




BURN *the* SHIPS

Series Guide



When God
seeks
to do
something
THROUGH us,
He almost
always
seeks to do
something
IN US first.

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This book belongs to:

We are at a turning point in the long history of our church.

Since 1891, the people of LifeBridge Christian Church have been introducing people to Jesus and leading them in their next steps with Him in Northern Colorado.

Over the last 3 years, it's hard for me to put into words how faithful God has been to our church. He has used us to reach people who are far from Jesus in ways that I haven't seen before. And He has grown people in powerful ways that are producing a great deal of spiritual fruit, but also momentum in our church. As God continues to bring opportunities

for us to grow as a church, He also brings opportunities for us to grow as individuals. When God wants to do something through us, He always wants to do something in us first. This generosity initiative is that. It is an initiative to help us win Northern Colorado for Christ, and it is also an initiative to grow us as individual followers of Jesus.

We are at a turning point where we can't look back. If we don't step out in faith and generosity, who might not hear about Jesus? If we don't step out in faith and generosity, whose family won't be transformed? If we don't step out in faith and generosity, whose eternity won't be changed? If we don't step out in faith and generosity, who will step

up to win NOCO for Christ? If not us, then who? God has been leading our church forward for 133 years; we can't go back now. It's time to *Burn the Ships*.

I can't wait to see what God does in us and through us.



Matt Hessel, Lead Pastor



**“This is your Father’s house.
Enter expectantly,
feel at home,
breathe prayerfully,
relax restfully,
worship soulfully,
greet others cordially,
and leave thoughtfully.”**

Weekly bulletin, 1936



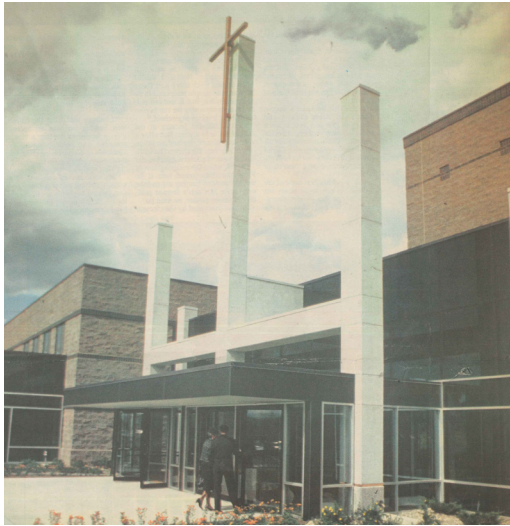
Where We Were

1889, The Beginning

In 1889, a small group of friends began meeting in Longmont to study the Bible and pray for their friends who didn't know Christ. Then, stepping out in faith, they took action and became a church on July 5th, 1891. And the church grew.

1903, First Christian

A statement from the weekly bulletin in 1936 described what the services were like: “This is your Father’s house. Enter expectantly, feel at home, breathe prayerfully, relax restfully, worship soulfully, greet others cordially, and leave thoughtfully.”



1991, Relocation

Over the decades, First Christian Church grew. The building in the heart of downtown Longmont was built, expanded, and eventually too small for the growing church. In 1991, the church finished building a campus on Highway 66 and relocated. The church continued to grow and develop an even stronger name and reputation in the surrounding communities.



1999, Name Change

In 1999, the church decided to change its name to LifeBridge Christian Church. “Life” signifies a church that is growing and thriving. The “Bridge” is a reminder to create a bridge to the people we’re trying to reach.



2020, Covid

No one enjoyed COVID, but God used it. On paper, the church should not have survived. Yet, God unified the church, strengthened it, and caused COVID to be a new season of growth. We became a 130-year-old church plant!



2024, Burn the Ships



"You never know something as well as when you teach it. Teaching and explaining the Bible to the kids has deepened my own understanding and some of the questions or insights I hear from them are as good as anything I hear in service (don't tell Matt)!"

- Aaron Bailey



Where We Are

We want to win NOCO.



"I got baptized because I wanted to be ALL IN. I have been coming to LifeBridge for a little over 2 years, and this is really the first church I have felt moved by the Lord. I have witnessed Jesus changing my life and others around me since coming to LifeBridge. I knew I was ready to take this step months before I got baptized. However, it was a vulnerability I was struggling with. I overcame that by realizing that none of it mattered; the only thing that mattered was trusting in the Lord and knowing He is my savior, protector, and God. I was ready to be ALL IN."

