



1958 TO TODAY

In 1957, God brought together a group of women with a passion for helping girls grow closer to Him. As a result, GEMS Girls' Clubs (then Calvinettes) was born. Today, GEMS Girls' Clubs is still seeing that passion lived out across the world. God's Spirit is moving, and the GEMS ministry is touching the lives of thousands of women and girls each year.

OUR MILESTONE DATES:

2018

HAPPY 60TH ANNIVERSARY GEMS!

JULY: GEMS ReFresh launches as the new, online training membership site for GEMS leaders

2017

The Esther school becomes the fourth ministry of Dynamic Youth Ministries

2016

Dr. Munyiva Kitavi begins starting GEMS Girls' Clubs in Kenya

2013

OCTOBER: GEMS holds its first online auction.

SEPTEMBER: The Esther School in Zambia starts its second year with a new first grade classroom

2012

SEPTEMBER: The Esther School in Zambia opens!

2011

JULY: GEMS International is introduced as the newest facet to the overall ministry.

2010

SEPTEMBER: It is decided to adapt GEMS Zambian curriculum for use in all developing countries.

JANUARY: Two interns travel to Zambia to work with clubs, help with training, and support the growing number of CITs there.

2009

NOVEMBER: GEMS partners with Zonderkidz to bring *The Beauty of Believing Tour* to Grand Rapids, MI

JULY: Construction on The Esther School in Zambia began.

2008

HAPPY 50TH ANNIVERSARY GEMS/CALVINETTES

2007

APRIL: The GEMS website is given a completely new and fresh look. **SHINE brightly** circulation is 15,578. *Sparkle* circulation is 5,119.

MARCH: A promo video for GEMS Girls' Clubs is created. This can be used in churches or at large community gatherings to promote GEMS.

JANUARY: Christian Service Brigade partners with GEMS.

2006

JULY: A team goes to Zambia, Africa to build The House that GEMS Built for orphans. Training for Zambian women to be GEMS Counselors also takes place. Four new clubs are started in Zambia, Africa.

2005

SEPTEMBER: GEMS Girls' Clubs is introduced to the idea of expanding GEMS Clubs to Zambia.

MAY: *Believin' It Girlz Tour* is the new name given to the previously named *Power House*.

JANUARY: New version of *Jesus is All the World to Me* by Colleen & Grace is produced.

2003

DECEMBER: The first Heartwarming Christmas Tour of Homes is held – a fundraiser for GEMS Girls' Clubs.

NOVEMBER: The name of Counselor's Convention was changed to Counselors' Leadership Conference.

MARCH: **SHINE** *brightly* sold through QSP –Reader's Digest Fundraiser Program – catalog, enabling girls not in club to more easily purchase the magazine.

2002

SEPTEMBER: GEMS has been invited to be involved in the *Girls of Grace* tour organized by Point of Grace.

APRIL: New website for GEMS unveiled.

2001

MAY: *Touch Magazine* has a name change – **SHINE** *brightly*. A new magazine for Awareness Level girls is introduced – *Sparkle. Power House* is the new name given to the previously named *Celebration Gatherings*.

MARCH: Bridges board game is designed.

2000

NOVEMBER: ACTS (Area Counselor Training and Support Program) adopted. Thirty Four areas replaced the existing 52 councils. This will provide on enhanced plan for delivering training to leaders.

MAY: *Finishing Touches! On Guard Series & Kingdom Kids* made available.

1999

AUGUST: 1st Get Connected! Camp is held on Lake Tippecanoe in Webster, Indiana.

1998

HAPPY 40TH BIRTHDAY GEMS/CALVINETTES

1997

SEPTEMBER: 1st Celebration Gathering held in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

1996

NOVEMBER: GEB approves revising *the Discovery Badge Book* and utilizing more color on the merit badges.

SEPTEMBER: *Touch Magazine* goes full color throughout!

MAY: GEB (GEMS Executive Board) decides to adopt the title Club Coordinator instead of Head Counselor. First Annual GEMS Golf Classic held – a fundraiser for GEMS Girls' Clubs.

MARCH: New advanced curriculum *Finishing Touches!* completed and approved to market outside of GEMS/Calvinettes.

JANUARY: A new logo for GEMS Girls' Clubs was adopted.

1995

NOVEMBER: GEMS Girls' Clubs chosen as the new name of the ministry. This was done in an effort to better convey our mission and vision – helping bring girls everywhere into a living, dynamic relationship with Jesus Christ.

MAY: Approved adopting new version of *Jesus is All the World to Me* by Colleen & Grace. *Touch* utilizes first full color insert. *Touch* circulation is 15,000.

MARCH: Jan Boone begins tenure as Executive Director. New Awareness materials to replace *Busy Bees and Blossoms and Beehives*. Titles for new materials: *God's Kids* (grade 1), *Hearts Reaching Up to God*, and *Hearts Reaching Out to Others* (grades 2 & 3).

