

UT's Ash finds peace in decision to give up football

QB TOOK TIME TO FIGURE OUT GIVING UP GAME WAS NECESSARY

AUSTIN - David Ash couldn't play forever. He knew this even when he was 6.

Outside the 15th Street Church of Christ in Temple, there's a bush where he used to begin his Sunday mornings by hiding a football. As soon as the service ended, Ash would tear off his church clothes - he usually had planned ahead and wore his play clothes underneath - and headed straight for the ball.

"It was a lot faster to get it out of the bush than to ask my dad for the keys to the car," Ash said. "So I had the maximum amount of time to play with it."

That's all Ash wanted out of football, really - to get the most he could out of it. And during the 18 days that followed what turned out to be the last game of his career, he slowly came to the realization that he had accomplished that.

The people around him were careful to make sure he figured it out on his own. Doctors told him they wouldn't let their sons play football if they had experienced concussion symptoms three times in a year, but they didn't specifically tell Ash he couldn't return.

Texas coach Charlie Strong, having decided he wouldn't let Ash play again, just nodded and smiled when Ash talked about wanting to come back.

Then, last Wednesday, UT's fourth-year quarterback finally acknowledged the truth.

"At the core of my heart of hearts," Ash, 22, said, "I knew I shouldn't be playing."

By the time he spoke about that decision in a Monday news conference that captured him at his thoughtful, funny, earnestly faithful best, Ash said he was "at peace" with his decision to give up football.

One last attempt

He admitted it wasn't easy. After suffering the first concussion of his life last September against BYU and then experiencing more symptoms two weeks later against Kansas State, he had worked 11 months to prove he could play. When it was suggested he should have quit last year, he insisted he didn't want to live his life wondering about what might have been.

In his first game back, Aug. 30 against North Texas, he got his answer. Although he said Monday he didn't feel anything unusual during the game, he called trainers that night complaining of dizziness and headaches. Those headaches lasted "seven or eight days," which was especially worrisome because he wasn't subjected to any out-of-the-ordinary contact.

"I really didn't get hit," Ash said. "I didn't get a vicious blow."

So at last, there were no more doubts. As he came to the realization his career was over, he said he "met (his) quota for crying for the next 10 years." But he also said he was able to play in one last game, and doesn't regret anything about his UT career, in which he started 22 games and passed for 4,728 yards.

"I wouldn't change any of it," Ash said.

Monday he thanked UT fans, coaches and teammates for their support, and named more than a dozen people who helped him during his time with the Longhorns. He spoke eloquently about the importance of his religious faith, saying: "I'm not a victim, I'm a victor. Football was never my gift - Jesus was."

New challenges ahead

And he said he looks forward to not only helping UT's new starting quarterback, Tyrone Swoopes, but also to graduating in December. He said he plans on enrolling in a postgraduate program on a medical scholarship.

"There's so much good life out there besides football," Ash said. "Maybe I'll get a girlfriend."

Last weekend, with the Longhorns off, Ash had a chance to go home and visit his family. They went back to the 15th Street Church of Christ, where the bush still grows.

It had served its purpose. Football wouldn't last forever, but Ash got the maximum he could out of it.

- Mike Finger, Houston Chronicle—September 22, 2014
<http://www.houstonchronicle.com/sports/college-football/article/UT-s-Ash-finds-peace-in-decision-to-give-up-5773487.php>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Youth Sunday: Rocky Creek Maze

Please join us on **Sunday, Nov. 12 at 2 p.m.** for youth Sunday at the Rocky Creek Maze in Moulton. **If you plan to attend, please sign up in the foyer by Wednesday, Nov. 8, so we can get make reservations for the group rate for admission if enough people are attending.**

ISF Thanksgiving Meal

Our dinner with ISF (Intermediate Sanction Facility) residents and staff is only three weeks away. This year's meal is on **Friday, November 17**. The ladies will prepare the food on Wednesday, Nov. 15 in the annex. Please keep in mind no children under 16 are allowed at the ISF facility. More information to come.

Wednesday Evening Meal & Bible Study

Please join us at **5:15 p.m. this Wednesday** for dinner in the annex. **This week's entrée is turkey and dressing.** Classes for all ages follow at 6 p.m.

