

Coffee in the Swarm | Ishbel Wilson

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Ishbel Wilson, Graceland University, Community of Christ, environmental policy, student government, church ministry, Liberty Street, World Conference, Onset campground, spirituality, leadership practicum.

SPEAKERS

Mike Hoffman, Aliyah Farrell, Ishbel Wilson

Aliyah Farrell 00:29

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 myself, Aliyah Farrell, and is hosted by Campus Minister Mike Hoffman. Coffee in the Swarm is where we interview students at Graceland who are connected to the Community of Christ. Today we are with senior Ishbel Wilson. Welcome, Ishbel.

Ishbel Wilson 00:54

Thank you.

Mike Hoffman 00:55

We're really glad to have you here. (Yes.) Thank you.

Aliyah Farrell 00:58

Alright. So, tell us about yourself. Tell us your story.

Ishbel Wilson 01:03

Yeah. So, well, my name is Ishbel. I grew up in Independence, Missouri. I am the youngest of four children and only have three older brothers, so, that says a lot, I believe. But, um, yeah, I grew up going to Liberty Street, uh, Community of Christ near the Independence Square. And when I was, the year I was born, my dad became youth minister for Central Mission. And, so, I've just grown up around all things church.

Mike Hoffman 01:30

Yeah. That's cool. I remember when he was the youth minister there, so. And then now, and what, he, now, he is the Mission Center president? (Yes.) How long has he been doing that?

Ishbel Wilson 01:43

I believe five years (Okay.) because he took the role four days before COVID broke out. So, we had, we always joke that he had to close all the churches as his first big thing. (Oh, my gosh.) So, yeah, it's not the prime time to (No.) be here.

Mike Hoffman 01:58

Well, that was, that was a tough time wasn't it?

Aliyah Farrell 02:02

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

Ishbel Wilson 02:04

Yeah. So, I'm wrapping up my last year here at Graceland. So, I am triple majoring in communication, sustainability and social change, and, so, I hope to do something environmental policy related with those degrees. But I'm on Sariah. I've been involved in a ton of things on campus from, I'm, this year student government president. I was last year's intramural director. I work with student media here, and I'm on the soccer team, in Enactus, and a whole lot of things that

Mike Hoffman 02:34

And in Inspire (Yes. And Inspire.) Inspire, the, the church, um, ministry and leadership practicum that we do, yes, right?

Ishbel Wilson 02:34

And she spoke at Afterglow a couple times.

Mike Hoffman 02:45

Yes. Yes. You're very, very engaged. You're (Yeah.)

Ishbel Wilson 02:49

Sometimes too much.

Mike Hoffman 02:50

Probably so. Probably so. Yep.

Aliyah Farrell 02:53

So, what was church like back at Liberty Street?

Ishbel Wilson 02:56

Yeah. So, it was a super youthful church. We had, like, 40 kids growing up, (Oh, wow!) and my youth group was always super active. Actually, a lot of my friends at Graceland have come from Liberty Street (Okay.) and people I was close with, like this year's Chaplain President, Danny Dennis. And, so, church was always like a second family for me. Um, no matter what age they were in my congregation, um, there are people I always cared about and, um, especially with Central Mission's youth programs were a big, were a big delegation. And, so, camps were always a big part of that for me, and SPEC, and things along those lines. (Very good.)

Aliyah Farrell 03:35

So, what brought you to Graceland?

Ishbel Wilson 03:37

Well, in middle school, I was very anti-Graceland and I was like, all my brothers are going here, my parents met here, my aunts and uncles, all the things. And I was, like, I'm not going to go to Graceland. I'm going to be different. And then I came to SPEC and I was, like, immediately changed my mind. Just the, the feeling of belonging I felt at Graceland and all the different things was something I knew I wanted to feel for four more years.

Mike Hoffman 04:02

That's cool, very cool. Was that your first SPEC that you went to that made you change that? Or was it one closer to the time you came to Graceland?

Ishbel Wilson 04:11

So, I actually only got two SPECS because of COVID after (Oh, yeah.) my freshman and sophomore year. So, it was pretty early on in my high school career. And I would say it was a mixture of my first, but really my second year was one that, like, sticks out to me. It was, the theme that year was Belong, (Oh yeah.) and, so, it went, went perfectly with how I feel about it.

Mike Hoffman 04:29

How you feel about it. Great.

Aliyah Farrell 04:31

So, what's been your church experience at Graceland this far?

Ishbel Wilson 04:35

So, at Graceland, um, like, like you guys said, I've done Afterglow and I'm in Inspire. And, for me, it's just been finding ministry in all different places. And, so, something I've thought a lot about is that ministry's just not, um, going to a church service and, um, things along those lines, but how you carry yourself every day and the, the actions you choose to put yourself in.

Mike Hoffman 05:00

Yeah. And you actually do that really well on campus. I mean, um, your leadership is outstanding, your representation of not only the church, but Graceland student government and all of those. You, you find ways to serve just continually. So, (Thank you, Mike.) Thank you. So,

Aliyah Farrell 05:20

So, you're a triple major. What are your life plans after graduation?

Mike Hoffman 05:24

In case you didn't hear it, there was a big sigh.

Ishbel Wilson 05:28

This is a question I've been getting asked a lot, and I always joke that it's just to move home and live in my parents' basement, but my mom does not like that answer. So,

Mike Hoffman 05:39

Do you have brothers in your, in their basement right now?

