

Coffee in the Swarm | Nicole Sherer

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Graceland University, campus ministry, Shalom, Enactus club, church experience, World Conference, young adults, higher education, Community of Christ

SPEAKERS

Nicole Sherer, Mike Hoffman, Aliyah Farrell

Aliyah Farrell 00:27

Welcome back to Coffee in the Swarm, a Project Zion Podcast production coming to you from Graceland University in Lamoni, Iowa. The Swarm is our on-campus snack bar in the Newcom Student Union. This year, our podcast is co-hosted by campus chaplain, Aaliyah, and hosted by campus minister, Mike Hoffman. Coffee in the Swarm is where we interview students at Graceland who are connected to Community of Christ. Today, we are here with ...

Nicole Sherer 00:50

Nicole Sherer

Aliyah Farrell 00:52

Yay.

Mike Hoffman 00:53

Welcome Nicole.

Aliyah Farrell 00:54

Okay, Nicole, tell us about yourself. Tell us your story.

Nicole Sherer 00:58

So as I said, I'm Nicole. I am from a tiny little town in Iowa called Woodbine,

Mike Hoffman 01:04

But that seems to be a famous town around Graceland.

Nicole Sherer 01:07

Around Graceland, it is. There's a strong Graceland-Woodbine pipeline. So ,there's a lot of Woodbine students here, but I graduated with about 30 kids in my class, so it's pretty small, kind of like Lamoni, actually, [MH: yeah]. But I am pretty involved on campus. I'm part of COSA board. I also have hobbies I like. I like to read and write and crochet. I do a lot of crocheting.

Mike Hoffman 01:32

And you're part of Inspire, which is the Community of Christ leadership program here on campus too.

Nicole Sherer 01:36

Yes,

Mike Hoffman 01:37

Great. Well, we're glad to have you here.

Aliyah Farrell 01:40

Yes. Okay, tell us about your year, your major.

Mike Hoffman 01:43

Oh, wait, I want to ask Oh, her crochet. Yes. So, my family, my mother-in-law, my wife, my daughters, all crochet. So, tell me about that. I've heard that you crochet some very unusual things.

Nicole Sherer 01:59

I do. Right now I'm working on a giant Triceratops. Triceratops.

Mike Hoffman 02:05

A giant... How big is it? I mean, I you sort of showed me a picture, but I had no clue.

Nicole Sherer 02:10

I'm estimating it's going to be about the size of my torso, like from my waist to shoulder. [MH: Oh my gosh]. So, pretty giant. [[MH: Yeah.] And then I also do simpler stuff, like baby blankets and ...

Mike Hoffman 02:20

So, so is that something you will stuff then, is that how it gets its shape?

Nicole Sherer 02:25

Yes, I have a big bin of stuffing, [MH: okay] putting in it.

Mike Hoffman 02:28

That's cool. That's very cool. What color are you doing it in?

Nicole Sherer 02:31

Pink, all sorts of pinks.

Aliyah Farrell 02:34

I've also heard that you do balloon animal events around campus.

Mike Hoffman 02:38

Way a minute, you do it at events? Balloons animals?

Aliyah Farrell 02:41

She did last year, right?

Nicole Sherer 02:42

Yes, I, I am. I can do balloon art. I did it at Graceland Enactus Spring Fest last year. I made like hundreds of balloon animals. That's a skill I picked up when I used to work at the nursing home in Woodbine, um during COVID, we all had to pick up a special skill, and it was that, or be a Shirley Temple impersonator. So...

Mike Hoffman 03:10

I think you chose wisely. So ...

Nicole Sherer 03:13

I always, my friends always say I have specialty skills like crochet and balloon art, but not so much the practical ones.

Mike Hoffman 03:21

Thank you for sharing.

Aliyah Farrell 03:22

So, tell us about your year, your major, your house.

Nicole Sherer 03:27

Um, I'm a sophomore. I'm majoring in history, and I'm on Shalom, which is something that has really had a strong impact on me. I really like my Shalom girls.

Mike Hoffman 03:37

Are you? Is Shalom like a legacy house for you, like your mom or anybody. How you ended up there gotcha, and you're a history major, yes, what do you want to do with that?

