

**THE SALVATION ARMY
Women's Sunday**

Leaders' Recognition Luncheon

Welcome by the Women's Ministry Leader or Corps Officer

Invocation

Luncheon

**Special Music
"I'm Set Apart for Jesus"
Song #495**

**Recognition & Meditation
"Precious Stones of Remembrance"**

Benediction

Then mount four rows of precious stones on it (breastpiece). In the first row there shall be a ruby a topaz and a beryl; in the second row a turquoise, a sapphire and an emerald; in the third row a jacinth, an agate and an amethyst; in the fourth row a chrysolite, an onyx and a jasper. Mount them in gold filigree settings. There are to be twelve stones, one for each of the names of the sons of Israel, each engraved like a seal with the name of one of the twelve tribes.

Whenever Aaron enters the Holy Place, he will bear the names of the Sons of Israel over his heart on the breastpiece of decision as a continuing memorial before the Lord. (Exodus 28:17-21; 29 NIV)

Preparation: Know the birth months of those that are to be recognized. For a gift, you may find any birthstone pin, e.g. angel, cross, heart. The worship center may be colorful cloth with gems scattered around a Bible. Gems may be found at a party supply store or catalogue.

Table Decorations: Picture holder – the style that displays several pictures on paper clip type holders. Small heart cutouts. Place the name of each women's ministries member along with her particular birthstone. Display on the picture holder.

Recognition: When presenting the birthstone pin, explain the significance and short history of each month's gem along with the following meditation.

Meditation

Every year we all celebrate the day of our birth. No matter how old we get, we like it when someone remembers us on our birthday – some may not want others to remember their age, but we do think it special when our day is remembered with gifts and birthday wishes. It has become a custom to wear our birthstones; either on a ring, necklace or pin. In researching the meaning of birthstones, one may find some very interesting information.

The following is a brief history and significance of each birthstone: (recognition may take place at this time, giving birthstone to each leader)

<i>Month</i>	<i>Stone</i>	<i>Significance</i>
January	Garnet	Loyalty
February	Amethyst	Dependable
March	Aquamarine	Grace
April	Diamond	Innocence
May	Emerald	Wealth
June	Pearl	Purity
July	Ruby	Perfection
August	Peridot	Gladness
September	Sapphire	Prosperity
October	Opal	Hope
November	Topaz	Cheerfulness
December	Zircon	Success

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January - Garnet

The brilliance of the Garnet makes this gemstone a most prized possession. During the 18th century, genuine Garnets were considered the most treasured jewel to own, and it was worn by only the most wealthy and influential people of the era. It is said in mythology that anyone who possessed a Garnet would enjoy long life, good health and fortune.

Genuine GARNETS are found in Africa, India and North America, specifically Arizona, California and Idaho. South America, Madagascar and Europe (Czechoslovakia).

February – Amethyst

The genuine Amethyst, because of its beauty, warmth and color, has always been a very desirable gemstone. It was Bacchus, god of wine, who was believed to have given the Amethyst its glorious purple when a nymph who rejected his affection was transformed into a crystal, Bacchus endowed the crystal with a deep purple and thus the Amethyst was born.

This gemstone is mined in South America, Russia and India.

March – Aquamarine

The genuine Aquamarine reminded the Romans of the Mediterranean Sea and derives its name from the Latin word “aqua” meaning water and “marinus” meaning sea. It is said in mythology that Queen Mary of England became fascinated with the beautiful color and had her crown bejeweled with Aquamarines. This enhanced their popularity and they became in great demand.

Primary sources for Aquamarines are Brazil, Russia, Africa and Madagascar.

April – Diamond

The genuine Diamond has always been the most treasured jewel known to man. They were formed thousands of years ago by nature and generally found in remote and inaccessible areas. Only one Diamond in four is suitable for gemstone quality, the remainder are used for industrial purposes. It is said in mythology that a person fortunate enough to wear a diamond will possess qualities of purity, love, joy and wealth.

The major sources for Diamonds are South Africa, Russia, Brazil and recently, Mainland China.

May – Emerald

The word Emerald is derived from the Sanskrit word meaning the “green of growing things”, and people who wore emeralds symbolized a continually growing love. Emeralds are considered to be one of the most prized and valued gemstones. It is said in Greek mythology that when your eyes grew tired and strained, they would be refreshed by looking at Emeralds.

