

ATF Leading Investigation Of Adas Israel Synagogue Fire In Duluth

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MINNEAPOLIS (WCCO) – Officials in Duluth are asking the public to help with the investigation of [a fire that destroyed a synagogue](#).

The fire at the Adas Israel Congregation Synagogue started early Monday morning. Police are giving no indication this anything other than an accidental or unintentional fire. With that said, the cause remains undetermined. Still, for congregants, that takes away just part of the sting.

A cornerstone written in Hebrew stakes claim to this corner of the Central Hillside neighborhood, where for nearly 120 years, congregants came to worship in the Adas Israel temple.

“I don’t know. You just have to think positive,” said Barb Munic, a 45-year member of Adas Israel. “We’re all here, no one got hurt.”

It’s still unclear how the fire started. Though it began near a storage area, investigators say there no sign of arson. They are looking over hundreds of hours of surveillance video.

“There is no indication right now that there is a threat to other places of worship, and certainly the places of the worship to include the Jewish community,” Tusken said.



(credit: CBS)

Ten of 14 Torah scrolls were recovered from the debris, though several others are stuck in the blackened walls, too damaged to be saved.

“For now, just the well wishes have been fantastic,” said lay leader Phillip Sher.

He is thankful for what did survive, including a personal connection to the past.

“I had my ... late father’s prayer shawl that I used to use, and the ATF man crawled into the wreckage to get it for me this morning,” Sher said. “I nearly broke down and cried.”

Members here are very thankful for offers of support. Everything from prayer books, furnishings and money are flowing in from locations such as New York and even Israel. But congregation leaders are warning donors to use caution since they haven’t sanctioned any fundraising sources yet.

Anyone with information about this case is urged to call Alcohol Tobacco and Fire investigators at 888-283-3473.