Jesus, Guitars and Bacardi 151

Profile of Lindsey Lundin

By: Haley Bogan

The night started with pre-gaming in the bathroom of Lindsey Lundin’s dorm room. There were a total of six people that were all squeezed into the miniscule bathroom. Around 11 the scene shifted to downtown Milledgeville where for the next three hours they would bar hop the night away; going from Chops to Velvet, from Velvet to Amici’s, and then back to Chops. At the end of the night the group made their way back to Bell Hall. The two boys in the group walked the four girls back to their dorm room but left before the girls were safely inside. Lindsey’s roommates, the other three girls in the group, got inside without a problem. Lundin had a little bit more difficulty putting herself in the room after the six bottles of Shocktop and the three shots of Bacardi 151 she had downed throughout the night. After that point Lindsey remembers nothing except waking up the next morning in someone else’s dorm room, in someone’s bed she didn’t know and in someone else’s clothes.

Lundin’s church, where she is the Worship Leader alongside boyfriend Chris Willis, has never heard this story.

“Usually older adults have such a stigma attached to drinking that it's usually best not to talk about it. Chris [Lundin’s boyfriend] and I don't really discuss our sex life with really anyone,” Lundin said. “So it's not a huge deal that no one knows about that at church because that's more private than social drinking habits. If our group leaders or any of the other adults found out though, the reactions would range from disappointed to absolutely horrified and outraged. We pretty much don't let anyone know about that side of us. We aren't all that close with the people there though, so it's not like we lie to anyone, it just never comes up.”

Even though Lundin likes to have a good time, she is still a religious person. Lindsey believes in Christian values and tries to live her life accordingly. With the occasional slips, she still refers to herself as a Christian first and foremost.

Jesus and alcohol were not Lundin’s first loves.

“My love for music started before I could even talk, I'm sure,” Lundin said of her 21 year old relationship with music.

Lundin’s parents were both band directors (her mom still is, and her dad retired as soon as she graduated from high school). She grew up surrounded by it. All her parents' friends seemed to be involved with music as well; whether they were band directors, music professors, music students, or just enthusiastic former band nerds. Lundin’s sister, who is five years older than her, was also involved with music since she was a little kid, so it was only natural that Lundin would be too.

Claudia Lundin, Lindsey’s Mother, didn’t give her children the option of not having music in their life.

“She didn't have a choice. It was just a given, just like she was going to college or she was going to breathe. I believe music makes you smarter and I wanted my child to have all the advantages in life that were possible,” Claudia said. “Sure, if she decided she absolutely hated it after trying band for a few years, I wouldn't have made her, and I made sure she knew that.”

All of Lindsey’s decisions involving music were made on her own, which is something that makes her mother very proud.

Lundin’s musical capabilities are incredibly impressive. She can sing, play acoustic guitar [six string or 12 string], mandolin and the trumpet.

Music is also how she met Willis (Lindsey’s current boyfriend). The two met at a district honor band clinic in high school. From there they discovered their similar taste in music and mutual interest in guitar. It wasn't until much later that Lundin and Willis applied this interest, or hobby, to worship music.

Many couples have common interests that bring them closer together. Often time’s people assume that when couples perform together that they have a greater connection. While Willis says that “music minded people” like to think this way; he also believes it applies to anything that a couple connects through.

“The truth is, every couple that really gets one another has something they connect with more deeply than everything else,” Willis said. “Music is special in our story because it was each of our first loves, and we would not have met if not for a school band function. We do connect strongly over music but if we had different interests those would serve the same purpose.”

Willis can see how strong Lundin’s connection with music is and believes that it is something that is not only a hobby for her but also an unwinding ritual.

“She could solve all the world's problems if she had time to play more,” Willis said.

When Lundin was 19 and Willis was 22 their minister approached them about being the new Worship leaders for the youth group at their church. The next year they started performing for the entire congregation.

“He had heard that we played music together and wanted to add something fun for the youth group to experience every week,” Lundin said. “He felt it was important for the younger kids to have an outlet for them to worship other than just studying the Bible and praying as a group.”

Initially it was Lundin’s love for music that made performing for the church so exciting.

