

A stained glass illustration of the Nativity scene. The background is a dark, textured green. In the top left, a golden star shines. In the top right, a white mountain peak is visible. In the bottom left, the infant Jesus lies in a manger. In the bottom right, the Virgin Mary kneels in prayer, wearing a blue robe and a yellow crown. The overall style is reminiscent of traditional stained glass art.

THE  
**Vision**

DECEMBER 2024



# Remember in December

Advent is a season where we remember the God of the universe did not just stand off, point down, and scold humanity. Advent is a season where we remember God came near and entered the brokenness with us!

This December our church will step into a time of anticipation, hope, and reflection on the miraculous truth at the center of our faith, Emmanuel—"God with us." We celebrate the reality that God's love is not distant but has come near to us, taking on flesh and dwelling among us.

If the God of the universe was born in a dirty, messy manger, there is no mess or brokenness in our lives that God is not willing to step into.

In a world where we can feel isolated or overwhelmed, the message of Advent reminds us that God didn't stay far off. He entered into our world with all its messiness and challenges, to walk alongside us and to experience life as we do. Through Jesus, God shares in our joy and pain, our highs and lows. Advent is a celebration of God's closeness—of a Savior who understands us fully and loves us completely.

As we prepare for Christmas, may we remember that we are never alone. God is with us in every moment, every challenge, and every joy. Let's prepare our hearts, not only to celebrate His coming at Christmas but to welcome His presence anew in our lives each day. May the hope, peace, joy, and love of Advent fill our hearts as we look forward to the ultimate gift: Jesus, God with us.

Blessings to you and your loved ones this Advent season.



*Dr. John Whitten*  
Dr. John Whitten  
Senior Pastor



# Weeks OF Christmas

## **Dec 6th, "The Light Has Come"**

HSU Worship Ensemble Concert  
Conference Center, 6PM

## **Dec 8th, "Meet Me At the Manger"**

Children's Choir Christmas Musical  
Sanctuary, 6PM

## **Dec 15th, Morning Worship Services**

"Here With Us" (Celebration Worship) &  
"Hope Has Come" (the gathering)

## **Dec 22nd, Blue Christmas Service**

Sanctuary, 6PM

## **Dec 22nd & 29th, Worship Services**

Celebration Worship, Sanctuary, 10AM  
the gathering, Conference Center, 10AM

## *Christmas Eve Services*

Service Time	Carols	Worship Leadership	Communion	Children's Sermon	Candle Lighting	Service Length
3PM	✓	Soloists	✓	✗	✗	25 Minutes
4:30PM	✓	Worship Team	✓	✓	✓	60 Minutes
6:30PM	✓	Choir & Orchestra	✓	✓	✓	70 Minutes



# DECEMBER

## CHURCHWIDE

### JAN. 8: WEDNESDAY NIGHTS RESUME

Worship Wednesdays resume after the holidays on January 8th. Don't miss out on mid-week discipleship opportunities for everyone this Winter and Spring.

### FEB. 21-23: MARRIAGE RETREAT

Register now to join us for Marriage Retreat 2025! We will be staying at serene Camp Compass. Nestled in the trees on the shore of Lake Lewisville, this location feels like a true retreat but is conveniently located only 10 minutes from Downtown Denton. This weekend will give you and your spouse time to intentionally invest in your relationship with each other. There will be time to connect, play, eat, and grow together. Sign up now to reserve your spot. A \$100 deposit is due at registration with the \$400 total cost due by February 10. If you have any questions, contact Terence@pioneerdrive.org.

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

### DEC. 11: RAs & GAs CHRISTMAS FUN

RAs and GAs, join us for a night of Christmas fun as we "wrap" up a great semester of Missions! On Wednesday, December 11th, we will have extended RA/GA time (no choir) from 6:00-7:30PM. On that night be sure to check-in and meet in your RA and GA room. From there we will take vans and go Christmas caroling and then back to the Gym for Christmas fun! Parents, pick your child up in the Gym no later than 7:30PM.

## COLLEGE MINISTRY

### DEC. 8: CHURCH SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Scholarship applications for the 2025 Spring Semester are available in the upstairs offices or in the College Bible Study Room (2254) for students attending a Texas Baptist University or Abilene Christian University. All applications must be sent to gayla@pioneerdrive.org, mailed, or delivered to the upstairs office. Priority will be given to students pursuing full-time ministry. The remaining scholarships are awarded on a need basis.

## MISSIONS MINISTRY

### DEC. 4: SERVE AT SALVATION ARMY

We are looking for groups and individuals to help provide, prep and/or deliver a hot meal for people in our community experiencing housing insecurity. Volunteers are needed for December 4th from 4:30-5:30PM. Contact Nathan@pioneerdrive.org for more information.

### DEC. 7: PACK CHRISTMAS GIFTS FOR INMATES

Volunteers are needed to help stuff Christmas bags for inmates at the local prison. For more information, contact Nathan@pioneerdrive.org or drop by the Global Samaritan Offices at 2074 North 1st on December 7th at 8:30AM to join the packing party!

### DEC. 22: CITY LIGHT COMMUNITY MINISTRIES

Join us as we host a service on Sunday morning, December 22nd. You can help by greeting at the door, serving food, reading scripture, singing, praying, preaching, or simply visiting with their congregation. Contact Nathan@pioneerdrive.org for more information.

