The Vision
October 2026

Looking Ahead Together

As we move into October, I want to highlight a meaningful tradition in the life of Pioneer Drive: the Legacy Banquet. Hosted each year by our Deacon Fellowship and led so faithfully by Steve Hodges, this special evening honors the widows of our church who embody a lasting legacy of faith and service. Our deacons and their spouses are paired with widows for a night of fellowship, encouragement, and gratitude at Abilene Country Club. This year's guest entertainer will be Larry Pearce from First Baptist Dallas. I am grateful for the care our deacons show through this ministry and for the opportunity to celebrate these women whose prayers, faithfulness, and witness have blessed generations. It is truly a beautiful picture of our church family caring for one another.

I also want to encourage you to begin praying about our upcoming Deacon Election, which will take place on Sunday, November 1, during all morning worship services. In Scripture, deacons are servant leaders who help meet practical needs and strengthen the ministry of the church. While Acts 6 does not use the title ‘deacon’ directly, many see the seven believers selected there as the model for deacon ministry. In 1 Timothy 3, Paul describes deacons as people of integrity, faithfulness, spiritual maturity, and good character. At Pioneer Drive, our deacons provide care through widow ministry and hospital visitation, serve the Lord's Supper, follow up with guests, promote unity within the church family, and stand ready to serve whenever needs arise.

As you prepare to nominate individuals, prayerfully consider those who demonstrate a servant's heart, a Christlike spirit, and a commitment to the mission of our church. May God guide us as we seek faithful leaders for the days ahead.

Dr. John Whitten

Dr. John Whitten
Senior Pastor

NEXT 70

As September comes to a close, our new spaces are really beginning to take shape. On the exterior, windows are going in, the roof is nearing completion, and brick is going up as we publish. Inside, the HVAC ductwork is nearing completion, and walls are being framed in the sanctuary, children's foyer, back of house, and bathrooms. Multiple trades are now on site, and we expect even more crews in the days ahead.

We're in awe of what God has done through this church family. Because of your faithful giving, praying, and trusting, more than $5.7 million has now been given toward Next 70 — proof that when God's people come together in obedience, He moves in remarkable ways. To every family who has stepped out in faith and sacrificed for this vision, thank you. Your generosity is writing the next chapter of our church's story.

Want to see how the project is progressing or find a way to get involved? Visit **pioneerdrive.org/Next70** for the latest updates and weekly photos.

Sunday Evening Activities

October 4	Love and Care Revival led by *the gathering* team 6PM (Abilene Convention Center)
October 11	Sharon Maurer/Christian Women's Job. Corp. 6PM (Conference Center)
October 18	Meeting Night: No PM Worship
October 25	Southern Gospel Concert: Greater Vision 4PM

October Events

Church-Wide

World Hunger Bags
Get ready to make a real difference right here in our community! On October 4th, our RA and GA kids will have special decorated bags ready for you to pick up and fill with non-perishable food items. Simply return your filled bag by October 11th, and watch as these gifts are sorted and delivered to the ABA Social Ministries Food Pantry to bless families in need. Questions? Reach out to Tammy Lunbeck Let's come together and feed our neighbors with joy!

Volunteer Interest Meeting
Ready to discover where you fit in our church family? Join us Wednesday, October 14th, from 6:15–7:15PM in Room 1255 for our Volunteer Interest Meeting — a fun, no-pressure way to explore all the exciting ways you can serve! Whether you're brand new to serving or looking for your next opportunity, this is the perfect place to start. Visit www.pioneerdrive.org/serve or connect with Nathan Adams at Nathan@pioneerdrive.org to learn more!

Next Steps Class
Have you been thinking about becoming part of the Pioneer Drive family? We'd love to walk that journey with you! Join us for our Next Steps Class on October 18th at 10:10AM in Room 2231, where you'll meet our ministers, connect with others exploring membership, and discover what makes our church family so special. Register by the October 18th deadline — reach out to Nathan Adams to reserve your spot!

