

Parkwood ARP Church



The two-story 1929 Parkwood Church faces south and sits adjacent to Parkwood Avenue, a primary thoroughfare in the Villa Heights neighborhood. The brick T-plan building is covered by a hipped roof. It occupies the southeast corner of an approximately one acre lot at the intersection of Parkwood Avenue and Allen Street. With the exception of a small one-story store building to the east, the church is surrounded by single family houses. Due to its height, architecture, and proximity to Parkwood Avenue, the church has a commanding presence in the neighborhood.

The church is set on a tall basement delineated by a beveled stone water table. Wire-cut bricks are laid in a running bond in foundation and on the other exterior walls. The façade is dominated by a projecting center bay. Prominent masonry steps span the width of the bay. The thirteen concrete steps are bordered by brick cheek walls topped with simple concrete caps. The steps feature pipe handrails. The west portion of the top four steps and a portion of the west cheek wall has been covered with a concrete slab to allow for a late-20th-century wheelchair lift.

The steps lead to a shallow porch and three sets of double doors, each containing replacement slab doors, topped with stained glass transoms. The bay is defined by two brick buttresses that feature tall recessed concrete panels. The doorways are topped with one-and-one-half brick soldier-course segmental arches each topped with a corbeled band. The doors are separated by

brick pilasters that feature recessed parged panels and are topped with cross-gabled stone caps. The buttresses and the pilasters are connected by a parapet with simple stone caps. The central section of the parapet is taller and features a stone panel inscribed “Parkwood A. R. Presbyterian Church,” although “A. R. Presbyterian” has been obscured with a thin coat of mortar.

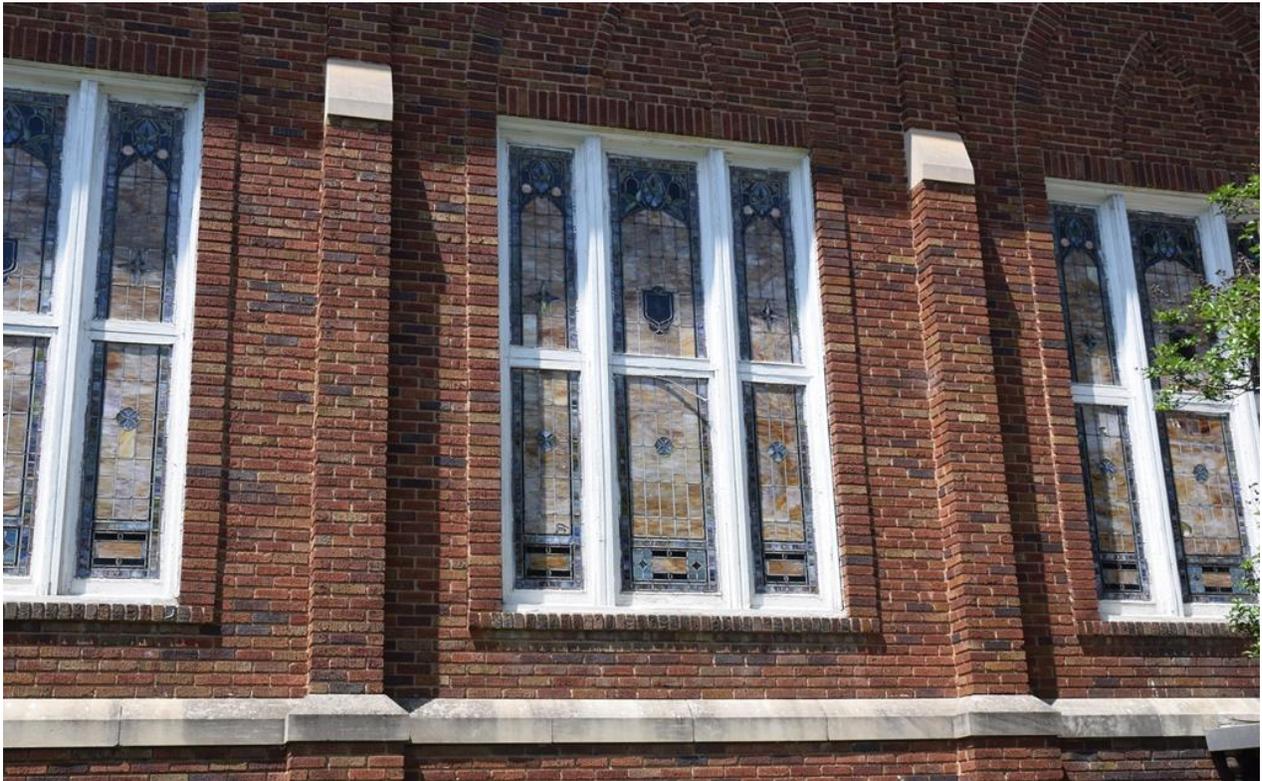
Above the parapet the buttresses are stepped back with the steps protected by half-pyramidal caps. The bay is recessed behind the parapet and features a full-width bank six tall casement windows, each containing stained glass. The windows rest on a continuous brick sill and are topped with a row of soldier-course brick. Above the windows is a brick gable. The gable features bricks set in a basket-weave bond, and a deep corbelled barge. The buttresses extend past the gable and are topped with pyramidal stone caps.

