The Vision

GIVE thanks



November
2026

10 Things I'm Thankful for at Pioneer Drive Today

There's an old saying: "Count your blessings." Every now and then, it's good to actually do it. As I look around Pioneer Drive today, I see so much to be grateful for. It's easy for a church to spend most of its energy thinking about what needs to be fixed, built, changed, or planned next, and there is certainly a time for all of that. But every once in a while, we need to stop looking ahead long enough to

1. 22 Baptisms This Year
Every baptism represents a person, a story, and a life being changed by Jesus. Few things encourage me more than watching someone step into the baptistry and publicly declare, "I belong to Christ." Each of those moments is a reminder that the gospel is still doing its work among us.

2. 112 New Members Welcomed Into Our Church Family
God continues to bring people to Pioneer Drive. They come from different backgrounds, different generations, and different places, but they are finding a church home and becoming part of this family of faith. Every new member is a gift, and I'm grateful for each one who has chosen to join us in what God is doing here.

3. The Ministry Happening Beyond Our Walls
Every week, Pioneer Drive people are scattered throughout Abilene and far beyond it. They are serving neighbors, caring for coworkers, loving students, supporting missions, and carrying the presence of Christ into the places where they live and work. We will never know the full extent of Pioneer Drive's ministry because so much of it happens Monday through Saturday.

4. An Average of 15 First-time Guests Every Sunday
And those are just the ones who fill out a card! Almost every week, people walk onto our campus who are looking for a church, looking for community, asking spiritual questions, or simply wondering if Pioneer Drive might be a place for them. I'm thankful that God continues to entrust people to us, and I pray we never take that trust lightly.

5. 1,747 People Involved in Sunday School This Year
I love that in an increasingly disconnected world, hundreds of people are still gathering every week to open the Bible, pray for one another, and share life together. Sunday School remains one of the primary places where a big church becomes small. It's where people are known by name, missed when they're absent, and cared for when life gets hard.

6. Our Pioneer Drive Staff
I see things most people never see: the meetings, preparation, hospital visits, late-night phone calls, prayer, planning, and countless little acts of ministry that happen every week. Our staff serves with faithfulness, humility, and a genuine love for this congregation. I am deeply thankful for the people God has called to serve this church.

7. Roughly 360 Volunteers Serving at Pioneer Drive
This church simply could not do what it does without people who teach children, rock babies, sing, greet, cook, lead students, run cameras, visit people, set up rooms, and do a thousand other things that often go unnoticed. Ministry happens because the people of Pioneer Drive understand that church is not somewhere we go. It is something we are.

8. $5,897,366 Given to Our Next 70 Vision
We have asked God to help us prepare Pioneer Drive not simply for the next few years, but for the next generation. I am humbled by the faith-filled generosity this church has shown. Every gift to Next 70 represents someone believing in what God is doing here today and what He may do here long after we are gone.

9. A Record $4.91 Million Ministry Budget for 2025–2026
That number represents far more than dollars. It represents extraordinary generosity and a congregation committed to investing in ministry, missions, people, and the work God has called us to do together. Behind every dollar is a family that chose to give, and I don't take that for granted.

10. The Things We Could Never Count
There is no spreadsheet for the number of prayers prayed by Pioneer Drive people this year. We cannot count every meal delivered, every hospital-room prayer, every child taught about Jesus, every grieving person comforted, or every moment someone chose faith over fear. God sees every one of them. Numbers matter because people matter, but not everything that matters can be numbered.

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So as we move into another season of ministry together, I find myself overwhelmed with gratitude. God has been very good to Pioneer Drive. And I believe some of our most exciting days are still ahead. **But today, maybe we should simply stop for a moment and say: "Thank you, Lord!"**



Dr. John Whitten
Senior Pastor

NEXT 70

What a month it's been on the north end of our campus! October brought great progress, and the new building is really starting to take shape. The roof, walls, and windows are nearly complete, and inside, sheetrock is going up as interior walls form around the main-level restrooms and back-of-house rooms. Outside, workers are using the scaffolding to coat the exterior walls in preparation for laying brick very soon.

We're also grateful for our partners at Collier Construction, who treated the crew on site to a BBQ lunch one day last month. It was a great way to say thank you to the hardworking crew who are helping bring this vision to life!

Thanks to your faithful giving, praying, and trusting, more than $5.8 million has now been given toward Next 70. Every gift is helping prepare Pioneer Drive not just for today, but for generations to come.

Want to see how the project is coming along or find out how you can be part of it? Visit **pioneerdrive.org/Next70** for the latest updates.











