

## History

- Southminster United Church was formed when Calvin Presbyterian Church and Ottawa South Methodist Church amalgamated following formation of United Church of Canada in 1925; corner stones of these 2 previous congregations are set in wall inside the porch
- Calvin Presbyterian Church traced its origins to 1860s services held in Billings Bridge Temperance Hall
- Ottawa South Methodist Church traced its origins to 1860s Methodist circuit missions
- 1931 Southminster Church built on site of earlier, smaller Ottawa South Methodist Church (1908 – 1930)
- Original 3 manual Casavant organ with 1440 pipes
- 1955 Memorial Hall containing offices and meeting rooms was added 1955
- 1966 a carillon of bells was installed to mark Centennial year (later removed at request of neighbours)
- 1990s renovations were made to improve accessibility
- 2009 Chancel area was redesigned to better accommodate musical and speaking events
- 2022 Memorial Hall demolished for redevelopment and basement renovated to accommodate new offices and meeting rooms



Balcony fretwork. Credit: Mike Mullin

## Architecture

- Designed by Ottawa architect J. Albert Ewart (who designed many other buildings around Ottawa including Knox Presbyterian on Elgin and the Transportation Building now part of the entrance to the Rideau Centre)
- Exterior walls dressed with Nepean sandstone (the same stone used for Peace Tower on Parliament Hill, and the Public Library opposite church)
- Roof covered with slate
- Entrance façade ascends from porch in tiers demarcated by 2 gabled buttresses and 3 tall, slim lancet windows; the lancets provide lighting in the balcony and emphasize height of church; lancets are typical of Early English Gothic style
- Screen for organ pipes decorated with fretwork that incorporates symbols such as a single cross in centre and outline of fish used in United Church's crest
- Design of fretwork on front of balcony reminiscent of burning bush symbol of Presbyterian church



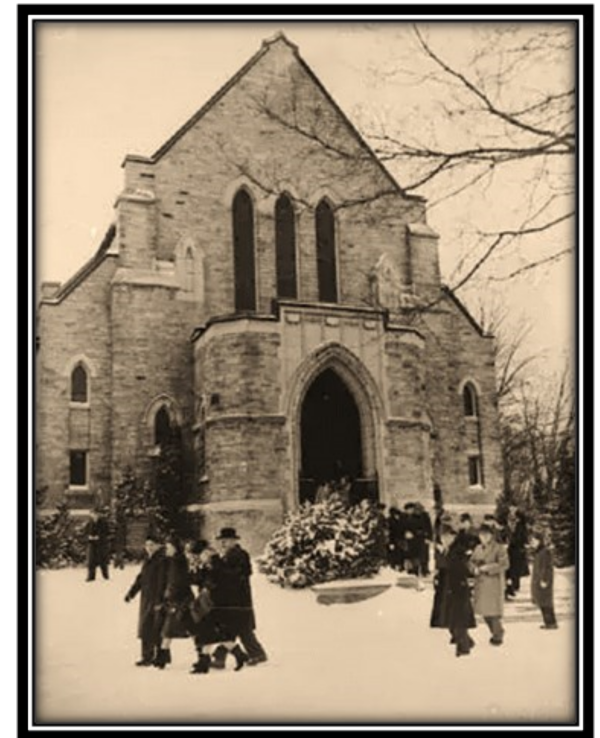
Organ fretwork. Credit: William Kendall

Cover photo: Parishioners leaving the building following a Sunday service in 1935.  
(Courtesy, City of Ottawa Archives)

# Southminster United Church

15 Aylmer Avenue  
Ottawa, Ontario K1S 3X1

## Architecture and History



## Architectural notes

- English Gothic revival style, emphasis on horizontality and symmetry
- Simpler decoration reflects influence of modern architectural trends such as Art Deco, over more ornate Victorian Revival style
- Shape of interior is a single-aisled Latin cross basilica, with 2 shallow north and south transepts
- Nave measures 85' X 45', expanding to 62' at western transepts
- Mouldings around narthex include plaster bosses that represent leaves, flowers and pine branches and cones
- Smaller oak pews in balcony from previous Methodist church
- Original church capacity 900