Ishbel Wilson 05:41

Yes, until the final, the third of my, the, out of the three of my brothers, (Yeah.) the last one's getting married in April. So, soon they were, (So.) they'll, it'll just be me there. (I see. Okay.) But, um, after school, my current plan is actually, just last week, I started a part-time job with World Church where I'm helping, um, as a worship assistant. So, I'm making spreadsheets and organizing and doing all the things that I love. And, so, I'll do that up through World Conference.

Mike Hoffman 06:09

That is for World Conference, (Yes.) right? For (Yes.) specifically, okay. Thank you.

Ishbel Wilson 06:13

So, I'll just work up through the end of World Conference, and then I'll have three days and then I'll actually work at the Onset Campground, and then August 2 comes, and I don't really know what I'm going to do, but hopefully something good.

Mike Hoffman 06:26

And that's, this is, you're going back to Onset. (Yes.) You were, you were also there last year, right?

Ishbel Wilson 06:32

Yes, I was.

Mike Hoffman 06:33

Now, did, I didn't ask you this ahead of time or anything, but did, did Onset have a Graceland rep there at all? (No, they didn't.) I mean, you are sort of the Graceland (Yes.) rep in some ways. (So, it's,) And you were with Nicole Scherer?

Ishbel Wilson 06:47

Yes, me and Nicole Scherer went, but it's a little different there because they don't have youth camps. So, they have only a reunion because there's cottages on the, on the campground, so, people either live there year round or just come for the summers. So, that can create some liability issues, (That's right.) obviously, but, um, it's just a sort, sort of different camp.

Mike Hoffman 07:07

So, they had one week of reunion there? (Um huh.) And then what did you do the rest of the time?

Ishbel Wilson 07:11

So, my job was summer program director. So, we put on two to three events every single day (Oh, wow.) other than our days off. (Okay.) And so, (So, people could come in.) Yeah. So, they still have activities. They can range from potlucks to kick ball to chalk art to bullet journal (. . .)

Mike Hoffman 07:27

In all ages because it could be a whole family that's there for the (Um huh.) summer.

Ishbel Wilson 07:30

My favorite's beach time, though. (Your favorite what?) My favorite event is (Oh.) is beach time (Beach time.) because, you know, who doesn't love having a campground on the beach by Cape Cod?

Aliyah Farrell 07:40

So, did they have a pool or did they just have the (. . .)?

Ishbel Wilson 07:44

They had the beach. So, they're about 10 minutes from Cape Cod And, so, they have a little, um, place called Muddy Cove that's on the campground and then you can walk 10 minutes into town and be on, like, a beach, beach. (Oh.) (Wow.) So, it's a lot of fun.

Aliyah Farrell 07:59

Okay, so what are your hopes for Community of Christ in the future?

Ishbel Wilson 08:02

I think my hopes for Community of Christ are that we start to lean on the younger generations and we are willing to change in the ways that, um, younger generations need to experience, uh, spiritual, spirituality and religious experiences. I know talking to a lot of my friends growing up that Sunday morning services were not where we felt God. And that's okay. And understanding that a lot of us, our experiences with church, we automatically think of camp and those experiences. So, how can we shift, um, our routines away from sitting in a pew and listening to going out and being action based?

Mike Hoffman 08:45

I mean that's, to some degree that's had an impact on worship here at Graceland because we used to have, um, I, well, we used to have Afterglow on Sunday nights and then we'd have a very traditional Sunday morning worship that was pretty well attended. And then after COVID, it was like, it was like, there was sort of a, I don't know, a, a crucible that was crossed or something. Anyway, it got to where students wouldn't come on, to a traditional Sunday morning service. So, you know, they still support afterglow, which is a, a student led, student music, student sharing service. So, okay, thanks.

Aliyah Farrell 09:28

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

Mike Hoffman 09:35

Do you get to share that, any of that with, through your internship?

Ishbel Wilson 09:38

I have no idea. Right now I'm just making spreadsheets. So, (Okay, okay.), but, um,

Mike Hoffman 09:44

You could put notes in the spreadsheets and see (. . .) (. . .)

Ishbel Wilson 09:49

Yeah, so, it's actually funny. My senior year of high school, um, Central Mission does a newsletter every, um, I think it's week. I should know, since my dad is the one who puts it out, but sometimes I don't read them. But I was, I was asked to write a piece for it and I just wrote something about where I think the church is headed. And it ended up, I, they asked me to expand it and they published it in the Herald. But it was talking about kind of what I just shared on how we really need to break the routine that we can get stuck in. And (Yeah.) sometimes you go to church on Sunday morning. Some, it feels, because it's routine versus, uh, being called there. And, so, finding what we are truly called to. Um, I was just thinking I signed up for Central Mission's, young adult retreat and although I don't get to go to my home congregation every week, I feel more excited and called to this youth, um, young adult retreat versus going every Sunday and just finding ways that we can experience fellowship in different settings and, um, seeing ministry go from the pulpit to the people. (Yeah.)

Mike Hoffman 10:56

At Onset, that's sort of a different rhythm of things, too, for the summer. So, that could be something to look at, too, I suppose. So, yeah. Well, it's great that you've been exposed to so many different things and so, right.

Aliyah Farrell 11:10

Alright, do you have any closing thoughts for us, Ishbel?

Ishbel Wilson 11:13

Thank you for having me.

Aliyah Farrell 11:15

No. Thank you for coming. Alright. So that wraps up things today for this episode of Coffee in the Swarm. Thank you for listening. This is Aaliyah, (Ishbel) and (Mike) signing off until next time.