



## 1958 TO TODAY

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:

#### 2023

GEMS Girls's Clubs begins operating under GEMS Global, a US nonprofit 501(c)3, and moves to its new location in Wyoming, Michigan.

#### 2022

ReFyne, a fun, faith-filled app for tween girls was launched enabling the ministry to reach even more girls here, there, and everywhere.

#### 2021

ShineBrightly Activity Boxes for girls ages 7-12 was released.

#### 2020

First Global GEMS Day held.  
In the midst of the pandemic, GEMS was not canceled. For the first time, the Leadership Conference was hosted online and curriculum was expanded to include hybrid options.

#### 2019

The *LOVED.* curriculum was released as a foundational curriculum for every new club, teaching girls who God is and their Truth-filled identity.

#### 2018

##### HAPPY 60TH ANNIVERSARY GEMS!

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

#### 2017

Cindy Bultema begins tenure as Executive Director. The Esther School becomes the fourth ministry of Dynamic Youth Ministries.

#### 2013

GEMS holds its first online auction.  
The Esther School in Zambia starts its second year with a new first grade classroom.

#### 2012

The Esther School in Zambia opens!

#### 2011

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

#### 2010

It is decided to adapt GEMS Zambian curriculum for use in all developing countries.  
Two interns travel to Zambia to work with clubs, help with training, and support the growing number of CITs there.

#### 2009

GEMS partners with Zonderkidz to bring *The Beauty of Believing Tour* to Grand Rapids, MI.  
Construction on The Esther School in Zambia began.

#### 2008

##### HAPPY 50TH ANNIVERSARY GEMS/CALVINETTES

#### 2007

The GEMS website is given a completely new and fresh look.  
A promo video for GEMS Girls' Clubs is created. This can be used in churches or at large community gatherings to promote GEMS.

## 2006

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

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

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

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

## 2003

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

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

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

## 2002

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

New website for GEMS unveiled.

## 2001

*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*.

Bridges board game is designed.

## 2000

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

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

## 1999

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

## 1998

HAPPY 40TH BIRTHDAY GEMS/CALVINETTES

## 1997

1st Celebration Gathering held in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

## 1996

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

*Touch Magazine* goes full color throughout.

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.

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

A new logo for GEMS Girls' Clubs was adopted.

## 1995

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.

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.

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).

Jo Ilbrink retires as Executive Director.

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

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

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

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

## 1993

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

## 1992

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

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

## 1990

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

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

## 1989

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

Position of part-time Leadership Training Coordinator approved.

## 1987

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

## 1983

### HAPPY 25TH ANNIVERSARY GEMS/CALVINETTES

## 1981

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

## 1978

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

## 1976

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

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

## 1973

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

## 1972

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

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.

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

## 1971

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

*Touch* Circulation at 9,700.

First issue of *Touch* published

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

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

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

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

## 1966

Calvinettes has 461 clubs.

## 1965

Shirley Lautenbach appointed part-time Calvinette director.

## 1964

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

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

## 1959

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.

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

It was decided to:

Order white neckerchiefs

Have badges and emblem designed

Approve certificates of rank

## 1958

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

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

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

## 1957

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