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From Our Students: Gifty Arthur

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Luther College

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From Our Students

GIFTY ARTHUR

Luther College, Class of 2017



“The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.” (John 10:3)

Having grown up Christian, I have come to understand that although faith is about knowledge, belief, and behavior, it is also—and perhaps most importantly—about relationship: relationship with God. It is about a relationship that focuses on God and the diverse ways He reveals Himself to people through various personal encounters. That spiritual intimacy is very personal and distinct to each individual or group of people. It means that, although we may have our eyes focused on One Being as the object of worship, our mode and means as well as our expression of worship may greatly differ based on our personal understandings of what we believe and the faith traditions with which we identify.

Interfaith cooperation at Luther College has made me deeply rooted in my spirituality. I have had various interactions and interfaith dialogues with students of different faith backgrounds, mainly through the college’s *Journey Conversations*. There are times set within the school’s curricular activities where students are given the room to interact and share personal

experiences and beliefs that are central to their own traditions. I believe this has and continues to serve as a unique opportunity for other students who are also in search of a spiritual identity. They bring on board the pertinent questions they have about faith, as well as gain insight into the tradition with which they identify. This quest for knowledge is central to the diversity to which a liberal arts college commits.

As the scriptures mention in the book of John, God knows each of us. I believe that the various traditions we have are a result of the understanding we have construed from relationship we have with God through our personal encounters. In appreciation of this, I am of the view that we can still uniquely identify with our various faith tradition and still work in an atmosphere of love and mutual respect for others’ beliefs. We know that the spiritual diversities we have today are a result of the different expressions of worship that come out of personal relationships within different faith backgrounds.