

Jewish Community Uniting in Wake of Duluth Synagogue Fire



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Updated: September 10, 2019 07:53 PM

The Jewish community is still processing the loss of the Adas Israel Congregation synagogue, a building had stood as a fixture for so many in the community, but they are also using this tragedy to unite.

The Monday morning fire may have taken away the building, but one thing that can't be taken away are the memories.

"There were so many things that went on there," said Bob Wolfe, who was born in Duluth, but now lives in Minneapolis.

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WDIO-TV

Wolfe celebrated his Bar Mitzvah at the synagogue in 1955. His parents were married there, and his family has been members of the Adas Israel Congregation since the 1800's.

"It's tradition, it's things that we've all would meet at and go to and it was an important part of our lives. To have it disappear like that, boom is quite a tragedy," said Wolfe.

But in the midst of tragedy, there is a bright spot. As WDIO News has reported, eight of 14 Torah scrolls (<https://www.wdio.com/news/eight-torah-scrolls-recovered-burned-synagogue/5485895/?cat=10335>) were saved.

"To be able to save those scrolls was really quite special," said Wolfe.

Now the Jewish community is coming together to help those in need.

"Our job here as a Jewish organization, we're here to help the Jewish people and anybody who needs help with their Jewish needs in any way," said Rabbi Mendy Ross of Chabad of Duluth.

And as Rabbi Ross says, try to create a little bit of light out out of this terrible darkness.

"We might have lost a brick and mortar building, a synagogue. It's important that we show up in bigger numbers to show support for them and ourselves and to kind of send the message to the whole world that we're still here," said Rabbi Ross.

Rabbi Ross says on Monday he had rabbis from the across the country reach out and offer their support. He also says he has received phone calls from clergy in Duluth offering their space.

"It's been something that the Jewish community throughout the United States and the world has been an outpouring of support, and that's something that we're forever grateful for," said Rabbi Ross. "It's something that we didn't expect. We weren't looking for. I didn't reach out to people, and say, 'hey please we need help' "

Phillip Sher, who is the past president of the Adas Israel Congregation synagogue, says they are not accepting funds at this time. He also wants to warn people of any possible scams that may be circulating.