</sup>, 1956," unpublished booklet, 1956.

WESTWOOD EVANGELICAL CHURCH AND PARSONAGE  
HABS IL-1268  
(Page 84)



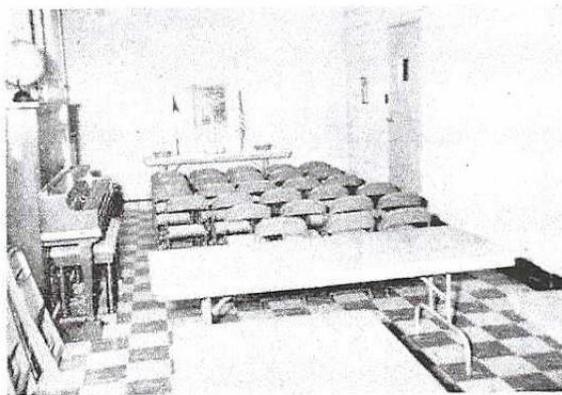
*The Nursery*



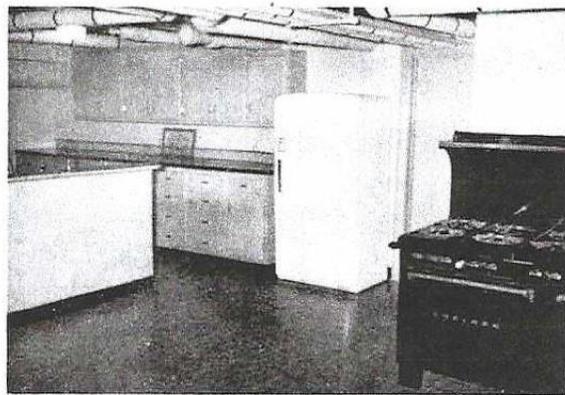
*The Auditorium*



*The Primary Room*



*The Kindergarten*



*The New Kitchen*

Figure 64: Photos of various rooms in the basement, 1956.  
Source: Westwood Evangelical Lutheran Church, "Dedication April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 6<sup>th</sup>, 1956," unpublished booklet, 1956.