Nicole Sherer 03:42

My roommate's mom, okay, Cadence Sires, her mom was on Shalom. So that's how I ... Um, I'm not sure. Okay, that's fair. I'm hoping to pick up English when they put that back next fall. So ...

Mike Hoffman 04:00

Is that a definite thing to bring in English?

Nicole Sherer 04:01

They announced it.

Mike Hoffman 04:02

Oh, I missed that announcement. So...

04:04

I hope they're also bringing theater, theater back, because Janae is in the same position that she's in. Oh, okay, it'll start like one way, and then it's [MH: Gotcha. Okay]. Yeah. So we talked about the Woodbine and the Community of Christ, kind of like link. I kind of want to talk about that. And like, how church was for you back home.

Nicole Sherer 04:25

As I mentioned, Woodbine is a really small town, so our church congregation wasn't super big, probably like 25 ish people when I was growing up. Now it's ...

Mike Hoffman 04:36

Like on a Sunday morning, 25? Okay.

Nicole Sherer 04:39

Now it's a bit smaller, but I was related to a lot of the people there, so I felt comfortable from the start, and I was involved with the service probably like once a month, which, I always say, really helped me with public speaking and singing. Like, I can sing in front of crowds. I sing at Afterglow like every week now, and that's something that I started at my home congregation.

Mike Hoffman 05:00

And for those of you listening, Afterglow is our Wednesday night worship service here on campus. So, yeah.

Aliyah Farrell 05:06

So what brought you to Graceland?

Nicole Sherer 05:09

My parents went to Graceland, and my sister and my brother, and then, obviously, I have such a strong church connection. I'm a member, and that's kind of why we are so passionate about Graceland and care about it. So

Mike Hoffman 05:21

Was it always your top choice, or as long as you can remember, or were you thinking about?

Nicole Sherer 05:25

No, I toured a lot of other places. I wanted to run cross country and track, which I did here last year, but so I was looking around other places too, but I SPEC was too much fun. So...

Mike Hoffman 05:40

Well, we're glad you made that decision.

Nicole Sherer 05:41

Thank you.

Aliyah Farrell 05:43

So describe your grace and experience. So far.

Nicole Sherer 05:46

My Graceland experience has been really good. I have enjoyed things in just about every aspect, like my academics. I love my classes. I enjoyed my sport last year, and I was involved in it, but I've also been able to get more involved in other things, like Afterglow and my house, and I'm on COSA Board, as I mentioned.

Mike Hoffman 06:06

And, I know you're really involved in Enactus. Would you explain what Enactus is?

Nicole Sherer 06:10

Enactus is the campus entrepreneurial club. So I actually work for Jared Doty, who's the sponsor of it. So I do a lot of the finer detail management, just making sure that all the groups have all the materials they need. And then I'm also a leader of my own group, which does small projects around campus, but we always say we want to do things that nobody else has done before.

Mike Hoffman 06:33

Very good.

Aliyah Farrell 06:34

What has been your church experience at Graceland?

Nicole Sherer 06:40

My church experience at Graceland has looked a little different from at home, but in a way that has really made it more enjoyable for me. I really like the Afterglow services on Wednesday evening. I like the spiritual side of that, and getting to like worship with my friends and my peers who are my age. It's also cool to just be able to talk to people with different experiences, because, like I said, a lot of people at my home congregation I'm related to, and I've known my whole life, so we have a lot of the same opinions, or at least we know exactly what the other ones have been.

Mike Hoffman 07:13

And, you probably know each other's stories more than you would here I mean year... so...

Nicole Sherer 07:18

It's interesting to hear other people's testimonies, because it's things that I never knew about them.

Aliyah Farrell 07:24

What are your life plans after graduation?

Nicole Sherer 07:29

As a history major, I'm not entirely sure, but I ...

Mike Hoffman 07:33

You just love history, right? [NS: Yeah] or so far anyway.

Nicole Sherer 07:37

Yeah, I've always just liked the humanities. I wanted to major in English, but that's something we didn't have here, so I decided to have history. Now they're bringing English back, so [MH: you can pick it up.] Yeah, I'll pick that up. But I now I'm invested in history, so I don't want to comment, but I'm going to try to do that, and then I definitely want to get my masters at some point, probably in history, but we'll see.

