First Lutheran School To Open Its New Addition on Jan. 27

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When the addition to the First Lutheran School is dedicated Jan. 27 it will be named in honor of a 91-year old man, and the library will be named in memory of a former student who died at age 9.

The new facility will be called the Heins Memorial Addition, named for A.G. Heins Sr., who attended the school in 1892. He was among the first students and continues to support the school and church.

The library will be called the Timothy Jenkins Memorial Library in memory of Timothy Jenkins, a fourth-grader, who died of leukemia in 1974.

Dedication services will begin at 10:30 a.m. Jan. 27 at the church, 1207 N. Broadway. The speaker will be the Rev. Norman Groteluschen of Memphis, the executive secretary of the Mid-South District of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.

The 4 p.m. dedication program will have the Rev. Wilbert Griesse, president of the Mid-South District, Memphis, as speaker. The UT Brass Wind Quintet will provide the music.

The Lutheran school and church were founded in 1869. After being closed for several years, it was reopened in 1892 "and has been operating every year since then," said Ronald Royuk, principal since 1969.

"When I came to the school, the first and second grades were in the same classroom, the third and fourth in the same, the fifth and sixth in the same, and the seventh and eighth grades were in the same room. We just took the expansion step, and now we have nine teachers for kindergarten through eighth grade," he said.

The building program started several years ago, but the actual construction began last April. The school receives no Government funding, but the $223,000 building was constructed with funds from gifts, contributions and tuition.

The new facility includes six classrooms, a gymnasium, a library and a meeting room with a fully equipped kitchen.

"This is the first year we've had a gym," Mr. Royuk said. "In the past we used the Lamar Street Recreation Center, and we're thankful to the city school system. We also have a classroom for each grade and I'm happy about that."

The present enrolment is 205 students from all areas of the city. One-third are Lutheran, and 20 per cent are from the black community, Mr. Royuk said.

"Since we receive no Government funding, religion is included in our curriculum and it goes beyond a classroom subject," said Mr. Royuk, who is also the church organist and choir director.

"Religion plays a big part in how teachers handle particular situations. Parents are looking for a traditional classroom where their children can excel academically. For example, two valedictorians here four years ago were valedictorians of their high school graduating class. I believe we have an excellent academic program beginning at the kindergarten level where students begin first grade with a vocabulary of 1000 words.

"Of the 148 families represented here, 90 percent are educators who have recognized the potential of their children and want them to excel in a particular academic setting," Mr. Royuk said.

He said the building committee considered following the trend to move west, but the majority of the students are from the northern, eastern and southern sections of town.

"This is the best location for us. The church and school ought to be on the same property where the preacher is always visible, walking through the halls whistling and speaking to the students. This has a good effect on the entire environment of the school."

The teachers at First Lutheran School are certified by the state. Tuition is $700 per year, with special rates for families with two or more children enrolled.

For more information about the school, persons should contact Mr. Royuk.