

A Celebration of Ryan's Life
Thursday, February 25, 2021

- Hello everyone. Thank you so much for being here today.
- For those of you who don't know me, I'm **Liz Lilly** and I have known Ryan and the Morgan family since the second grade when our moms started working together at Cypress Christian School.
- I want to thank Miss Becky for allowing me the privilege to stand before you today to share Ryan's story and the impact he had on those around him.
- And I want to say a special thank you to Ryan's best friend **Jason Groll** for helping write this message.
- When you've known someone as long as many of us have known Ryan, it's a truly impossible task to try and summarize the life of such a truly incredible person – one whose quick wit and infectious laugh could make time stand still.
- That's why we felt it best to not summarize his 27 years of life but rather share firsthand accounts of the impact Ryan left on so many of us – from kindergarten to only a few short weeks ago.
- I'm a firm believer that one's legacy is not only defined by the number of individuals willing to speak on your behalf, but more importantly the quality and character of those willing to do so.
- And trust me when I say, the stories you are about to hear are from some of the best men I've had the privilege of growing up with.
- For as long as I've known Ryan, he's always had a close group of guy friends. At times we even referred to them as his 'posse' and for Miss Becky, all "her boys."
- And now, boys are helping live, share and embody Ryan's legacy. They are telling his story to celebrate his life and you'll hear many key themes across all their memories.
- Let's begin with **Travis McGrath**.
- **When Travis** thinks of Ryan, the first thought that comes to mind is how infectious and contagious his laugh and smile was to those around him.
- He says he can't count how many times they would be in class together and he would look over to see Ryan absolutely cracking up.
- It made it impossible not join in on the laughter even if he didn't know what Ryan was laughing about. He says when they'd hang out, it felt like they were always joking and laughing about something.

- **Cody Mangum** says that all his memories of Ryan share a common thread of him being witty and being able to find something humorous about almost any situation.
- He remembers this from when they first met in elementary to the most recent time, they enjoyed one another's company only a short time ago. His character has always been reflected to him this way and remains the same to this day.
- **Now for Troy Mason:**
- Troy says Ryan's sense of humor was contagious. It was almost impossible to hang around him and be in a bad mood.
- His favorite memories were going to Ryan's house and playing basketball for hours in his driveway and staying up all night just to watch Fresh Prince of Bel Air.
- **Kyle Moon** notes that one of his favorite memories growing up was going over to Ryan's house on the weekends. Becky and Scott were always so welcoming and seemed to enjoy having all the boys over there even if they were a little loud!
- He says, "We always had so much fun playing basketball, renting action movies from Blockbuster, skateboarding or just doing whatever we felt like doing.
- It was always a good time, because Ryan was so good at living in the moment and enjoying whatever we were doing. He was fun and full of life and energy and was someone I always wanted to be around.
- I will always remember our memories we made together. Rest in peace brother, I miss you."
- **Cameron Kostak** believes that Ryan's wit was unmatched. No matter what he was facing at the time, Ryan could always make a room laugh. He was an amazing friend who always had your back.
- **Andrew Galloway** says that some of his favorite memories were the fun trips he shared with Ryan down in Galveston. Ryan had a great sense of humor and really cared about others.
- **Now for Austin Barton:**
- Austin says "When I think of Ryan, the qualities that stand out to me are his intelligence, quick wit, and sense of humor.
- No matter what the situation, he always had something clever to say that prompted those around him to bust out in laughter. He brought joy not only to our close group of friends but also to everyone else that had the pleasure of being near him"
- **Ben Mitchell** says that "without a doubt, Ryan was one of the funniest people he has ever been around, and his quick wit was unmatched. No matter the situation, Ryan made sure to add humor resulting in laughs and smiles from all who were present.

- **Zachary Angelo firmly** believes that there are not many people in this world that you only have good memories of. But for him, Ryan is one of them.
- He says ... “growing up I didn't always fit in, and Ryan was someone who always made sure I was included in the group.
- I don't know if he realized it, but whether it was field trips, parties, the lunch-table, or in the classroom, he would invite me to hang out and make sure I wasn't sitting alone.
- That was just who Ryan was, an inclusive, kind, loving, and caring person, a person that went out of their way to make others feel important.
- I think my favorite trait of Ryan was his ability to make everyone in a room laugh or crack a smile.
- It always seemed so effortless. I was amazed by his ability to bring joy to wherever he was.
- It was something I tried to replicate when I moved away from Cypress. I honestly don't think he knew the impact he made in my life growing up.
- I truly am a better person today for having had Ryan in my life and I am grateful for his role in it.”
- **Levi Link** says that Ryan was a friend to many, and we were blessed to call him friend.
- He notes... “As we reflect on Ryan today, we all can agree he lit up any room he walked into with his bright smile and contagious laughter. A friend we all will forever be grateful we had and the memories we had will last a lifetime.
- Times were always better with Ryan just being Ryan goofing around. Ordinary days at school always seemed better with the touch of Ryan's uplifting attitude.
- Anyone that knew Ryan knew that his loyalty for family and friends were his top priority. We are so thankful for the time, memories and friendship that made life more colorful just knowing him.
- Ryan you will be missed, but we celebrate your life today and the gift of your friendship we shared. Thank you for the gift of your friendship that will live on forever in and through so many lives. Rest in Peace my friend and I look forward to seeing you again someday!
- **Evan Doremus** shares that some of his most favorite memories of Ryan were during our senior year on the basketball team.
- He says Ryan consistently had a great attitude toward the game and life in general and that he truly appreciated having him around as he always had something positive to say and was always able to cheer everyone up despite anything that was going on.

