



Dear Pastor,

A sincere hello from GEMS Girls' Clubs! We are grateful for you and your club. We count it a privilege to partner with you in discipling girls to become faithful followers of Jesus!

Coming soon is something we call GEMS Sunday, which can be scheduled for April 28, May 5, or another date of your choosing. It's a special day to celebrate the girls and women in your GEMS Club. It's a great opportunity to let your congregation know what takes place at GEMS while providing girls with leadership opportunities in intergenerational worship. This includes sharing the Annual Theme studied in GEMS Clubs throughout the season.

This year we studied what it means to *Be a Blessing*. The theme verse is 2 Corinthians 9:8, *And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all you need, you will abound in every good work.*

Your Club Coordinator has more information including a sample bulletin cover, children's bulletin, and litany. Following this letter, you will find more details about the theme. You can also visit gemsgc.org/volunteer-resources/?filter=gems-sunday to download these resources.

Please talk to your Club Coordinator today to put plans in place! When you do, ask if she is attending the annual GEMS Conference scheduled for July 26-28, 2019, at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Encourage your entire GEMS team to attend!

Also, ask if your club is a member of GEMS ReFresh—the new online training site. If so, it gives access to Sunday School teachers, youth workers, and other ministries within your church. I pray it is encouraging and equipping you and your volunteers. If your club has not subscribed yet, please go to gemsrefresh.org. There's even a sample message for you to watch on the site. So far, we have over 1,600 leaders participating across North America.

Finally, I would love to know how we can serve you and your club better. Send me an email or pick up the phone and call. I would count it a privilege if you would introduce yourself and tell me about your GEMS Club.

May your GEMS Sunday bless you and all those worshipping and experiencing it with you!

Serving together,

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "Cindy" followed by a stylized flourish.

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A ministry of Dynamic Youth Ministries



Theme Logo

The theme logo is available on the *Theme Resource DVD*. As God's child, His daughter receives God's blessings and eagerly shares them with others so they can know Him, too. From the abundance of His good gifts she abounds in doing good.

Theme Song

"We Receive Your Blessing" by Grace and Natasha Moes

GEMS Sunday

GEMS Sunday is scheduled for April 28 or May 5, 2019. (These are suggested dates only. Please feel free to schedule it for any date that works for you.)

Bulletin Cover or Insert, Litany, and Children's Bulletin

Full color, theme-related GEMS Girls' Clubs bulletin covers are packaged in quantities of 100 and available in two sizes, 8 1/2 x 11 and 8 1/2 x 14, for a nominal cost (smaller sample enclosed). A bulletin insert is also available in quantities of 100. This 5.5 x 8.5 insert has the same information as the bulletin cover (sample enclosed). Bulletin covers and inserts can be ordered from the GEMS Global Office. Also enclosed in this packet are reproducible copies of our *Be a Blessing* litany and a Children's Bulletin. The litany is also available via PowerPoint. Download from gemsgc.org.

Be a Blessing

God's blessings are packaged big and small, on mountains and in valleys, temporary and eternal. But of all the good gifts He gives us, our greatest blessing is Jesus. In Him and through Him we can find peace and joy. In Him and through Him we can help other people do the same.

And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work (2 Corinthians 9:8).

Blessings draw us closer to God and ignite a desire to draw others to Him, too. So when we live aware of God's goodness, we abound in all that is good. We are eager and equipped to bless! We bless God with our thankfulness, and we bless others with our genuine love and care.

Theme Aims

- To become aware of and grateful for God's blessings.
- To speak and pray God's blessings on all people.
- To become an agent of God's blessing who loves, serves, and is for people.

Theme Verse

And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work (2 Corinthians 9:8).

Theme Outline

Blessed to be a blessing. It can sound arrogant—a humble way to brag and boast. Confusing—where does blessing fit in the tough stuff? And cliché—the hashtag (#blessed) of the happy who get what they want. Which may not describe you or the people in your congregation right now.

What is a blessing, really? We have to rightly define it before we determine what to do with it. We discover in Scripture that a blessing is anything that God gives that draws you closer to Him.



Look in Scripture:

Jacob. In Genesis 32 Jacob spends an entire night wrestling God. Then at daybreak God said, “Let me go.” Jacob said, “I will not let you go unless you bless me!” So, God blessed him. And he walked away with a limp! Where’s the blessing? His limp changed his walk with God and others. The one who had been wrestling since he was in the womb with his twin brother is now renamed Israel—the one who struggled with God and with men and overcame.

Abram. He was a nomad traveling into the unknown. He knew the grief of losing a brother and a father as well as the heartache of wanting a child. And in the midst of his mess (which probably didn’t feel much like a blessing) God was there.

“I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you” (Genesis 12:2-3).

Abram was blessed so that all people would be blessed!

Paul. In 2 Corinthians Paul writes that he was beaten, shipwrecked, imprisoned, and received a tormenting thorn in the flesh that he pleaded with God three times to please take it away. And God said no. Is a no a blessing? It can be if it draws you closer to God. And for Paul it did. God said to Paul, *“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness”* (2 Corinthians 12:9). And Paul believed God and experienced more of Him. How do we know? Paul said, *“When I am weak, then I am strong!”* (2 Corinthians 12:10) He saw the blessing.

Jesus. Jesus is our greatest blessing! *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ* (Ephesians 1:3). We are blessed in Christ so that all peoples will come to Him! This is God’s heart. His desire is for His children to be close to Him.

We are blessed to be a blessing! It’s kind of like a seed. When a seed breaks through the soil it first looks up and then reaches out with fruit like tomatoes, apples, or flowers.

The blessed:

- 1. Look up! Bless God by thanking Him for our blessings.**
- 2. Reach out! Bless others by sharing His blessings.**

There are so many ways to bless God and others! But being a blessing was never intended to be a to-do list.

When you plant a seed in a garden, you don’t tell it what to do. “Seed, now grow deep roots and bear much fruit!” No! You plant the seed, God grows it, and the seed does what it was designed by God to do.

From the abundance of His blessings, we bless by planting ourselves in the truth of who He is—our Blessor, and who we are—the Blessed. When we receive God’s blessings and eagerly share them with all peoples—they can know Him, too!



Possible Object Lessons and Other Message Enhancements

1. Challenge your congregation to memorize the two steps of blessing God and others. Or ask the GEMS to teach them!
2. Challenge your congregation to journal God's blessings and to journey their thanks. How do you journey thanks? Every step of every day—bless God for it before you do it. It will take great effort and discipline, but you can discover it affects everything.
3. Challenge your congregation to do a blessing project together. Maybe you highlight the projects different groups doing—boys, girls, youth group, seniors, etc. And then highlight an intergenerational project that is already in place or suggest an idea or more for people to consider.
4. Be available! Either during the service or afterward, make yourself (or a team) available to pray with anyone who wants to learn more about Jesus.
5. Invite girls to read other verses they studied in the theme study or to share how they blessed God and others this season.
6. Allow girls to participate fully in various elements of leading the worship service—reading Scripture, signing the theme song with (or without) creative movements, serving as greeters, offering prayer, giving personal testimony.