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Date: Friday, September 13, 2019 6:41 PM
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Subject: Fw: Shul fire

Suspect arrested in fire at historic Duluth synagogue

Details will be released Sunday morning.



STAR TRIBUNE
Gallery: Little remained of Duluth's Adas Israel Congregation after it was gutted by fire early Monday morning.
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DULUTH — A suspect has been arrested in [the fire that destroyed the Adas Israel Congregation](#) synagogue on Monday.

Officials will be holding a news conference at 11 a.m. Sunday detailing the “conclusion” of the fire investigation.

Police said earlier this week they had interviewed several “people of interest” but details were scarce. Officials declined to say at the time whether they were suspects or witnesses.

Congregation leaders were made aware of the arrest before their first Shabbat without a home began Friday evening. The news conference was originally scheduled for Saturday, when the congregation would be observing the sabbath.

The fire claimed the nearly 120-year-old structure early Monday morning and has rocked the congregation [“like a death in the family.”](#)

No one was inside the building at the time of the fire. It did claim several Torah scrolls: six of the 14 scrolls were destroyed.



MARK VANCLEAVE

Little remained of Duluth's Adas Israel Congregation after it was gutted by fire early Monday morning.

The fire comes less than a month before the start of the Jewish High Holy Days, which often drew home far-flung members of the congregation that has dwindled to about 35 members locally.

"I've always been connected to Duluth through the holidays," said Diane Hamou, who now lives in Silver Spring, Md. "It's been a home away from home. The synagogue always pulls us in."

The Adas Israel congregation was formed in the late 1880s, and the building, also known as the Third Street Shul, had stood at 302 E. Third St. since the early 1900s.

"There were three Orthodox synagogues in the area at one point and now there are none," Adas Israel board member Fred Davis said Friday afternoon. "We're very much in shock over everything that's going on."

Davis said the congregation board is focused on finding a home for the High Holy Days before making decisions about the future of the congregation.

Hamou said she will be back in Duluth for the High Holy Days — Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, begins at sunset on Sept. 29 — and she expects many others to make the trek as well.

"It's almost like we're in mourning," she said. "The physical building is gone but our memories will never be forgotten."