Genuine Emeralds are mined primarily in Brazil, Columbia and Africa in extremely hazardous and remote areas.

June – Pearl

The Japanese have developed expertise in breeding oysters specifically for producing cultured Pearls. Today, cultured Pearls are highly desirable for their beautiful luster. They are traditionally a symbol of good taste and wealth and throughout the ages have been worn by queens and royalty.

Pearls are principally harvested in oysters in the Sea of Japan.

July – Ruby

The genuine Ruby is considered a highly prized gem and of enduring value. They are found in remote, inaccessible areas of the jungle and the same mining techniques have been used for hundreds of years. As they are found, the miners take the stones to the bazaars and sell them in stalls where general articles of far lesser values are sold such as fruit, vegetables and handicrafts. It is said in mythology by the famous Englishman, Sir John Mandeville, those wearing genuine Rubies would enjoy good harvest, fortune and health.

Rubies are primarily mined in Burma and Thailand.

August – Peridot

The beauty and brilliance of the genuine Peridot makes it a treasured possession by all who wear it. It is said that Crusaders traveling the continents of Europe first discovered genuine Peridots. The gems, which were thought to symbolize chivalry, bravery and sincerity, were presented to the Cathedrals of Europe by the Crusaders and favored for use in ecclesiastical jewelry since the Middle Ages.

The principal source of genuine Peridots is St. John, a small island in the Red Sea. They are sometimes found in small quantities in other locations.

September – Sapphire

The genuine Sapphire possesses outstanding beauty and has a noble history. Sapphires have always been highly valued by the Royal Family of England and their collection may be seen in ceremonial occasions. It is said in mythology, those possessing a genuine Sapphire will enjoy prosperity.

Sapphires are primarily mined in Australia, Cambodia, Thailand and Sri Lanka (Ceylon), in close proximity to Ruby mines.

October – Opal

Today, one ounce of fine Opal is worth about ten times the price of one ounce of gold. It is said in mythology, the learned men in times of Helen of Troy expounded on the virtues of the Opal, claiming it possessed the most beauty of all gemstones known to them. It was described by Shakespeare as the “miracle and Queen of gems”, possessing magical qualities. Its fiery beauty makes the Genuine Opal one of the most popular gemstones of modern times.

Genuine Opals are mined in the Lightning Ridge area of Australia, an extremely arid climate.

November – Citrine

Genuine Citrine is noted for its transparency. It is said in mythology, Citrine was known as the “stone of strength” and was worn as a mark of power and authority by Emperors and Kings.

Genuine Citrine is found, almost exclusively, in Brazil although some mining is done in Madagascar.

December – Zircon

Genuine Blue Zircon, due to its brilliant color, is ideally suited for birthstone jewelry and its quality produces an effect far in excess of its low price. It is a relatively new gemstone, and was first discovered in the 18th century. The popularity of this precious gem has increased to a point where demand is surpassing supply.ⁱⁱ

The earliest association of twelve stones with the months of the year appears to have originated with the twelve precious stones in the breastplate of Aaron the Levite priest, brother of Moses. These twelve gems represented the twelve tribes of Israel. They were placed on the breastpiece to be worn over the heart of Aaron as he went before the Lord in the Holy Place. They were to be worn as a memorial as decisions were made on behalf of the people of God.

Christ Jesus sent by His Father to live among us, Immanuel, to experience human emotions, thoughts and life. He gave His own life for us and now sits at the “right hand” of God pleading our case. He knows us by name and loves us – He took the place of the Aaronic priesthood:

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. (Hebrews 4:14-16 NIV)

The Charge: May we as women's ministries leaders and members be a "precious stone" to those whom we minister. May we keep the names of loved ones on our hearts as we bring them in prayer before the Father through Jesus Christ our Lord.

As you come to Him, the living Stone—rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to Him—you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light. (I Peter 2:4-5, 9)

ⁱ Birthstone chart adapted from: www.thebrazilianconnection.com/birthstonewebpage.html, 2/26/04

ⁱⁱ Birthstone information adapted from: www.jcpenney.net/guide/jewelry/gemstone/history.htm, 2/26/04