To either side of the projecting central bay, the façade on each story is pierced by a single tall double-hung window. The windows contain stained glass and each feature a simple brick sill and a soldier-course lintel. Flush with the façade, stepped buttresses project to the east and west sides, with no interruption in the brickwork. The buttresses each feature a beveled coping stone at the step, and a sloped stone cap. To the east and west of the center projecting bay, the eave of the hipped roof forms a deep overhang with a tongue-and-groove board soffit featuring a simple moulded wooden cornice and freeze-board. This deep overhang is present on the remainder of the building.



The east and west elevations of the nave are five bays wide. The bays are separated by stepped buttresses with a beveled coping stones at the steps. The buttresses are topped with a sloped

stone cap. The bay closest to the façade is narrow and is pierced by a single double-hung window containing stained glass. The other four bays are of equal size and each contains a large tripart stained glass window. The windows are divided into three parts by thick mullions, with each section containing two stacked sash. The middle section is wider. The windows feature a simple brick sill, and are topped with a row of soldier-course brick. A corbelled architrave of stretchers begins at the sill, runs past the lintel, and forms the outline of a pointed arch above the window. A smaller pointed arch composed of stretchers is set inside the larger outline. The tall basement level is delineated by a stone water table. At the basement level the narrow front bay on the west elevation contains a five-panel door, and the wider bays on both the east and west elevations contain wide window openings topped with a brick lintel and are now infilled with brick and wooden panels.





The tall one-story nave tees into a two-story transept. The transept projects past the nave one bay to the east and the west. On the west side of the church, this narrow south-facing wall is blank. On the east side of the church, the bay contains a three-panel door at the basement level. The panels feature rosettes. The door is protected by a shed roof supported by two steel posts. Above the door is set a single window. All the windows in the transept are six-over-one double-hungs, with a brick sills and soldier-course brick lintels. The east elevation of the transept is three bays wide. The basement level is delineated by a corbelled soldier course, and features three window openings infilled with brick. The bay closest to the nave contains a single window. The two other bays contain paired windows. The same fenestration is found on the second story. The west elevation of the transept is four bays wide, with four six-over-one double-hungs on each story. The first-story windows feature metal security bars. A bricked-in window opening cuts through the water table. The basement level features a stairwell, sheltered by a shed roof supported by wooden posts, that leads to a five-panel door. Three other bays on the basement level are infilled with brick.



The rear of the transept is three bays wide, with each bay containing paired windows. The center and west bays on the second story are pierced by paired windows. The west bays on the first and second stories can be accessed by a metal fire escape. The basement level is pierced by five window openings infilled with brick.

INTERIOR



The high degree of integrity found on the exterior is also found in the interior. Nearly all of the original interior woodwork, millwork, hardware, plaster, and flooring has been preserved. The interior features a narthex containing two staircases with original newel posts and handrail, and two-panel interior doors that have retained original brass hardware. The sanctuary features a sloped floor and a recessed pulpit. The pews may be original. A large balcony is supported by substantial steel columns. The nave contains two floors of classrooms and offices, all containing original millwork and wood trim. A large basement features original doors, bathroom fixtures, and trim.