Volunteers Needed: Wednesday Night Meals

Volunteers are needed to prepare the entrée for meals on Wednesday evenings. To help, please sign up in the foyer. **If you signed up to prepare a meal, please send Victoria your menu by Wednesday the week before.**

Volunteers Needed: Communion Prep

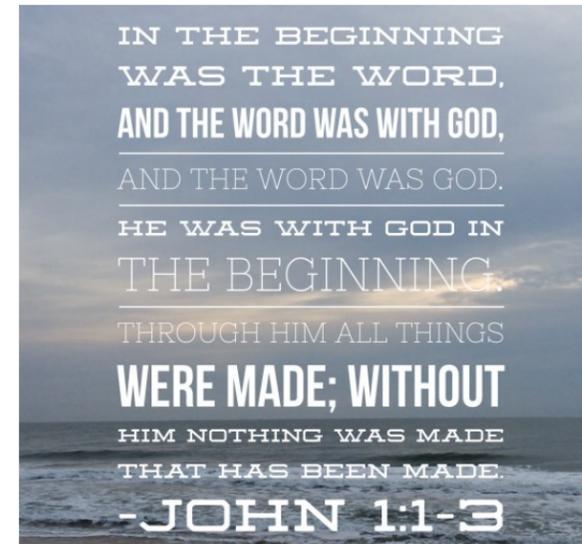
Volunteers are needed to prepare communion in the coming months. This task takes very little time and is a great service to the congregation. Please sign up on the large bulletin board in the foyer.

Sunday Night Small Group

There is a small group that meets in the annex each Sunday evening from **6-7 p.m.** The Lord's Supper is available.

Tuesday Morning Men's Prayer Breakfast

All men are invited to the annex each Tuesday morning at **6:20 a.m.** for a time of breakfast, prayer and fellowship.



PRAYER LIST

- Pauline Alvarez
- Lauren Babb (health)
- John Beiler (health)
- Family and friends of Claudean Boggs (Rex Boggs's sister-in-law)
- Jim Carpenter (Cody Chrismon's great uncle—health)
- Cinco Ranch Church of Christ
- Betty Cox (Brent Barnick's sister—homebound)
- Jake Faires (Air Force, deployed to Jordan)
- Steven Faires, and Lexi
- Nelle Hahn (health)
- Molly Lind (Linds' daughter-in-law)

- Clay Mason (health)
- Family and friends of Orvan Muelker (Kathy Winegeart's father)
- Norman Pennock (Debbie Fougerat's step-father, health)
- Ada Powell (Sharron Mason's sister—health)
- T.J. Reid (Nelle Hahn's brother—health)
- Julie Rodriguez (Babbs' friend—health)
- Kathy Schumacher (Cody Chrismon's mother—recovering from surgery)
- Nancy Tuttle (Peggy Walls's sister—health)
- Edwin Weaver (broken leg)
- Catherine Winegeart (Perry's mother—health)

If you have any announcements or prayer requests you wish to have included in the bulletin or to sign up for weekly e-mail updates, please contact Victoria Johnson: 325-518-9205, victoria@gonzaleschurhofchrist.org.

YOUTH ZONE

CONGRATULATIONS TO JACY CHRISMON WHO RAN A PERSONAL BEST TIME AT THE REGIONAL CROSS COUNTRY MEET IN CORPUS CHRISTI ON MONDAY!

CONGRATULATIONS TO COACH KEVIN JOHNSON AND THE GONZALES HS GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY TEAM WHO QUALIFIED FOR THE STATE MEET BY PLACING 3RD AT REGIONALS IN CORPUS CHRISTI ON MONDAY!



Caden Chrismon—Shiner Jr High Football

THURSDAY, NOV. 2
JUNIOR HIGH FOOTBALL
SHINER V. GANADO, 6:30 P.M.
SATURDAY, NOV. 4
HIGH SCHOOL CROSS COUNTRY
GONZALES @ STATE MEET
(OLD SETTLERS PARK, ROUND ROCK)



Coach Kevin Johnson—Gonzales Cross Country