- Kate Wherry



“God has been teaching me that I just need to be willing, and He will do the rest. It’s not about being the best Bible scholar, or being the best hostess, or even having a clean house or kleenex on hand (yes, for the first year of hosting group at my house, when someone would shed tears, I handed them a roll of toilet paper because it was all I had on hand). It’s actually not about me at all; it’s about being willing to create a space for people to gather together and God to do His work. The fact that I get to be a willing participant in God’s work, means I get a front-row seat to the transformation He’s doing in people’s lives, which only strengthens my faith and reassurance that He is always at work, even when I may be too distracted to see it in my own life.”

- Kelly Hessel

“I didn’t need to clean my life up to meet Jesus. He wanted to meet me right where I was.”

- Chris Lucarelli

When Chris felt like he wasn’t good enough to meet Jesus, God showed up and reminded him that even at our worst, His grace is still greater.



BURN THE SHIPS

BURN THE SHIPS



“We are at
a turning point
where we can’t
look back.”

– Matt Hessel

Where We Are Going

It's time to *Burn the Ships*.

Goal #1 of *Burn the Ships*

100% Engagement

First and foremost, *Burn the Ships* is a discipleship initiative. It is for us to grow as disciples, and it is so we can make more disciples.

Our primary goal is that as close as possible to 100% of our people will have a life-changing encounter with God as it relates to their generosity. We want every person at LifeBridge to take their next step to grow in generosity.

We follow a God who is extravagantly generous. We want to follow His lead as this is part of every individual's personal discipleship.



**We grow as disciples, so we can
make more disciples.**

Goal #2 **of *Burn the Ships*** \$16 Million in Generosity

General Budget \$8M

This investment over the next 2 years represents supporting and strengthening our general budget - which is anything but “general”. It is our disciple-making ministries, NextGen ministries, care ministries, outreach partnerships, weekend experiences, and ministry operations.

Campus Renovation \$8M

If we want to win NOCO, then we need to fix and update one of our primary tools: our campus. Our goal is to renovate the entire campus to take care of deferred maintenance, reconfigure the interior of the building to maximize our space to accommodate growth and facilitate ministry, and update the aesthetic appeal of the campus.

The Giving Journey

This tool is designed to help a person move from money being their priority to money being a tool for God's Kingdom. The Giving Journey focuses on behaviors and attitudes of our hearts rather than on amounts or percentages, further transforming us into the likeness of Christ. Each step of the journey represents growth in a lifestyle of generosity and sacrifice. These are not steps you ascend to get to God, but simply a way to evaluate your growth in generosity. Scripture encourages us to grow in every facet of our walk with Christ, including *the grace of giving* (2 Corinthians 8:7).

Initial Giver

An Initial Giver is someone who decides to give for the first time out of a response to God's Word about giving. It is a big step and a big deal! This is someone who decides to give something and trust God and the leaders of the Church with everything given. They experience the initial joy of putting Jesus' words into action. (Matthew 7:24)

Consistent Giver

A Consistent Giver decides to give on a consistent basis to exercise the discipline of giving as a disciple of Jesus. Often, this giver decides to make their tithe and offering an online recurring gift and will learn the joy of consistency. Non-online givers can be consistent givers as well, of course; it just requires more discipline. They experience the joy of excelling in this grace of giving. (2 Corinthians 8:7)

Intentional Giver

An Intentional Giver understands the preeminence of Christ and that He is before all things – that all things were created by Him, for Him, through Him, and to Him. This giver places such a significant priority on their giving that it drives their spending and saving, as opposed to their spending and saving driving their giving. They experience the freedom of serving “one master” and declaring Jesus is first. (Matthew 6:19–24 and Colossians 1:15–20)

Surrendered Giver

A Surrendered Giver recognizes that Christ surrendered Himself for us, and therefore we desire to surrender ourselves to Him, in love (Ephesians 5:1–2). This giver would say, “My giving is not just changing my spending and saving. It's also changing me!” They also look at what they're not giving away and ask, “Is it surrendered too?” This informs how they use everything they've been blessed and entrusted with – whether that be through direct monetary giving or through a God-honoring use of an existing resource (i.e., honoring God with the use of your home, etc.)

Eternal Giver

An Eternal Giver sees the eternal impact of their giving – on them and others – not just the immediate programs and ministries it helps accomplish. This giver has been captivated by the knowledge that the more they are led to “do good, to be generous and ready to share,” the more they “take hold of that which is truly life” (1 Timothy 6:19). This encourages them to keep growing! They make all decisions (big purchases, savings, giving, relationships, areas of service) in light of how it will affect their eternal impact.



One Fund Initiative

You may have been a part of church campaigns in the past – maybe here at LifeBridge – during which you were asked to give a second gift ‘above and beyond’ your usual gifts to make special initiatives like new buildings and new ministries possible.