- He so valued the time he got to spend with him and will cherish the memories we were able to share.
- **Now to Michael Ambrose:**
- Michael says that Ryan was one of those people that can make anyone laugh and is always someone that you want to spend your time with. He had an infectious personality that everyone wanted to be around!
- He can remember all the nights he spent the night at Ryan's house.... waking Becky up multiple times in the night causing a ruckus, just being young kids.
- He and Ryan had so much fun together, whether it was basketball camps, football games, or just hanging out on the weekend.
- He says... "Ryan Morgan will forever be one of the most cherished friendships I had growing up. When I think of me growing up,
- Ryan Morgan is one of those faces that will forever be in my mind because of the major impact he had on me. He is the kind of friend I want my son to have when he grows up, just a loyal and sweet soul. I will see you again Ryan, love you man!
- **Daniel Rodriguez** says that he remembers Ryan being such a friendly guy to just about everyone. He had an infectious smile that always brought joy to people around him.
- The biggest thing **Jonathan Mason** remembers about Ryan was his smile - whether it was high school football practice/Friday nights, or hanging out with him in Austin, TX after not seeing him for a few years.
- Jonathan says... "I will always think of his smile and happiness while being around him and friends. I am so sad to hear of him not being with us anymore - this pushes me to think of the great hope we still have here..."
- Romans 5:1-6: "Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.
- Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.
- Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given us.
- For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly."
- **And lasty, to Jason Groll.** Jason says this about Ryan...

- As I'm sitting here putting everyone's memories and admirations about Ryan on paper, it's glaringly obvious that there are common themes when describing Ryan, such as his infectious smile and natural joy, unmatched wit and sense of humor, and his ability to naturally elevate the mood of any room he was in.
- With Wit and a sense of humor being something mentioned by just about everyone, I couldn't stop thinking about a story that's been one of the funniest memories I have of him and perfectly displays these characteristics.
- When we were about 8 years old, I was spending the night at Ryan's house and Mrs. Morgan took us to blockbuster to rent a movie. When checking out, the cashier said, "you've saved 5 cents on your rental today" and without a second of hesitation, Ryan at 8 years old sarcastically responded "oh wow thanks, now we can pay off our mortgage".
- Everyone around busted out laughing. The fact that an 8-year-old had the ability to make a joke like that or even know what a mortgage was made it so much funnier.
- I can honestly say Ryan is one of the funniest people I've known and I'm sure everyone that knew him would say the same.
- But that just scratches the surface when describing him.
- His wit, sense of humor, and smile really did elevate the mood of whatever crowd he was with and his personality and genuine care for others was part of the reason people loved to be in his company.
- I've known Ryan since we were in Kindergarten and he was like a brother to me ever since then and I have so many memories of us and our group of friends growing up together.
- Whether it be the countless nights of group sleepovers and playing basketball at his house until we were forced to stop (which happened from elementary through high school), going with him on a family trip to Belize, spending just about every weekend at each other's house, having conversations about just about anything and everything in life, Ryan was such a joy to be around and there was never a dull moment with him.
- With the endless list of memories that I have with Ryan, my favorite one comes about a month before his passing.
- I went to Ryan's house to help him and Mrs. Morgan put up Christmas decorations at about 8 am and once we finished, we just sat down on the couch and talked.
- Sitting down with him that day felt exactly how it did when we were kids. We talked about memories, caught up on life, talked about future, and just had genuine conversations about anything and everything.
- In that conversation we were just caught up in the moment without a care in the world, until eventually I noticed my work phone vibrating from someone at work trying to get a hold of me about a meeting I missed during that time.

- At that point, we realized three hours had flown by just sitting there on the couch talking with him.
- It's a special memory to me because when we were spending time together, all those characteristics that myself and everyone else remembers about him shined bright in our conversations.
- He was genuine, caring, joyful, funny, and just such an easy person to talk to and get along with.
- As I think back on that conversation, the same characteristics that shined through in his last days were the same as they were in Kindergarten.
- Ryan's kind heart, joyful attitude, unmatched wit, loving personality, and the ability to naturally lift the mood of everyone around him are what he will be remembered by, and I'm so thankful I was able to have the friendship we had. Ryan, you will be truly missed, love you bud.
- As you can see, Ryan made quite the impact to everyone around him. His laughter, wit and loyalty are his legacy and live on in each of us.
- And there's a very special woman responsible for this incredible young man.
- My story about Ryan is centered on her. One that demonstrates his unwavering love and support for his mother.
- After his father Scott passed, a handful of close family friends gathered at Becky's house to celebrate his life.
- After a quick dinner, Ryan was getting ready to leave when he stopped and asked us to please take care of his mama because she needed us all more than ever before.
- He made us promise that no matter life's circumstances, we would make sure his mom was taken care of. Because for Ryan, his mom was everything.
- Miss Becky, we promised Ryan that day that we would stand by you, take care of you and love you fiercely.
- We stand by that promise today and are supported in that promise by everyone in this room. Your friends, your boys and your girl are here no matter what.
- We love you so incredibly much. You raised a good man. One who's story will inspire others as well as all of us to live life to the fullest and be the best versions of ourselves.