

# JOSHUA the Pioneer

By Lucy Stevenson Ewell  
(Based on a true story)

This story happened in the USA.

Joshua skipped on the sidewalk as he and his family walked home from church. “Guess what?” he said. “I’m giving a talk in Primary next Sunday!”

“Next Sunday is Pioneer Day, when we remember the pioneers who came to the Salt Lake Valley,” Mom said. “Maybe you could talk about pioneers.”

That gave Joshua an idea. When he got home, he flipped through the *Friend* magazine. He had seen a “Draw It” activity that showed how to draw a covered wagon and oxen, like the pioneers used when they crossed the plains.<sup>1</sup> He wanted to draw a



picture of pioneers to hold during his talk. Joshua got out his crayons and got to work.

After Joshua finished drawing, Dad helped him write his talk.

“What do you want to say about pioneers?” Dad asked.

Joshua remembered a song about pioneers that they were learning in Primary. “Well, pioneers are people who walked and walked and walked,” he said.<sup>2</sup>

“You’re right! The Saints who crossed the plains walked very far,” said Dad. “But did you know that you’re a pioneer too?”

Joshua scrunched his eyebrows. “Because I walk to school sometimes?”

Dad laughed. “You’re a pioneer because you do hard things,” he said. “And you choose the right, even though it’s not always easy.”

“Cool,” said Joshua. It felt special to be a pioneer! “A pioneer is also the first person to do something,” Dad said. “When you became part of our family, you learned about the gospel and chose to follow Jesus Christ. That makes you a pioneer too!”

Joshua was adopted. He still saw his birth family and got to do fun things with them. But when he came to live with Mom and Dad, he learned about Jesus Christ and the Book of Mormon. He went to church with them. He even got to go to the temple to be sealed to his new family.

Joshua grinned. He had an idea of what to say in his talk.

All week, Joshua practiced what he would say. “Do you want me to go up with you when you give your talk?” Dad asked.

“I think I can read everything I wrote by myself,” said Joshua. “But can you hold up the picture I drew?” Dad smiled. “Of course.”

When Sunday came, Joshua was ready. He stood at the front of the Primary room. Dad stood next to him and held up the drawing.

“Today is Pioneer Day,” Joshua said. “Pioneers are people who walked really far. Like the Saints who crossed the plains.”

Joshua pointed to the picture Dad was holding. “But a pioneer is also the first person to do something,” he said.

Joshua looked at Mom. She was smiling at him from the back of the room.

“I am a pioneer,” said Joshua. “When I get baptized, I will be the first person in my birth family to join the Church.” He grinned. “We can all be pioneers by doing hard things and choosing to follow Jesus. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.”

Joshua felt happy as he walked back to sit with his Primary class. He was glad to be a pioneer! ●

1. See *Friend*, July 2022, 17.  
2. See *Children’s Songbook*, 214.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY MELISSA MANWILL KASHIWAGI



“A pioneer is the first person to do something,” said Dad.