Aliyah Farrell 07:59

What's like your dream job, dream world, like, what would you want to do?

Nicole Sherer 08:03

Dream job? I would love to be a professor, but so that's why I want to go into higher education or get my upper degrees. But I know that it's kind of a tough field for like, history and English professors right now, is what I heard. So

Mike Hoffman 08:22

I suppose, but I I don't know, we are still trying to carve that out here at Graceland, especially since you said we're bringing back that the English major. So, yeah. Do you want to teach at Graceland?

Nicole Sherer 08:36

I could teach at Graceland. Yeah,

Mike Hoffman 08:38

That would be pretty cool.

Nicole Sherer 08:39

Yeah, it would be cool. I, I'm just kind of operating under the thing, under the idea that it'll be what it's supposed to be.

Mike Hoffman 08:47

Yeah, sure.

Nicole Sherer 08:48

It'll fall into place.

Aliyah Farrell 08:49

Would you want to stay in a small town? Like, you grew up in a small town, and then coming to college, you're also in a small town. Would you ever want to go to a bigger town? Or you kind of like the small town feel?

Nicole Sherer 08:59

Well, my sister lives in New York City right now, so she was ready to get out. But I don't know if I'm ready for that big of a change. I feel like I would want to say at least, like, suburban or smaller, [yeah,] but it's hard to say. I've never lived in a city before, so I have no idea if I like it or not.

Aliyah Farrell 09:17

Yeah. Well, coming, I can say coming from a big city, like I live in, I definitely like Lamoni better, because it's just doesn't like, obviously, things are an hour away, which is so inconvenient, but ...

Mike Hoffman 09:29

I don't know, I lived in a big city, and yeah, but you still had to go an hour sometimes, yeah, to get somewhere. So it's, yeah,

Aliyah Farrell 09:35

It just, it's so much safer. Yes, you just feel so much more like homey. So, yeah. Okay, What are your hopes for Community of Christ in the future?

Mike Hoffman 09:45

Yeah, especially, I don't know. You know we're, we're recording this several months before World Conference too. So we've got that coming up too. I don't know if you have any thoughts about that, too.

Nicole Sherer 09:57

I'm excited for World Conference. I think something that I would like to see is I want our church to be a church that really brings the energy, And, I like that, right now, it seems like we're not getting too settled into old routines, like the World Church is always being innovative and coming up with new stuff. But I think especially being at Graceland, you can see that there's a lot of young adults who really are energetic and care and want to be involved. And sometimes it's hard when you're leaving your old congregation and you're coming somewhere new, and then you're graduating, it can be hard to stay connected with the church. So I think having that like energy will reach out to kind of like draw in the young adults a bit more.

Mike Hoffman 10:39

Do you hope to go to World Conference?

Nicole Sherer 10:40

I do, yeah, I'm going with my home I'm going to delegate my home Mission center.

Mike Hoffman 10:45

Delegate. Okay, great, great, very good.

Aliyah Farrell 10:47

And then what is one thing you would want the leaders of Community of Christ to know going forward?

Nicole Sherer 10:52

I think, kind of like I said, I just want them to know that there are, like, young adults who care. Um, I went this summer, and I worked at Onset campground in Cape Cod, Massachusetts, and they said that having us out there was like a breath of fresh air, and it really like gave them some hope, because they don't have young adults or kids at their campground. So I think that's something that I just want, like everyone in the church to know, is that, like we are here, and there is a future for the church. We just have to, like, keep, keep trying to figure out what that looks like.

Aliyah Farrell 11:28

I also think a lot of us are willing to, like, go out too, and go out to those places, like, Cape Cod, because, like, a lot of us are here in Lamoni. Like, it's very high concentration of young adults that are involved here, that aren't really elsewhere. I feel like, Okay, so that wraps things up today for today's episode of Coffee in the Swarm. Thank you for listening. This is Aliyah.

Nicole Sherer 11:54

This is Nicole.

Mike Hoffman 11:55

And Mike.

Aliyah Farrell 11:56

Signing off until next time.