Normally, you gave that gift to the ‘Building Fund’ or ‘Campaign Fund’, and you also continued to give tithes and offerings to the ‘General Fund.’ This type of giving is potentially confusing to people who either don’t have a baseline for their “usual giving” or who aren’t able to really celebrate the total giving they are engaging in at LifeBridge in one single number. We believe that it’s all ONE MISSION we’re on as a church – the mission to introduce people in Northern Colorado to Jesus, and lead them in their next step with Him. So we’ve decided that our collective giving over the next two years will all go into one fund for this next season of ministry expansion – to celebrate the totality of our generosity growth as disciples of Jesus.

The *Burn the Ships* initiative will last for two years. In those two years, every gift that is given to

LifeBridge will be used both to continue our ongoing ministry work and to move our mission and vision forward, including renovating our campus and improving the layout of our building so we can maximize its use; addressing maintenance needs; enlarging and improving our kids and student space; updating and improving safety and security; and much more.

We’ve included a sample commitment card so you can begin to pray about your commitment and what that will mean for your journey with God. Please take time to think and pray through this, and then we will provide you with a new hard copy on Commitment Sunday, May 5th.

Sample Commitment Card

\$

What I/we would normally give in a year

(regular giving, special projects, missions, etc.)

+\$

My/Our expanded annual generosity as part of the

Burn the Ships initiative

= \$

x 2 years

↓

\$

Gifts from my/our stored resources

(savings, stock, property, possessions, etc.)

+\$

My/Our Total 2-Year

Burn the Ships Commitment

\$

May 2024 – May 2026

The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly,
and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.

2 CORINTHIANS 9:6 ESV

Two-Year Gift Chart

As you pray and discern how God would ask you to give during this time, use this gift chart as a discipleship tool. Let it be something that inspires and challenges you towards greater generosity as we seek to *burn the ships* for God and win NOCO for Christ.

Gifts Needed	Two Year Gift Level	Annual Gift	Monthly Gift	Gift Level Total
1	\$1,500,000	\$750,000	\$62,500	\$1,500,000
1	\$1,000,000	\$500,000	\$41,667	\$1,000,000
2	\$750,000	\$375,000	\$31,250	\$1,500,000
2	\$500,000	\$250,000	\$20,833	\$1,000,000
4	\$250,000	\$125,000	\$10,417	\$1,000,000
7	\$150,000	\$75,000	\$6,250	\$1,050,000
10	\$100,000	\$50,000	\$4,167	\$1,000,000
15	\$75,000	\$37,500	\$3,125	\$1,125,000
18	\$65,000	\$32,500	\$2,708	\$1,170,000
25	\$50,000	\$25,000	\$2,083	\$1,250,000
30	\$35,000	\$17,500	\$1,458	\$1,050,000
32	\$25,000	\$12,500	\$1,042	\$800,000
40	\$15,000	\$7,500	\$625	\$600,000
45	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$417	\$450,000
80	\$7,500	\$3,750	\$313	\$600,000
95	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$208	\$475,000
Many	\$2,500	\$1,250	\$104	\$430,000
Total Gift Goal				\$16,000,000

Message Notes: April 7, 2024

Week 1 | What If?

Genesis 12:1-3

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Message Notes: April 14, 2024

Week 2 | The Harvest is Now

Matthew 9:25-38

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Message Notes: April 21, 2024

Week 3 | Will You Be Bold?

Acts 4

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Message Notes: April 28, 2024

Week 4 | We Have to Sow if We Want to Reap

2 Corinthians 9:6-15

[illegible]This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Message Notes: May 5, 2024

Week 5 | The NOCO Section in Heaven

Revelation 7:9 & 21

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.This image shows a full page of blank, lined paper. It features approximately 20 evenly spaced horizontal grey lines across the entire width of the page, providing a guide for writing. The background is a solid off-white color.

Small Group Content

Each week of our *Burn the Ships* message series, groups will be provided with video teaching so that you can dive into meaningful and deeper conversations. If you are not a part of a group or have been hesitant to join one, we want to answer a few questions you may have:

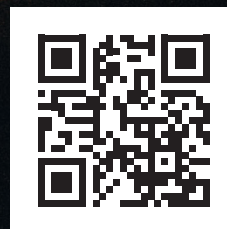
What if I'm unsure about Jesus?

Groups are a great place to ask the hard questions! They're where you can share your doubts and be authentic and vulnerable in a safe environment.

I don't think I have enough time?

Life is busy, but groups are where you can find support, accountability, and encouragement from others. Our groups have different meeting schedules, including weekly, bi-monthly, and more, so you can pick which group best fits your schedule.

Can I try another one if my group isn't the right fit? Absolutely! If a group doesn't seem like the right fit, we encourage you to try another one. We are also available to help you find a better fit.



