Lakeview Presbyterian Church

5914 Canal Boulevard

Lakeview Presbyterian Church originated as a small neighborhood church in 1912. In a suburb that expanded rapidly after World War II, the congregationlike its Catholic counterparts in Metairieoutgrew its earlier home.

For a new home, it selected a no-nonsense geometric style by Edward M. Y. Tsoi. The windows, likewise, are composed of simple rectangles that complement the Modernist architecture. Mainly in earth tones, these were designed by Robert Frei of the Emil Frei Studio of St. Louis, Missouri, in 1959-1960, and were installed as part of the original architectural plans. A striking terra cotta panel behind the altar resembles the one designed by Tsoi for the Chinese Presbyterian Church on Bienville Street, in Mid-City.

Architect Edward Tsoi moved from Canton, southern China, when the Japanese invaded in 1937. After a stint with A. Town Hays, a Baton Rouge architect specializing in traditional styles (think of the Tudor-style wedding chapel at First Presbyterian Church in Baton Rouge), Tsoi moved to the Modernist architectural firm of Burk, LeBreton and Lamantia in New Orleans (think of St. Pius X Catholic Church in Lake Vista). Eventually he launched his own firm. The Preservation Resource Center profiled Tsoi in its 2019 series on Modernism in New Orleans. (His best-known works may be the large, boxy, functional Schwegmann grocery stores.)

Tsois 1963 sanctuary building for the Chinese Presbyterian Church includes windows like those at Lakeview Presbyterian Church, though they are dominated by blue with random playful red rectangles. The Frei archives document that, working with Tsoi, Robert Frei designed the windows for both Lakeview Presbyterian Church (in 1959-1960) and the Chinese Presbyterian Church (1962).

*Not visited.*

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