FEBRUARY: Jo Ilbrink retires as Executive Director.

JANUARY: The Awareness Level names to include: Grade One – Observer, Grade Two – Learner, Grade Three – Achiever. CEB approves *Touch* to include use of full color on some pages.

1994

NOVEMBER: Jan Boone selected to be Executive Director upon Jo Ilbrink's retirement.

JULY: Celebrate 25th Annual Calvinette Counselors' Convention at Wheaton, Illinois.

JANUARY: The CEB (Calvinettes Executive Board) approved expanding Awareness Calvinettes to first grade.

1993

NOVEMBER: Personnel Committee accepted Jo Ilbrink's intention to retire as of March 1, 1995.

1992

JULY: Revised *Discovery* handbook introduced at Convention in Vancouver, British Columbia.

JUNE: Decision made to change the name of Busy Bees to Awareness Calvinettes.

1990

NOVEMBER: A program introduced to minister to girls who live in isolated areas—mission fields, military bases, etc.

JULY: *Clothes Designed by Jesus* for Busy Bees introduced at Convention in London, Ontario.

1989

JULY: *Women of Faith – Then and Now* for Busy Bees introduced at Convention in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

JANUARY: Position of part-time Leadership Training Coordinator approved.

1987

MARCH: Decision made to begin long-range plan to unify all program levels and materials.

1983

HAPPY 25TH ANNIVERSARY GEMS/CALVINETTES

1981

MAY: Bible helps publication renamed *Connections*, mailed three times per year to registered clubs. *Cable* becomes a quarterly publication to counselors.

1978

JULY: First theme badge developed, first theme sectional offered at Convention.

1976

MAY: A committee was appointed to write new material for Advanced Calvinettes to replace Manna Publications' *Charm Course*.

MARCH: Jo Ilbrink hired as the first full-time Executive Director.

1973

MARCH: A survey showed approximately 20% of girls in Calvinettes did not come from families who attended church.

1972

NOVEMBER: Adopted as Calvinette verse and aim: Micah 6:8, song: *Jesus Is All the World to Me*.

JULY: Program revisions included: The youngest girls would be called Busy Bees. Uniform suggested: a yellow vest with a bee insignia for membership. The rank structure was dropped from current programs.

JANUARY: Report on program revision committee: Badges for Junior and Senior Calvinettes should be separated.

1971

APRIL: The three ministries of Cadets, Calvinettes, and YCF joined together as UCY (United Calvinist Youth) and were all housed in the same building in Grand Rapids, MI.

1970

DECEMBER: *Touch* Circulation at 9,700.

SEPTEMBER: First issue of *Touch* published

JULY: 1st Calvinette Counselors' Convention held in Niagara Falls, Ontario.

FEBRUARY: Magazine name: *Touch* – suggests contact; by touching we are aware of others. Suggests that girls, counselors, and the Service Center keep in touch by sharing ideas, plans, suggestions.

1969

OCTOBER: The decision was made to work toward a new magazine for Calvinettes.

FEBRUARY: A new part time director, Cecilia Mereness, was hired. The Charm Course from Manna Publications was offered for grades 9 and 10.

1966

SEPTEMBER: Calvinettes has 461 clubs.

1965

JULY: Shirley Lautenbach appointed part-time Calvinette director.

1964

JULY: Calvinist Cadet Corps – YCF Study committee presented a suggested organizational chart consisting of three youth ministry branches (Calvinettes, Cadets, and YCF) headed by a united youth board. The organizational structure was approved.

1961

Theme – *Calvinettes Be Thankful to God* – first theme introduced.

1960

JANUARY: Mrs. L. Barb Vredevoogd appointed first (part-time) Calvinette Director.

1959

JUNE: Leadership Training Committee appointed to plan Leadership Training Courses for various areas to include instruction on how to teach the Bible lessons as well as handicraft demonstration.

FEBRUARY: First Aid badge – required for Gleaner; Etiquette and Hostessing – required for Reaper; Homemaking – required for Harvester.

JANUARY: It was decided to:

- Order white neckerchiefs
- Have badges and emblem designed
- Approve certificates of rank

1958

APRIL: The suggestion was made to use the name Calvinettes for the organization.

FEBRUARY: Organizational meeting held at Beverly CRC, Wyoming, Michigan. Panel discussion included:

Importance of meeting spiritual needs of girls and molding their lives

Inviting all girls to join

The goal of clubs should be:

Study of the Word,

encourage participation

Christian fellowship among girls

Good fun

Developing leadership

Get spiritual interest of girls back into church rather than school

JANUARY: Meeting resulted in appointment of committee to prepare program and constitution.

1957

AUGUST: The YCF (Young Calvinist Federation) board agreed that the girls' club movement required assistance and appointed a committee to take action in this matter.