No matter where you are in your relationship with Jesus, whether you know Him well or you don't know anything about Him, groups are a place where you can ask questions, learn, and grow. If you are not a part of a group, we encourage you to check them out.

FAQs

Where can I keep track of what is happening and coming up for *Burn the Ships*?

There's one place to find all of this information over the next two years: lbcc.org/burntheships. Here you will find resources, group videos, ongoing updates, and more!

If we are committing to *Burn the Ships*, how does this change my giving to missions, the general fund, Level Up, and other tithes/offerings to LifeBridge?

During this two-year period, every tithe and offering to God through LifeBridge will go to the key components of this *Burn the Ships* initiative, along with funding our ministries, standard operating budget, yearly Level Up campaign to support selected partners through giving above and beyond on a particular weekend each year, and much more!

What are you asking me to do?

First and foremost we are asking that you pray and seek God's leading on what He is asking of you. Prepare your heart to hear Him, and then listen to what He says. Take a step by joining one of our groups, where others will have the opportunity to share in this journey with you, and you in theirs. Engage in personal reflection with God through this guide and the online resources at lbcc.org/burntheships. Talk with your group, your spouse, your family, friends, or others about what this commitment will mean for this next exciting season of your life, and the life of our church and the communities that we are reaching.

We are asking that you make a commitment to gospel-driven, surrendered generosity – whatever it is that God leads you to do. Follow His leading.

Finally, prepare to be amazed. We serve an awesome God, and we anticipate He will move in huge ways as we seek an unprecedented impact from our collective *Burn the Ships* commitments – something only God can do. Please **mark your calendar for Commitment Sunday, May 5th**, and prepare to experience a worship service that will forever be remembered as a defining moment for our church, for our NOCO community, and for our own faith.

Can I give something other than my finances?

Be creative as you explore ways you and your family can give towards *Burn the Ships*. You might have some stocks, property, or other items of that nature. Or you may have some stored resources that God has blessed you with in the past that He might be calling you to give out of during this time.

Please let us know if you need assistance with facilitating non-cash gifts of property, stock or cryptocurrency and we would be happy to help you with that. You can contact our finance team by reaching out to Kevin King (kking@lbcc.org) to make a

gift of this type.

How long is my commitment?

We are asking that everyone make a two-year commitment. The fulfillment period for your commitment will begin with our Celebration Sunday on Sunday, May 19, 2024 and it will culminate in May of 2026.

What if I've never given to LifeBridge before?

This is a great time to jump in and give for the first time. *Burn the Ships* is a call to surrendered, gospel-driven generosity for absolutely everyone at LifeBridge. If you have never given before, this is your chance to start with committed giving.

What if I am not able to give as expected over the next two years? Or what happens if I move away during this time?

The truth is that none of us know exactly what our future will hold. That's the beauty and challenge of taking steps of faith! We want to encourage you that even if you're not sure if you'll be a part of LifeBridge for the full span of the next two years, we invite you to still commit to generosity and be a part of this life-changing endeavor God has for our church in this season. If needed, you may modify your commitment at any time. But often, people will continue to support LifeBridge, even after they've left the area – as a ministry they continue to be a part of into the future. If you happen to move out of the area, we would love for that to be your story!

If I am significantly in debt right now, am I supposed to still give?

If you are currently seeking to make payments to pay off debt right now, we absolutely encourage you to keep doing so. We would be happy to help you in this journey and/or to recommend a budgeting class or resource that might minister to you. Giving is something that God calls us to, regardless of our circumstances. Giving isn't about what God wants from you; rather, it's about what God wants for you. So it should be our joy and privilege to give at all times, regardless of the amount or percentage. Please contact us if you need assistance with paying off debt while still giving or if you would like to speak with a budgeting counselor. We would be honored to help.

How and where can I give?

Giving is easy! Conveniently, you can set up a one-time or ongoing automated gift at lbcc.org/give. We also have several other options, including placing your gift in check or cash format into the envelopes at the giving boxes at the back of the auditorium.

What if I am new here and not clued up about this campaign?

We believe the local church has the most compelling mission to which we can give our lives. We would love for you to make LifeBridge your home church as we seek to introduce more people to Jesus through *Burn the Ships*. You can get started by visiting lbcc.org to get connected.

Do you have more questions?

Check out the extended FAQs at lbcc.org/burntheships



KEY DATES

Burn the Ships Message Series

April 7th – May 5th

Advance Commitment Night

April 21st @ 6:30pm

Commitment Sunday

May 5th @ 9:00am & 10:30am

Celebration Sunday and First Big Give

May 19th @ 9:00am & 10:30am

**We're a church that
exists to introduce people
to Jesus and lead them in
their next step with Him.**



lbcc.org

info@lbcc.org