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# TIFERETH ISRAEL (1922)



Tifereth Israel Synagogue, date and photographer unknown [Image: Upper Midwest Jewish Archives]

**302 East 4th Street | Architect: Unknown | Built: 1922 | Lost: ca. 1995**

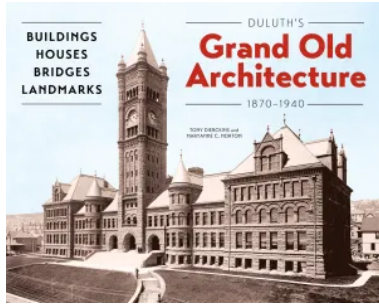
Russian Jewish immigrants organized the Orthodox Kofereth Israel Congregation in 1893, changing the name to Tifereth Israel (“Splendor of Israel”) in 1922. They purchased a small house at Third Avenue East and Fifth Street and converted it into a synagogue. With no formal rabbi, the congregants conducted services themselves. Cantors served at the High Holidays, and from time to time the rabbi from Duluth’s Adas Israel helped out as well.

In 1922 the congregation built a two-story brick vernacular synagogue on the southeast corner of Third Avenue East and Fourth Street, outfitted with Roman-arch windows and a circular Star of David window centered in the front gable. The building became known as the Fourth Street Shul, and in 1945 its members voted to become Conservative. In November 1969, after Duluth's Jewish population dropped below 1,200, Tifereth Israel joined with Temple Emmanuel to form a new congregation, Temple Israel.

Temple Emmanuel, a reform congregation, was founded in 1891 by a group of Western European Jews. Its founders included Duluth's first Jewish residents: Brothers Asa and Henry Leopold and newlyweds Bernard and Nettie Silberstein, who came a year later. The German Leopold brothers, born in New York, opened Duluth's first mercantile store in 1869. The Silbersteins immigrated from Hungary and came to the U.S. in the 1860s, married in Detroit, and moved to Duluth in 1870 to establish a dry goods store.

Services at the Temple Emmanuel were performed by "pious local elders" and occasionally a visiting rabbi in various homes until 1908, when they built an ornate temple crowned with an onion-shaped Byzantine dome and a similarly shaped keyhole entryway at 632 East Second Street. The congregation built a new Neoclassical-inspired temple in 1922 at 1902 East Fourth Street and sold the 1908 building to the congregation of Twelve Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox church (it was demolished in the 1950s to make room for a new Twelve Holy Apostles church).

Following the 1969 merger, Tifereth Israel's congregation left its synagogue to attend services at the 1922 Temple Emmanuel building. That building was later purchased by the River Church, which still owns it. Temple Israel is now housed at 1602 East Second Street, the former Jewish Educational Center. Messiah Lutheran, a mostly Finnish congregation, purchased Tifereth Israel in 1970, jokingly calling it a "Finnagogue." The building was demolished in about 1995. The lot it stood on now contains a parking ramp for St. Mary's Medical Center.



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