

Faith Matters

## Rumors of Beth Judah's Closing Unfounded

WILDWOOD – “It’s like living in the same house. It’s my home,” Ruth Edelman said April 15, in the quiet fellowship hall of Beth Judah Temple.

For houses of worship across Cape May County, the road to “normal” is fraught with questions and facing new realities. Demographics can paint an uncertain picture, i.e., aging congregations, safety protocols, and financial concerns.

Yet, for Ruth and Morey Edelman, coming back to services is more than simply entering a physical space. It’s about coming home, according to Ruth Edelman, and for Morey Edelman, it’s about rekindling the spark of community.



## Reconnected

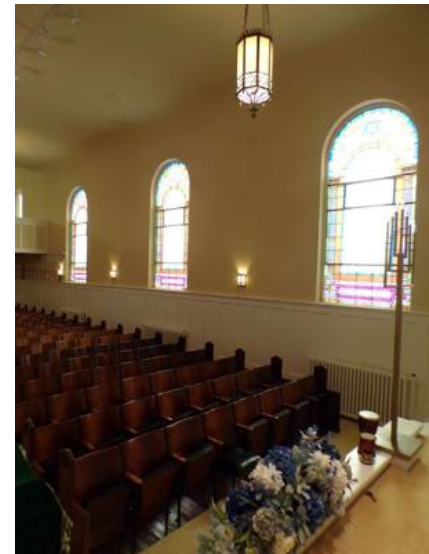
Since 1929, the temple is a living testimony of spirited Jewish immigrants who settled in the city. Beth Judah’s first members hailed from Woodbine and required a place of worship.

Between 50 and 60 families call Beth Judah Temple their spiritual home.  
Rachel Rogish

“I love the history,” Ruth Edelman said, as sunshine streamed through the stained-glass windows in the sanctuary. She enjoys researching the history of Judaism and reading the Torah (Genesis-Deuteronomy).

“I’m a transplant. I was born in Michigan and raised Lutheran,” she explained. Morey Edelman grew up in Cape May County and attended Beth Judah throughout his youth.

“We met at the University of Michigan,” he said.



The couple relocated to their present home, in Avalon, in 1989. Ruth Edelman worked as a social worker for [Jewish Family Services](#), while Morey Edelman spent his career as a retail buyer for Home Depot.

Without faith in God, the Edelmans don't know how they would survive the isolation of the Coronavirus pandemic.

"It's been a rough two years," Morey Edelman confessed.

## Reunited

Morey Edelman said the rumors of Beth Judah permanently closing its doors are "unfounded."

"We are pleased to reopen," he said.

The congregation briefly resumed meeting indoors, in 2021, until the omicron variant became prevalent. Services, led by Rabbi Ron Isaacs, have been conducted virtually via Zoom.

In-person services will begin in May, according to Morey Edelman. For a list of complete service times, go to <https://bit.ly/3JT3cHL>.

According to Ruth Edelman, an application for historic preservation has been filed with the state. If the grant is obtained, certain funds would become available to help maintain the building itself. A new livestream system was also recently installed for the broadcast of upcoming services.

"The funds and the people are here," Morey Edelman said.

Reuniting with fellow members is precious, especially for Ruth Edelman.

"Faith is an anchor in a world that goes awry. Judaism is so ancient," she explained.

She delights to see the parallels between Judaism and her Lutheran roots.

## Reoriented

"I'm looking forward to reinvigorating the place," Morey Edelman said.

"The Great Pause" never dimmed the Edelmans' spirits, and they look forward to upcoming projects and events.

New members joined Beth Judah just before the lockdown, in 2020, and the community is growing.

Both Morey and Ruth Edelman are committed to seeing Beth Judah grow and thrive.

“Come to a place that feels peaceful,” Ruth Edelman said, extending an invitation to all.



Beth Judah Temple opened its doors just before the stock market crash of 1929. The congregation has persevered throughout its existence.  
Rachel Rogish