“I found myself loving the spotlight and worrying too much about the performance and not really about the worship,” Lundin said. “That quickly changed after we attended the Passion conference in 2012. Now I do it purely for religious reasons. It took me a while to realize that it wasn't about me, performing, or showing off. It's about giving glory to the Lord through the gifts he gives us. It's about inspiring others to connect with Jesus on a personal level and to feel his presence.”

Before Lundin attended the Passion conference, a gathering of young adults to worship and listen to Christian speakers, she admits she was shaky with her faith.

“My faith kind of got stuck on the back burner when I started college,” Lundin admitted. “There were just so many other things on my mind.”

Some of those other things on her mind included: starting college, living away from home, starting a new romance, her parents divorcing and her older sister moving to Europe

To help get her mind off of the many distractions she started hanging out with her new, older, college friends.

“I never touched alcohol in high school, but suddenly I found myself surrounded by older friends who could drink (and drink they did) and so of course I joined them,” Lundin said. “How I managed to even keep my grades up, I'll never understand.”

Lundin’s partying days have died down since her freshman year. Of course Lindsey, who is now 21, enjoys drinks on occasion. Lindsey’s point of view is that it isn’t a sin to drink; it’s a sin to get drunk. So what does she have to feel guilty for?

Lindsey’s mother shares a similar view on the topic.

“My philosophy is everything in moderation. I don't believe in breaking any laws such as underage drinking, and especially drinking and driving,” Claudia says, “But I believe you can have a good time and still be a Christian and have a relationship with God as long as you keep your party in moderation and act like a responsible adult.”

Willis describes Lindsey as not particularly religious and sees that as a good thing.

“Lindsey is more focused on relationships which is the real purpose of the Christian faith. She didn’t have church as a constant in her upbringing so she does not stress over all the rules and regulations, the stand up, sit down, Hail Mary, benediction, Old Testament, shaking hands, every time the doors are open church life,” Willis said. “She also borders on life of the party a little. She is really charming when she turns it on and the people at church really take to her more than the other members that have been going for years.”

Lindsey doesn’t describe herself as the typical partier, going out for drinks the night before finals or drinking on Sundays. She also isn’t the stereotypical holier than thou Christian. Nor is she a pretentious musician.

She’s a little bit of all those things, and more. Lundin also works part-time, lives at home, and is an extremely hard working college junior.

“I'm not really a religious freak necessarily, but my relationship with Jesus is a big part of my life. I'm very open about my religion and try to incorporate it into my everyday life. I like to party sometimes, but I'm not a major partier. I enjoy the atmosphere, but I'm rarely ever really in it. When I am, I'm responsible and keep myself under control,” Lundin said about herself.

She is also very work driven and likes the feeling of begin able to pay her own way for things. She works part-time at American Eagle, a forty five minute drive from her home, five to six days a week for three to five hour shifts.

Lundin’s family dynamic is different since her parents are divorced and her sister lives in Europe, but even with that she still says that she considers herself somewhat of a homebody because she loves spending time with them, this includes weekly Skype dates with her sister overseas.

School is something she takes very seriously and hopes to graduate with a 3.8 GPA, which would mean graduating with honors.

“When I find myself wanting to party and can't because of school obligations, money, or any other reason, I tell myself that I'm in college to get an education and that's my number one priority,” Lundin said. “I think that not enough of my peers have this mentality. Education comes first and any of the fun that is associated with college is simply extra. If the fun happens, great, if not, then that's ok because it's not what I'm here for.”

It’s apparent that this is not the same attitude that Lindsey had upon first coming to college and dealing with the pressures of drinking. However she has grown and matured and realized what her priorities for her life are now.

This attitude Lundin has towards school carries over into her faith as well.

“If sometimes my life isn't going exactly the way I want or I feel like I'm missing out and not having enough fun or as much fun as everyone else, I tell myself that's not really what I'm here for. I'm here on this earth to serve the Lord,” Lundin said. “Any of the fun stuff is just extra. If it happens, great, if not, then that's ok too because my reward is going to Heaven at the end of this life which is better than any pleasure this world has to give.”

Lindsey’s life dynamic is a different one and it’s not often that you associate terms such as Christian and partying with the same person.

“I have nothing to be ashamed of; I sin just like everyone else. I’m not perfect and I don’t claim to be,” Lundin said.

At the end of the day she is not a worship leader with a hymnal in hand, a musician with a guitar in hand or a partier with a beer in hand.

She’s just Lindsey; no labels needed.