

Under the Big Top

Julia Bettencourt



Lions, bears, and tigers...Oh my!

Circus and carnival themes are always so fun! As long as you leave out the clowns! Anyone else feel that way? I do love all the fun things a circus theme can be, especially for a baby shower. Little elephants, bears, and all those things are quite fun.

And a carnival theme, especially in the fall is always a fun thing. I'm an adult and I still love going to Harvest Fairs and Harvest Carnivals. They just make me smile.

Circus/Carnival Event Concept

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The event themes on the website can be used for showers, parties, women's ministry retreats and activities, or church functions. Each theme will have one or several possible spiritual applications. *I give you lots of info and ideas—You pick just a few to enhance your event. More ideas can be used for showers and parties, but less is always more for ministry events.*

Theme Title Ideas

- Amazing Acts
- At The Circus
- Circus of the Stars (Bible Heroes)
- Country Fair
- Fall Bazaar (craft fair)
- Harvest Carnival
- High-Flying Fun!
- Step Right Up!
- Three Ring Circus

Spiritual & General Applications

- Concentrate on feats of faith. (Hebrews 11)
- Concentrate on including everyone ("Come One. Come All")
- A circus - carnival type theme. Idea for a Harvest Party for kids.
- A circus animal theme. Idea for baby showers
- See the Circus Devotional Starters

<https://www.juliabettencourt.com/womens-ministry/devotional-helps/devotional-starter-circus.pdf>

Theme Verse Suggestions

- *Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Hebrews 11:33, 34*
- *The LORD is their strength, and he is the saving strength of his anointed. Psalm 28:8*

Devotional Starters and Workshop Ideas

- Do a study of the Heroes of Faith and their death-defying acts. (Hebrews 11)
- Do a study of the “Amazing” miracles of Jesus.
- See the Carnival/Circus Devotional “Starters”.
<https://www.juliabettencourt.com/womens-ministry/devotional-helps/carnival-circus-devotional-ideas.pdf>
- This is the outline to one of my older devotionals, “Under the Big Top” (2009).
 - The Strong Man – Samson (Judges 16)
 - The Lion Tamer – Daniel (Daniel 6)
 - The Giant – David & Goliath (1 Samuel 17)
 - The Flying Trapeze – Heroes of Faith (Hebrews 11)

Simple Decorating

- Think circus and bright colors
- Balloons
- Streamers
- Colorful pennants
- Circus animal cutouts
- Use hard plastic popcorn containers for vases.
- Simple Décor: Tray filled with carnival/circus items such as a stuffed circus animal (such as elephant, tiger, etc.), tickets, caramel apples, megaphone, etc.

Ice Breakers

- Play carnival type games - Toss the ping pong ball into small jars, Toy bowling, drop the clothespin into a small mouth jar, etc.

Music

- Play some carnival/circus type background music.
- *Dare to be a Daniel* (PP Bliss)
- *Only a Boy Named David*
- *My God is so Good (so strong and so mighty)*

Favor Ideas

- Candy apple wrapped with cellophane
- Animal cracker box
- Large bright colored lollipop (the kind that swirls around)
- Popcorn (Check dollar bins for paper bags that look like popcorn holders)
- Large funny glasses
- Taffy candy
- Clown noses
- Although we may associate "peanuts" with the circus, I know there are so many people allergic these days that even the smell can be harmful, so I don't suggest peanuts unless they are "Circus Peanuts" marshmallow candy.

Door Prize Ideas

- Anything that says, "fun" such as oversized candy items,
- Christian comedian videos, etc.
- Bag of Circus Peanuts candy (tie with bow)
- Package of animal crackers or cookies
- Funny socks
- Packaged cotton candy
- Packaged candy apples
- Stuffed animal (lion, tiger, bear, or elephant)

Invitation Wording

- *Come One. Come All*
- *Help us welcome our Little Peanut* (baby shower)
- *The Circus is in Town!*
- *Welcome to the greatest baby on earth!* (baby shower)

Just for Fun

- Make ticket type invitations
- Group Project – Make candy apples together.
- Group Project – Have a candy pull (taffy) together.
- Paint circus animals on plywood or even a strong man (or woman) and make face cut-outs for use as photo ops.
- Have a ringmaster (as master of ceremonies)
- If having a harvest party for kids, encourage them dress up in Biblical costumes.

Food and Serving

- Homemade cotton candy
- Circus peanut candy
- Popcorn
- Funnel cakes
- Candy apples
- Hotdogs or Pigs in a Blanket
- Soft pretzels
- Rent or find someone within your church that has a fun machine from a rental place for the event such as popcorn machine, snow cone machine, or cotton candy machine.
- Have a few deep fryers on hand to deep fry "junk food" such as Oreos, Twinkies, Snickers, cheesecake Be sure to use safety precautions.

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