Trunk or Treat
Get ready for the sweetest night of the fall — Trunk or Treat is coming Wednesday, October 28th, from 5:30 to 7:30PM, here at Pioneer Drive! Bring the whole crew for candy galore, wildly creative trunks, bouncing inflatables, and a mouthwatering Frito pie and nacho bar. It's free and open to the entire community, so grab your neighbors, and friends, and make a night of it! Want to be part of the fun? Donate candy or sign up to decorate a trunk — and maybe take home the legendary title of Pum'king or Pinecone Princess!

Men's Ministry

Men's Groups
Looking for genuine connection and growth with other guys? Join us in Room 1251 on Wednesdays at 6PM or Room 2235 on Sundays at 10:10AM for encouraging Bible study and accountability. These weekly groups are a wonderful place to grow in faith and friendship side by side. Call or text Nathan at 281.794.6749 to find the group that's right for you!

Front Porch Prayers
Start your Friday mornings with purpose and community at Front Porch Prayers! Join us from 7–8AM at Front Porch Coffee, we gather to lift up one another and our community in prayer. For questions, contact Jim at 325.660.5655 .

Fellowship of the Donut
Craving wisdom, community, and maybe a donut or two? Join Fellowship of the Donut every Friday from 9–10AM at 358 E South 11th, where you'll gain wisdom from the elders in our church family. For more info, call Ray at 325.665.9775.

Early Bird Bible Study
Join us at 6AM every Friday at the South 14th Starbucks as we dig into the Old Testament together. It's a great way to fuel your faith before the day even begins. Text Logan at 806.681.6053 with questions.

Impact Next Gen Men
Here's a chance to change a young life forever! Over 60 school-aged boys in our community are waiting for a mentor, and you could be the answer. Getting started is simple — just visit www.bbbstx/be-a-big or reach out to Nathan to learn more.

Study Romans with BSF
Dive deeper into God's Word alongside other men in our community! Join us Mondays at 6:30PM in our upstairs education space as we study the book of Romans together with Bible Study Fellowship. Groups are also available for children and youth. Sign up today at https://join.bsfinternational.org/class/4, or reach out to Nathan with any questions!

Mission's Ministry

Disaster Relief Training

When disaster strikes, someone has to be ready to bring help, hope, and the love of Christ — why not you? Pioneer Drive is thrilled to host a Texans on Mission Disaster Relief Orientation & Specialty Training Weekend, equipping everyday people to respond in extraordinary ways. Whether you're brand new to disaster relief or renewing your credentials, this training will prepare you to make a real difference when it matters most. Registration is open now, so scan the QR code and sign up today! Questions? Reach out to Taylor — this is your chance to be the hands and feet of Jesus in a crisis.

Primetimers Ministry

Primetime LIVE

Giddy-Up Primetimers! Join us October 1st for Primetime Live in the Fellowship Hall. We will be entertained by George & Carolyn Newman and their program "Cowboy Poetry and Songs." The fun starts with games and conversation at 10AM followed by the program at 11AM, As always, we'll enjoy Chick-fil-A box lunches ($8) at noon. Sign-up online or in the church office by.

Register at pioneerdrive.org/events

Dinner and a Show

Join us October 8th for an evening of food, laughter and some great entertainment with "Daisy Pulls it Off" at the Van Ellis Theatre at Hardin-Simmons. Daisy Meredith is an old-fashioned adventurer caught in a delightful mystery with plenty of surprises. You'll enjoy watching her solve the case in a series of shenanigans. We'll meet for dinner at 6PM at the HSU Dining Hall. For more information, contact Jeff Reid or call the church office.

Register at pioneerdrive.org/events

Women's Ministry

Cafe Connections

Looking for a relaxed way to connect with other women in our church family? Join us for Cafe Connections at 10AM in the cafe this October 15th— a warm, welcoming time to build friendships over coffee and conversation! It's simple, it's sweet, and it's a great way to feel right at home at Pioneer Drive. Contact Meredith or Courtney for more details — we can't wait to see you there!

