

SUMMER FRIENDSHIP GATHERINGS

2026 SUMMER FRIENDSHIP GATHERING THEME OVERVIEW

“UNSHAKABLE!”

- Last year’s Summer Friendship Gathering theme was titled “RISE UP!” We learned how God raised up His people to new life with just speaking His Word. We learned that we can also Rise Up and hope, Rise Up and believe, and Rise Up and live for Him.
- This year’s Summer Friendship Gathering theme is titled **“UNSHAKABLE!”** During the three days of the Gathering we will learn how we can have an unshakable faith in the fire, an unshakable focus of praise and how we can live on the unshakable foundation of God’s Word.
- **Our theme Bible verse for this week is:**

Psalm 16:8

“I will keep my eyes always on the Lord, with Him at my right hand I will not be shaken.”



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“UNSHAKABLE!”

- We will learn that we can remain unshakable in the face of trials. We will study the unshakable faith of three young Hebrew men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They served the King of Babylon but refused to bow to his idol.
- Then Bible memory verse for Day 1 is **Hebrews 11:1 “Faith is being sure of what we hope for. It is being sure of what we do not see.”**
- King Nebuchadnezzar was a very proud man; He built a massive gold statue or idol—90 feet tall!
- He commanded people to come from every nation to see his gold statue and bow down and worship his idol. Anyone who refused would be thrown into a blazing furnace.
- The young men knew it was wrong and refused to bow down to anyone except God. They loved God and had faith that He could save them. They chose to obey God rather than obey the King, even if it meant being thrown into a fiery furnace.
- But then something incredible happened! The King saw four men untied and walking around in the fire, unharmed. When the men came out of the fire, not a single hair on their heads was burned. They didn’t even smell like smoke.
- Their willingness to die rather than worship any other god revealed their unshakable faith. Through this incredible rescue, God demonstrated that He alone is the true God, the King of Kings, worthy of all worship.

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- On the second night we will join Paul and Silas as they praise God from a prison cell. They will show us their unshakable focus even in dark and painful circumstances. Their worship and praise to God became a witness to spread the good news of Jesus Christ.
- Our Bible memory verse for Day 2 comes from **Psalm 30:12** **“So my heart will sing your praises. I can’t keep silent.”**
- We will learn that focus means paying attention to one thing and not getting distracted with things around you. Paul and Silas were focused on spreading the good news of Jesus Christ to the people in Philippi. The people of Philippi didn’t like that and had them beaten, chained up and thrown in prison.
- But while in a dark prison cell Paul and Silas focused on praying and singing hymns to God—the other prisoners were listening!
- While they were singing, a powerful earthquake shook the prison from top to bottom. All at once the prison doors flew open. The chains fell off Paul and Silas and all the prisoners!
- When the jailer saw that the doors were open and all the prisoners free of their chains, he was about to harm himself.
- But Paul and Silas said “Stop! Don’t harm yourself.” Seeing the love and power of God, Jailer asked them how he could be saved. After Paul and Silas spoke the word of the Lord to them, the jailer and his whole family became Christians.
- Just like Paul and Silas, we can praise God when we are hurting and trust Him through difficult times. And when we do, God may use us to share the good news of Jesus Christ to others.

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- On the last night of the Gathering the lesson can be taught as the message during the closing worship service. There will not be a small group discussion time on Day 3.
- In our final Bible lesson we will learn of a parable that Jesus shared with His disciples at the end of the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus told of a wise man who built his house on an unshakable foundation. The rains came and the winds blew but the house built on the Rock stood firm. We too can stand strong when our lives are built on the unshakable foundation of God’s Word.
- He also told of a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”
- Our Bible memory verse for Day 3 comes from **Matthew 7:24** “**So then, everyone who hears My words and puts them into practice is like a wise man. He builds his house on the rock.**”
- Jesus is telling us about two builders. One who builds his house on the unshakable foundation of rock, the other who builds his house on just sand with no foundation.
- Hearing God’s Word is the beginning but putting it into practice makes a solid foundation. It’s not enough to hear God’s Word, read it, even memorize it. The real difference is, hearing and obeying versus hearing and doing nothing.
- Storms will come—challenges, disappointments, worries—but when our foundation is on the solid rock of God’s Word, we will stand firm.
- You will want to review the Large Group Leader’s Guide to help you plan your lesson for teaching the large group.

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- The Large Group Leader’s Guide has helpful notes, key points, and discussion questions for Days 1, 2, and 3. It also includes the skits, and object lessons for each day.
- You will want to review the Large Group Leader’s Guide to help you plan your lesson for teaching the large group.
- You will also want to review the Small Group Discussion Guide Booklet if you are leading or participating in the discussion groups. These booklets are identical to the ones our friends will receive. We have added helpful hints on leading a discussion group along with answers to the discussion questions.
- Thank you for being part of this year’s Summer Friendship Gathering. If you have any questions, or need additional information, you can email us at connect@connection-ministries.org, or call our office 317-646-5067.



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