Highlights This Month

Deacon Election – Sunday, November 8th

On Sunday, November 8, our church family will come together to elect new deacons to serve Pioneer Drive. Deacons play a vital role in the life of our church, caring for members, supporting our staff, and helping lead with wisdom, humility, and a servant's heart. You can pick up a deacon nominee sheet in the welcome centers around campus. Look through the list of candidates and come ready to cast your vote, Sunday November 8th.

Sunday Evening Activities

All Activities in the Conference Center

November 1	6PM - Dr. John Whitten
November 8	6PM - Tim Matthews, *All For One Missions Church*
November 15	6PM - "Pioneer's Got Talent"
November 22	No PM - Holiday Week
November 29	No PM - Holiday Week

November Events

Church-Wide

Pioneer's Got Talent
Get ready for a night of music, laughter, and friendly competition as our ministries take you on a musical journey through the decades! Join us Sunday, November 15 at 6PM in the Conference Center for live performances and lip-syncs, a delicious dinner, and the chance to vote for your favorite act. Best of all, 100% of ticket sales support our High School Choir as they students go out to serve and share the gospel in the summer of 2027 Tickets are $15 for adults and $10 for kids 12 and under, available in Realm or through the church office October 25–November 8, so reserve your spot before they sell out!

Next Steps Class
If you've been thinking about making Pioneer Drive your church home, we'd love to walk alongside you as you take that step! Join us for our Next Steps Class on Sunday, November 22, at 10:10AM in Room 2231. You'll meet some of our ministers, connect with others exploring membership, and discover what it means to be part of this church family. Register online, or text Nathan Adams, Next Steps Pastor, at 281.794.6749 with any questions.

Operation Christmas Child Boxes
Christmas is just around the corner, and you can help share the love of Jesus with children around the world! Pick up your Operation Christmas Child shoebox starting November 1, then fill it with gifts that will bring joy to a child who may never have received a present before. Return your box November 16–23 to Curry's Corner.

Children's Ministry

Royal Ambassador State Park Adventure
Calling all Royal Ambassador boys in 1st–5th grade, along with Dads or a special adult male in their lives! Join us Saturday, November 14, from 10AM–2PM at Abilene State Park for a day of good food, great fun, and time enjoying the beauty of God's creation. It's a wonderful chance to build lasting memories and strengthen the bonds between boys and the men who guide them in faith. Registration is required, and the cost is $15 per person.

College

College Church Match Scholarship Application
We love investing in the next generation of believers and leaders! Scholarship applications for the Spring 2027 semester are now available in the upstairs offices and the College Bible Study Room (2254) for students attending a Texas Baptist University or Abilene Christian University. Priority will be given to students pursuing full-time ministry, with remaining scholarships awarded based on need. Submit applications by emailing gmize@pioneerdrive.org, mailing them, or dropping them off at the upstairs office by December 6.

Mission's Ministry

Big Country Needs – Bonham Christmas Store
There's still time to bring Christmas joy to families right here in our community! We are collecting new gifts for children ages 0–18 for our Bonham Christmas Store, where families will shop by appointment in early December. Your generosity helps parents give their children a Christmas filled with dignity, hope, and love. If you'd like to volunteer at the store or would like the digital shopping lists, please email Melissa@pioneerdrive.org.

Nehemiah Ministry
Did you know our church has a ministry dedicated to home repairs and ramp building for neighbors in need? Whether you're handy with tools or have never picked up a hammer, there's a place for you to serve with your hands and show Christ's love in action. Come learn more and enjoy a free lunch on the first Tuesday of every month in Room 1251! Our next meetings will be November 5 and December 1.

World Mission Offering
Together, we can help carry the gospel to the ends of the earth! This year's World Mission Offering goal is $275,000 to strengthen the missionaries and partners who share the good news of Jesus among the nations. For questions about the offering or where the funds go, contact taylor@pioneerdrive.org.

Primetimers Ministry

Primetime LIVE
Join us Thursday, November 5, at 11AM in the Fellowship Hall as we welcome guest speaker Dr. Kirk Canada, Interim President and CEO of Hendrick Health. A West Texas native, Kirk has served in many leadership roles at Hendrick and has played an integral part in advancing its mission of care in our community, all while keeping up with his wife Laci and their three children. Come early for coffee & conversation and stay afterward for fellowship over Chick-fil-A box lunches ($8) at noon. Sign up online or in the church office by November 4!

16th Annual Heroes Breakfast
We are grateful for the men and women who have served and sacrificed for our country! On Veterans Day, Wednesday, November 11, join us at 8AM at Cracker Barrel for our free Heroes Breakfast honoring all veterans and active military. Come share a meal, hear their stories, and thank these heroes for their service. RSVP online or call the church office by November 8 to let us know you'll be there.

Women's Ministry

Cafe Connections
Ladies, come enjoy a time of warm fellowship, good conversation, and encouragement at Cafe Connections! This month we'll meet in the Cafe at 10AM on Thursday, November 19. Bring a friend and join us for a time you won't want to miss.