## DECEMBER BIG COUNTRY NEEDS

Winter is coming soon, and it is especially hard for our neighbors experiencing housing issues. For the month of December, we are collecting items for the West Texas Homeless Network: Beanies or Toboggans, Gloves, Hand-warmers, Vaseline and/or ChapStick, Space blankets/thermal blankets, and lightly used blankets.

## PRESCHOOL MINISTRY

### DEC. 6: FRIDAY WITH FRIENDS

Fridays with Friends will be from 10-11:30AM at the Church Gym. We will play in the gym and have Christmas activities for the children.

## PRIMETIMER MINISTRY

### DEC. 7: PRESTONWOOD CHRISTMAS SHOW

The Primetimers will celebrate "The Gift of Christmas" at Prestonwood Baptist Church in Plano. The show includes a 1,000-member cast and choir, flying angels, live animals, elaborate staging and lighting. Did someone say Mexican food in the historic Fort Worth Stockyards? Cost is \$75 per person. Tickets are available in the Church Office (cash or check only).

## STUDENT MINISTRY

### JAN. 3: MAVS & MALL DAY AWAY

All 7th & 8th graders, join us for a fun day at the Mall and the Dallas Mavericks game. What better way to spend one of the last few days of Christmas break with your friends! Cost is \$50 and will include the cost of your ticket into the game and transportation. Students will need to bring spending money for two meals and any additional shopping they want to do. We will leave from the church in church vans mid-morning and return late evening (specific time will be sent out to all registrants). Your student must have an updated medical release form to travel with us. Check with Allison in the youth office to make sure your student is up to date. Register soon as spots are limited!



## **FEB. 14-15: DNOW 2025**

Spend a weekend away from the busyness of day to day living to grow in your personal relationship with God from February 14-15. 7th-12th grade students will travel to Lueders, Texas for a one-night retreat of worship, small groups, recreation, and all kinds of fun led by Pioneer Student Staff. Cost is \$75 per student which includes a T-Shirt, housing, and meals throughout the weekend. Students must have an updated medical release form to attend. Check with Allison in the youth office to make sure your student is up to date. Register online by January 26.

## **WOMEN'S MINISTRY**

### **DEC. 19: CAFE CONNECTIONS**

Ladies of all ages and stages are invited to come for a time of fellowship and encouragement on the third Thursday of each month at 9AM in the Cafe. Coffee & light breakfast snacks are provided. Come as you are and bring a friend. There is no cost or registration.

### **DEC. 10: WOMEN'S CHRISTMAS DINNER**

Reminder for those who purchased a ticket to attend this year's Women's Christmas Dinner in Conference Center at 6PM. Doors open at 5:30PM. Contact Meredith or Crystal with questions.

## **WORSHIP MINISTRY**

### **DEC. 8: CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS MUSICAL**

Our Children's Choirs, age 3 through 5th grade, will present "Meet Me at the Manger" on at 6PM in the Sanctuary. Come worship with the children of our church!

**SCAN THE QR  
TO SIGN UP  
FOR AN EVENT:**







## WORLD MISSIONS OFFERING

Through this offering we support our Missionary Partners here in the Big Country and around the world.

Be a small part of God's BIG story again! Give today by writing WMO on your offering envelope or by selecting World Missions online at [www.pioneerdrive.org/give](http://www.pioneerdrive.org/give).

Connect with [Nathan@pioneerdrive.org](mailto:Nathan@pioneerdrive.org) or call the Church Office to learn more about giving and going beyond the walls of Pioneer Drive!

# NEXT 70

As of November 19, Pioneer Drive has pledged \$6,493,835 towards the Next 70. Of those pledges, \$1,086,254 has already been given towards the project!

It's exciting to see what God is doing and will do through this project. As a reminder, you can give towards the Next 70 at any time. If you haven't made a commitment to the Next 70, you are welcome to do that by filling out a card available in worship, online through Realm, or by calling the church office. This is a three-year commitment period and those gifts can start anytime between now and January of 2025.

Please be in prayer for our architects, potential contractors, Building Improvement Steering Committee, and staff as they make decisions for the Next 70. As of now, the plan is for the project to go out to bid in early January.

Feel free to reach out to our staff! I can't wait to see what God does through the Next 70!



# MORE WAYS TO GIVE

## IN SERVICE

At Pioneer Drive, you are always welcome to give during our services. In each service, you may drop off your giving in the offering boxes located at the entrances or in our passed offering plates.



## ONLINE

Online giving is a convenient tool for folks who call Pioneer Drive home. With holidays and travel on weekends, this option is not only secure but also safe for those unable to attend.



[pioneerdrive.org/give](http://pioneerdrive.org/give)

Members of Pioneer Drive may send their offering by traditional mail services. To do this, simply send your gift to "Finance Office, Pioneer Drive Baptist Church, 701 S. Pioneer Dr., Abilene, TX 79605."



## BY MAIL



Giving becomes easy and simple with text-to-give:

1. Text "pioneerdrive" to 73256
2. Enter the gift amount & select the fund
3. Enter payment information & click submit

## BY TEXT



## OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

As of the week before Thanksgiving, we as a church family have packed over 140 Operation Christmas Child boxes. For every box given ten people hear the gospel, that means over 2,000 children and families will hear about the Good News of Jesus this Christmas. Also, Pioneer Drive was a drop-off location for a second time this year and to date we've collected over 200 more boxes from the community! Thank you for participating in this year's Operation Christmas Child. We will follow up in January with the final totals!





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

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



Visit our website  
[pioneerdrive.org](http://pioneerdrive.org)



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*Pioneer Drive*  
BAPTIST CHURCH

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