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**Showcase Talk – “Our Story: Nurturing the Intersections of My Story  
and God’s Story”**  
**April 30, 2023**

When Northwestern welcomed me last fall, I didn't anticipate being involved in campus ministry. The pandemic had kept me from feeling close to a faith community, as my youth group and church were online, resulting in me forgetting how to nurture my faith. So, my academic ambitions eclipsed any desire to grow my faith, and I expected to focus on academics, internships, and career advancement at Northwestern. However, these expectations were incorrect, and I am thrilled to share my story at the LCM showcase.

During Fall Quarter, I found it challenging to attend ministry events because of the amount of stress I was under. I struggled to manage time for classwork, midterms, friends, working out, and adjusting to adult life. Although I found peace being away from the pressure of Northwestern when I went to Sunday services, attending LCM seemed to require choosing between being present at the ministry and keeping up with my work. I hesitated to fully commit myself and feared I couldn't sacrifice more time, at the risk of falling behind in class. Fortunately, student leaders and Pastor Deanna met me where I was, and supported me with emails and invitations during my first quarter.

After the horror of Fall Quarter was over, I realized that I needed a change. The previous quarter had shown me the stresses of being a Northwestern student, and I didn't feel fulfilled completing problem sets – what a surprise! I wanted to challenge my faith and find deeper fulfillment. This challenge brought me closer to the LCM community, and the better I got to know everyone, the more I wanted to attend events and commit my time to LCM.

I realized how our shared faith brings together a diverse group of students, most of whom I wouldn't have met otherwise. I learned that all students at the ministry have their own set of stressors, and I was uplifted by each member's decision to show up at LCM despite all these things. I know when I am stressed or bogged down, I am heard and understood while talking to other students in the ministry. This community is our story, and each member by showing up and sacrificing their precious time shows the value of this community.

This Spring, I found my place in the LCM community on the student leadership board. I'm grateful that leaders looked out for me when I was unsure about committing and that I took a chance to invest my time when I was ready. Since then, I've found the value of my investment in the friends I've made and the fulfillment I've felt. The story of LCM continues, and as new members join and seniors graduate, we aim to cultivate a strong community that supports Northwestern students and meets them where they are.