

# FALL & WINTER 2020 MARMON VALLEY MINISTRIES

# SPURS

SPURRING FAITH FORMATION  
IN THE NEXT GENERATION



## FULL HOUSE & HEARTS

*Scholarship Fund Supports Adoptive Family*

Jimmy and Chelse Whalen have a full house and even fuller hearts with nine children under the age of 13!

In 2016, the Whalens had two biological toddlers and were fostering two young siblings, “E” and “A” (their identities are hidden for confidentiality) when they learned of four siblings that had been split into separate foster homes.

Jimmy and Chelse prayerfully decided to bring the siblings back together and welcome Shyane, Natalie, Kaitlynn, and Levi into their home.

**Being in foster care can be a challenging time, so they hoped to send the oldest kids to camp to have fun, learn about Jesus, and leave their worries behind.**

With the help of a camp scholarship, both Shyane and Natalie were able to attend camp at Marmon Valley Ministries.

After camp, Shyane couldn’t stop talking about how great her horse and counselor were. Both Shyane and Natalie grew in their faith and were excited to learn more.

## INSIDE:

FACILITY UPDATES

7 LESSONS FROM TIDYING UP

CAMP SAFETY

WHERE THERE’S A WILL



*Kaitlynn, Shyane, Natalie, & Levi*

As time went on, the court decided E and A would go to live with their aunt. The Whalens also learned that the four siblings were available to be adopted.

Shortly after the birth of their third child in May of 2017, **Jimmy and Chelse adopted all four siblings and gave them a forever family after 851 days in foster care.** *(over)*

# FULL HOUSE & HEARTS

*(Continued from cover)*

With seven children, they thought their hands were full and their family was complete, but God had other plans.

Months after the adoption, they learned that E and A could no longer stay with their aunt and were returning to foster care.

They knew the siblings well and wanted to ensure E and A didn't get bounced around to different foster homes. **They made room in their home and became a family of 11!**

For a week in 2018 and 2019, it was a little quieter at the Whalen home as Shyane, Natalie, Kaitlynn and E headed off to camp.

E was able to attend camp with the help of a scholarship. E loved camp so much he said that when he grows up, **"I want to start a camp where we can use horses to teach kids about Jesus"**.

The Whalen kids are already excited for next summer because five of the children are now registered for camp! Although they may not need a scholarship next summer, they are grateful for the financial assistance they received in the past.



*The Whalen Team at Ride Through the Valley*

In September 2019, Jimmy and seven of the children participated in the Ride Through the Valley trail ride fundraiser. The money raised from the event helps provide scholarships to kids who find themselves in a financially challenging situation.

Camp may not be able to fix all the challenges kids face, but it can offer them hope and an opportunity to connect with God. **He is the only one that can provide full healing and provision regardless of the situation.**

Today there are nearly 16,000 children in the Ohio foster care system. To learn about opening your home to foster care or adoption, visit [AdoptUSKids.org](http://AdoptUSKids.org)

*The Camp Scholarship Fund helped 93 kids come to camp in 2019. To make a secure online donation to the fund, click on the Donate Now button.*

## THE WHALEN TEAM

(E AND A ARE NOT PICTURED)



**Donate Now**

[CLICK HERE!](#)



## FACILITY UPGRADES

The maintenance crew at Marmon Valley Farm has been busy making it a better place for our guests!

Spring 2019, the farmhouse got new flooring, new mattress covers, and a fresh coat of paint on the bed frames and walls.

Summer 2019, a grainzebo was installed to provide a shady spot for guests to enjoy.

Fall 2019, a new bridge is being built between the Activity Barn and Big Red Barn. A new mini golf course is also being built with lots of fun new elements.

We also hope to launch a pedal tractor course in the near future!

Plan a visit to the Farm to see what's new!



## CAMP SAFETY

With the alarming news coverage of school shootings and terrorists acts, the world seems to be a very dangerous place. At camp, we want to offer our families the safety and security they need to feel comfortable.

While the probability of an emergency incident at camp is very low, we want to make sure we are doing our very best to prevent emergency situations and protect our campers and staff.

Each year we train summer staff how to respond in the case of natural disasters, physical threats, and other emergency

scenarios. In 2018 we started running a more specific ALICE training (Alert. Lockdown. Inform. Counter. Evacuate.) with summer staff during the two weeks of staff training.

We have taken it a step further by having a professional evaluation of the camp facility to offer insight of how to best protect guests and prepare in the case of an emergency.

While most of the security and preparedness measures have no noticeable impact on the average person's experience at camp, we hope to offer a bit more peace of mind to campers and parents moving forward.



Marie Kondo from *Tidying Up*

## 7 Lessons from Tidying Up

### “What sparks joy?”

This is a question many people are asking themselves since the launch of Marie Kondo’s Netflix show *Tidying Up*. The show has changed the way people organize their homes and their lives.

In the show, Marie asks a family with a cluttered home to systematically go through each item in their home and ask themselves if it “sparks joy”. If it does, keep it. If it doesn’t, give it away.

While some of Kondo’s beliefs are off-the-mark biblically, there are lessons we can learn from her method.

### 1. Take Stock

Just like the families on the show go through their homes, we should periodically evaluate our lives. It’s important to recognize all the blessings we have and the excess we’ve accumulated. We can ask God to help notice the areas of our lives and hearts that are becoming “full” and need to be cleaned out.

*“Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” Psalm 139: 23-24*

### 2. Choose Joy

There are some people, places, things, songs, thoughts, etc. that spark joy, lift our

spirits, and strengthen our faith. There are also things that drag us down and pull us away from God. When we recognize which category stuff fall in, we can ask God to give us more opportunities to do things that spark joy and build up our faith.