Rooftop Worship

Get ready for a breathtaking evening of worship, prayer, and fellowship! Join us October 15th at 6:30PM on The Grace Museum's rooftop as we overlook Abilene and pray for God's Spirit to move in our lives, our homes, and our world. Enjoy delicious fall treats and sweet fellowship together — but don't wait, space is limited! Register by October 12th

Register at pioneerdrive.org/events

Worship Ministry

Love and Care Worship Night

Come experience a powerful night of worship for our whole community! Join us October 4th at the Abilene Convention Center for a special Worship Night hosted by Love and Care Ministries, with worship led by the gathering team. Reach out to Kenna Hall for more details — we hope to see you there!

Sweet & Savory Silent Auction

Get ready for a delicious way to support our students! Stop by Curry's Corner on October 18th from 8:45–11:15AM to bid on homemade treats at our Sweet & Savory Silent Auction. Winning bidders will be notified by text, with items ready for pickup after the 11:15AM service, and some may even be available to "buy now"! Every bid helps our High School Choir students raise funds for their 2027 tour. Contact Regina Penney with any questions!

Greater Vision Gospel Concert

Get ready for an unforgettable afternoon of gospel music! Join us October 25th as Greater Vision shares their gift of music and ministry. Doors open at 3PM, with the concert beginning at 4PM. Admission is free. Bring your family and friends for an uplifting afternoon you won't want to miss — contact Griffin Jones for more information

FREE FOR THE COMMUNITY

TRUNK OR TREAT

Wednesday, October 28th - 5:30 - 7:30PM

Candy - Inflatables
Decorated Trunks
Food, Drinks, and More!

You belong here!

Join an Upcoming Next Steps Class

Sunday, October 18th
10:10AM
Room 2231

Sign Up!

Ministry Partner Spotlight:

Mark Hewitt, Love & Care Ministries

Hi, my name is Mark Hewitt, and I am the Founder and Executive Director of Love & Care Ministries in Abilene, where I do mission work across our city and surrounding communities.

In the late 1980's one Sunday morning, my family and I attended Pioneer Drive. We were welcomed, loved, and knew immediately this was the church for us. After serving in several ministries, and as time passed, I had the honor of portraying Jesus in the Easter Pageant for four years; this truly was life-changing for me. But in 1994, as the Easter Pageant was drawing closer, I knew in my spirit that at 33 years old, this was my last Pageant, but I wasn't sure why.

In June of that same year, I found myself in Moscow, Russia, on a Mission Trip with Pioneer Drive, where my life was changed right before me. On a Tuesday afternoon around 2:30, on a street called Arbat, while sharing the love of Jesus, I saw her: an elderly woman walking toward me. As she approached me, I knew no Russian, she knew no English I had one gospel tract in my hand, with Russian language on one side and English on the other. I reached out my hand, and she took the tract, smiled, and searched it with her eyes, then looked up at the sky. Within a few minutes, tears began to run down her face. She said, "Amen, Amen," then she hugged me. My spirit jumped with joy "Lord, you just saved that lady! That was so powerful."

That's when I heard in my spirit ***Mark, why can't you do this at home?*** I had every excuse you could think of, but that doesn't work well with Jesus. He then laid out what He wanted me to do, if I was obedient to what He was asking, *I was to quit my job and follow Him. I was to feed His sheep. I was to clothe His children. I was to love them all unconditionally with no judgment. The poor, the homeless, the addicted, the hurting, the lonely, and anyone else I was to see.*

Love & Care is located at 233 Fannin in Abilene. Our hours are 6:00AM- 3:00PM Monday through Thursday. We enjoy having volunteers at any time serving hot meals in our kitchen, our Food Pantry building boxes for families, or our clothing ministry sorting clothes. We receive donations daily and have a clothing drop-off 24 hours a day. We have three other locations in Merkel, Clyde, and Anson that serve communities around them.

Thank you, Pioneer Drive, for being a major part of my life and for partnering with Love & Care Ministries for 32 years in reaching the least of these.

Visit our website
www.pioneerdrive.org

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@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.v

Pioneer Drive
BAPTIST CHURCH

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