Women's Christmas Dinner
Celebrate the season with us on Tuesday, December 8, at 6PM in the Conference Center for our Women's Christmas Dinner! Enjoy beautiful music, a delicious dinner, festively decorated tables, and an inspiring message from Debbie Potter, president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas. It's the perfect evening to slow down, celebrate the birth of our Savior, and invite a friend to join you. Tickets are $25 and go on sale online November 15 until sold out or November 29. Contact Meredith or Courtney with questions.

Worship Ministry

Student-Led Worship
On Sunday, November 8, our Middle School and High School Choirs will lead us in worship at both the 9AM and 11:15AM Celebration Worship Services. There's nothing quite like hearing the next generation lift their voices in praise to the Lord! Come be encouraged by our students and invite a friend to share in this special morning of worship.

Children's Choir Musical – "A CHRISTmas Carol"
Everyone is invited to worship with our Children's Choirs on Sunday, December 6, at 6PM as they present "A CHRISTmas Carol." Our 3-year-olds through 5th graders will lead us to the manger through drama and music, reminding us of the true reason for the season. You won't want to miss this joyful blessing, so bring your family and friends!

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REGISTER

BENIFITTING
HIGH SCHOOL CHOIR

PIONEER'S GOT Talent

DINNER • MUSIC • LAUGHTER • COMPETITION

SUNDAY, NOV. 15TH
6PM – CONFERENCE CENTER

Women's Christmas Dinner

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8TH
6PM - CONFERENCE CENTER



SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER:

DEBBIE POTTER
PRESIDENT - TEXAS BAPTISTS /
CHILDREN'S PASTOR,
TRINITY BAPTIST CHURCH, SAN ANTONIO

Ministry Partner Spotlight:

Eddie & Rachel Andersen, Africa Inland Mission International





Jambo! We are Eddie & Rachel Andersen, missionaries to Kenya with Africa Inland Mission International. Our family has lived and worked in Africa since 2008. Our children include Uriah, married to Evelyn, Ja-el, Acacia, Miriam, Silas, and Ezra. Four of our children live in Texas, one is in Michigan, and Ezra is still in high school at Rift Valley Academy in Kenya. We are currently on home assignment and staying in one of Pioneer Drive's Mission Houses

For many years we lived in the bush of Kenya, near the Ethiopian border. We used all means available to plant churches among the Gabbra people, a nomadic, camel herding people. Eddie used his engineering skills to drill wells and put up radio towers. Rachel worked to write a literacy curriculum for the Gabbra and served the community through midwifery. Together, we often ran famine-relief programs and distributed Bibles in unreached areas. Living in the bush tested our resilience and built up our reliance on God's providence. We enjoyed living in the desert, and our children thrived as third culture kids.

In 2024, we led a small team of five adults and mentored them in ministry. They lived with us in the bush and learned to share the Gospel with the Gabbra people. We praise God that our team is committed to long-term work among the Gabbra, feeling His call to continue their work.





When the opportunity came for Eddie to serve as AIM Regional Executive Officer for Ethiopia, Kenya, and Tanzania, we felt God had prepared us to encourage our coworkers in that role. In December of 2025, we moved to Nairobi so that he could direct the work. Eddie works with African churches to develop programs to send their own missionaries to serve cross-culturally. He also collaborates with other missions organizations and regularly encourages missionaries serving across East Africa.

With the move, Rachel's work changed. Since January, she has traveled to several countries, teaching midwives and traditional birth attendants midwifery skills. She also traveled to remote areas to provide care and training for mobile medical clinics. She will continue to travel and teach, watching God use midwifery to open doors to share the Gospel in areas where people have little access to God's Word.



Although we have left the desert, Eddie continues to serve as a consultant on radio projects and missions strategy into remote areas with little access to the Gospel. We also continue to distribute audio Bibles into areas with low literacy rates. Rachel continues to facilitate literacy work among the Gabbra, encouraging her former teammates and helping them to develop the literacy program.

We are grateful to Pioneer for their partnership in the Gospel, for encouraging us, and for praying for us along the way. We are so thankful for our Sunday school class who regularly pray for us and welcomed us back when we came for home assignment. Thank you for being a part of our ministry. We will be in Abilene until December, when we hope to return to Kenya. If you would like to connect, let us know!

Visit our website
www.pioneerdrive.org

Like us on Facebook
@pioneerdrive

Follow us on Instagram
@pioneerdrive

The Vision is Pioneer Drive's monthly newsletter to learn about our church's latest news and upcoming events.

For more information, call us at (325) 692-6776 or email us at info@pioneerdrive.org.

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BAPTIST CHURCH

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