*“...whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.” Philippians 4:8b*

### 3. Identify the Junk

What physical, emotional, or spiritual baggage weighs you down? Maybe a failed relationship, a bad experience at church, a recurring sin, or a garage full of stuff. It’s important to identify the “junk” in our lives so we can ask the Lord for wisdom to deal with what is weighing us down.

*“...let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us,” Hebrews 12:1b*

### 4. Be Content

In the show, when people find something that doesn’t “spark joy”, Marie asks them to say “thank you” to the item before giving it away. We should remember not to thank the item itself, but to thank God for providing for us. When we choose to be content in

what God has given us, we will find that God is the true source of joy, not money or stuff.

*“Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.” Hebrews 13:5*

## **5. God Loves Us Anyway**

There are areas of our lives we probably don't want others to see, whether it is a basement full of stuff, a junk drawer, or even a part of ourselves that we are afraid other people will know about. The beautiful thing is that God sees the very worst things about us, even the darkest corners of our homes and our hearts, and He loves us anyway.

*“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us” Romans 5:8*

## **6. Discover Blessings**

In the difficult process of clearing out all the junk on the show, many people discover precious items that they've been missing for years. Sometimes it is only by getting rid of the excess in our lives that we discover precious blessings we have been missing out on all along.

*“Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord;” Acts 3:19*



*It's so easy to end up with too much stuff!*

## **7. Eternal Investment**

So many of us spend years gathering up items that can't bring us fulfillment and won't last. God tells us to spend our time and efforts on what will last forever.

*“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven...for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Matthew 6:19-21*

## **The Takeaway**

It's convicting when we realize how much we have and take for granted. Take some time to examine your life. Specifically identify what you have been holding on to, then choose to give it to God and be content.



## 2 GREAT FUNDRAISING EVENTS



### 1. RIDE THROUGH THE VALLEY

September 8th, 2019

There were 39 riders that joined the Ride Through the Valley Trail Ride Fundraiser and raised \$20,535 for the Camp Scholarship Fund!

Register to join the ride next year on Sunday, September 13th, 2020!



### 2. HORSESHOE HILL CLIMB

November 2nd, 2019

Challenge yourself or your friends to a 5k, 10k, 20k, or 30k trail run!

Race through woods, up and down ravine trails, around fields, across creeks, and along scenic overlooks.

Learn more and register online at [marmonvalley.com/run](http://marmonvalley.com/run)

---

## WHAT'S WITH THE LOGOS?



### ACA - American Camp Association

A national accreditation program for camps. To maintain accreditation, we must meet hundreds of standards, which are considered best practices throughout the industry. Each year we submit a standards report and every 5 years we receive an on-site visit and complete audit.



### CCCA - Christian Camp & Conference Association

A national non-profit that promotes the power and benefits of the Christian camp experience. They provide leaders with encouragement, professional training, and resources. As members of CCCA, we attend regional conferences and access resources in camp development.



### ECFA - Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability

A national financial standards association representing non-profit Christian organizations. Each year we must submit our audited financial statement and answer a number of questions to ensure we still meet their standards in finances.

## WHERE THERE'S A WILL

“Terrified of horses.” That’s how ten-year-old Aubree Scior describes herself...at age two.

Two years later, Aubree went to a friend’s birthday part at Marmon Valley Farm. She got to ride a pony. That’s when the switch flipped for Aubree. “I think I figured out that they weren’t harmful, even though they were really big,” she recalls.

By the time she was eight, Aubree was asking her parents, Rebecca and Josh, to go to camp.

Her parents said they would pay half of the \$655. She would have to come up with the other \$327.50. Aubree got upset with her parents. “How can you expect an eight-year old to get that much money?” she said.

“When she sat down with me and we thought it through, she calmed down,” Rebecca remembers. “We brainstormed ways she might be able to earn the money.”

Aubree enjoyed baking, so they decided she could bake cookies and sell them. Early in 2017...Aubree started baking. Her family helped her to sell the cookies, asking co-workers to buy a dozen or two. In all, she made and sold 50 dozen cookies! Combined with money from other side jobs, Aubree had enough for camp.

Next to riding the horses, Aubree says her favorite part of camp is...the chores. “Feeding the horses and, this might sound crazy,” she admits, “cleaning the stalls. **I just like being outside and around the horses.**”



*Aubree riding Leroy at summer camp.*



*Aubree baking to raise money for camp.*

Aubree likes learning about God and the Bible, too. She loves how the Bible study always work in horse stories. “For example, you use a bit in the horse’s mouth to help lead it where you want it to go,” she says, adding **“The Bible is like God’s bit in our mouth. He uses it to guide us.”**

The next year, Mom and Dad told her they would only pay the \$125 registration fee. Aubree pulled out her mixing bowls and cookies sheets and got to work. In 2018 she made, and sold, 93 dozen cookies!

This year, her parents offered the same deal. However, she decided to diversify...earning money by cat sitting for a neighbor and organizing material at her grandparents’ business. Combining that with revenue from selling 30 dozen cookies, Aubree spent another week at summer camp.

Aubree loves horses and enjoys baking, but doesn’t plan to pursue either as a career. She reveals her sights are set higher, “I love space and astronomy!” If Aubree decides she wants to go to the moon and take a horse with her---where there’s a will...

*To learn more about camp visit [marmonvalleyministries.org](http://marmonvalleyministries.org).*



7754 State Route 292  
Zanesfield, OH 43360  
PH 937-593-8051  
FX 937-593-6900

[www.marmonvalleyministries.org](http://www.marmonvalleyministries.org)  
E-mail: [camp@marmonvalleyministries.org](mailto:camp@marmonvalleyministries.org)



**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ACTIVITIES AT THE FARM GO TO:  
[WWW.MARMONVALLEY.COM](http://WWW.MARMONVALLEY.COM)**