



WRECKER'S CRANE demolishes the fire-damaged Linden Congregational Church building on Lawrence St., which housed Project Triangle after it was closed as a house of worship. The church bell has been donated to St. Luke's Episcopal Church. (Photo by Tom Hiltz)

Linden church's bell will continue to ring

By JOHN HAHESEY

MALDEN — The Linden Congregational Church is gone, but one marvelous remnant of the church exists.

A large bell weighing several tons, which for years tolled in the steeple of the church, on Lawrence St., has been donated to St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 388 Lynn St., in Linden Square.

The bell was given to St. Luke's by the Triangle Training Center (formerly Project Triangle), the sheltered workshop for the handicapped and retarded that used the church as its headquarters after it was closed as a house of worship in 1970.

Triangle Training Center vacated the church edifice earlier this year and moved to a large, new building on Commercial St., in the city's Industrial Park. Plans for the demolition of the church were being made when the

church was hit by a fire that nearly destroyed the aging structure several weeks ago. The cause of the blaze was reported to be suspicious.

The wrecker's crane soon finished the work begun by the fire; and it was determined that the one of the few salvageable items in the church was its bell, which measures a yard in diameter and is said to be worth several thousand dollars.

Beautiful Sound

Triangle Training Center board members decided to donate the bell to St. Luke's so that the people of Linden could hear once again its sound — a sound that Atty. John Donnelly, a member of the board, describes as "beautiful."

This decision pleased the members of

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St. Luke's Church, who immediately set about raising money for a structure to house the bell.

This structure will not be a steeple, according to Roger Powers, of 29 Arch St., one of the leaders of the church's "Committee on Raising the Bell."

Instead, the church is planning to have the bell raised above the peak of the church's roof in a steel arch that will have its base in the ground. This arch will be near the church, but not attached to it, Powers said.

He added that at some time in the future the church could decide to enclose the arch in a steeple.

The bell is being stored at the rectory, on Brentwood St., of St. Luke's. The church will hire an engineer or architect to work out plans for raising the bell at the church at a later date.

"Once there were three bells in the Linden section," Powers said, "but this is the only one left."

Donations to the bell fund may be made to the church, in care of the Committee on Raising the Bell.