

JOY Academy offers East Side tradition and technology

Parents and students can expect a traditional Christian education, high-tech learning and hand-picked teachers at JOY Academy on St. Paul's East Side.

"JOY" — an acronym that emphasizes students' priorities in putting Jesus first, others second and "yourself" third — is housed inside the historic Bethlehem Lutheran Church. The congregation, which is over 100 years old, has been financially supporting Christian education in the Twin Cities for as many years. For fifty years, the congregation bolstered East St. Paul Lutheran School; when that school closed in June 2009, Bethlehem's Rev. Nathan Raddatz and retired pastor Rev. Robert H. Krueger believed the East Side of St. Paul desperately needed a Lutheran school and decided to create JOY Academy.

Pastor Raddatz, Bethlehem members and citizens from the surrounding community created a proposal to open the school, and the Bethlehem Lutheran congregation contributed nearly \$40,000 to its start and upkeep. Just a few months later, JOY opened the doors to its first students.

The school began small, offering kindergarten through second grade, along with existing preschool and extended-day programs. Midway through its first school year, JOY Academy has enjoyed so much success and positive feedback that planners expect to expand through fourth grade for the 2010-2011 school year. The school's eventual goal is to continue to add until it can offer kindergarten through eighth grade.

To ensure East Side residents can afford to

send their children to JOY, the congregation works diligently to keep tuition low while keeping the education quality exceptionally high. As a result, tuition is \$2,000 a year for a full-day kindergarten student, and \$2,250 per year for students in grades 1-4.

But the reasonable tuition doesn't mean the teaching staff isn't top notch. In fact, the teachers at JOY Academy all emerged from a rigorous, multi-day interview process to ensure they were the best of the best.

At JOY, students enjoy a classic Christian education while utilizing modern technology, including SMART Boards, in a secure, safe location. Currently, teacher/student ratios at JOY Academy are less than 7:1.

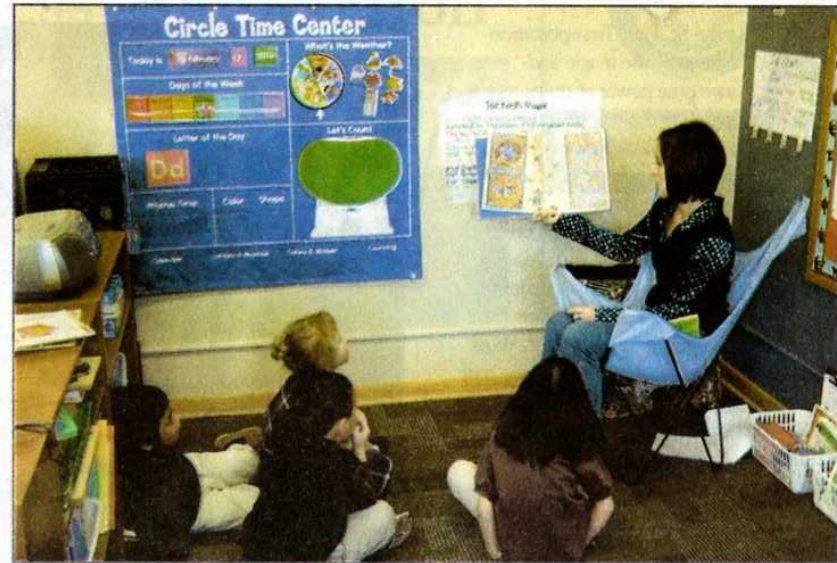
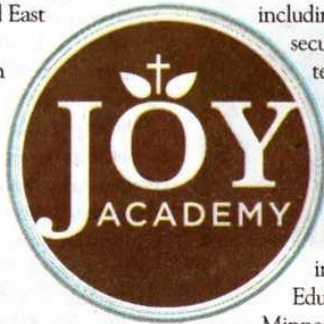
JOY Academy offers amenities such as hot lunch, regular chapel services, extended care and a school library. The school is enrolled in the READ (Reading Education Assistance Dogs)

Minnesota program, which allows students to read to certified therapy animals. Studies have shown that students who read to animals improve their literacy.

JOY Academy is looking to add the Accelerated Reader program this fall, expand the library, add busing service and plant a Learning Garden.

The JOY Academy school board and staff encourage parents to attend an open house, visit a classroom during the day or check out the school's Web site at www.joyacademy.org.

Readers should contact the school office at 651-771-6982 and ask for Mr. Chris Conner to receive more information. JOY Academy is located at 655 Forest Street in the Historic Dayton's Bluff area of Saint Paul.



Mrs. Wutke enjoys a book with her kindergartners at JOY Academy.



Mrs. Albrecht teaches a cooking lesson to the 1st and 2nd graders at JOY Academy.