

MOSAIC CENTER
News, p. #1

INSIDE THE STAR
Editorial, p. #1-2

PUZZLES
Activities, p. #2

CHAPEL
Opinions, p. #3

REVIEW
Columns, p. #4

MOSAIC CENTER CLOSING

ABIGAIL BATES ('26)

On Friday Mar. 10, President Wayne D. Lewis, Jr. announced the closing of the Mosaic Multicultural Center.

"Many individuals," President Lewis wrote, "view the space as exclusive and unwelcoming, leading to the effect of few students engaging in the learning experiences the space was intended to foster."

In the Fall 2023 semester, the space will become a Campus Ministry area led by Dean Michael Jordan for Emmanuel Scholars, Life Together Groups, and a new campus-wide discipleship program. The ambassador program from the Mosaic Center will continue as the Intercultural Ambassadors, and will work on promoting intercultural connections and events.

For various reasons, the Mosaic Center began to increasingly fall short of its intended goals leading to the decision to close the center.

"Houghton," President Lewis wrote, "will be able to more effectively accomplish the institution's goals in this area if our goals are separated from the Mosaic Center and the physical space it now occupies."



Photo Wall in the Mosaic Center

COURTESY OF CHRISTIAN WELKER

While many students recognize the problems of the Mosaic Center, some are dissatisfied with the administrative response.

"I do agree that the Mosaic Center often felt like an unapproachable place," Senior Benjamin Dostie ('23) writes. "There used to be more events there in my freshman year that allowed majority population students like me to interact in constructive ways... Even

if President Lewis was right that it wasn't meeting expectations, it would have been nice to see some corrective action or collaborative effort to align it with stated values before such a drastic action."

Senior Isabelle Murch ('23) feels that the Mosaic Center went from one extreme to the other without being given the tools to thrive. She wishes time was taken to listen to the

entire student body, and rather than closing it, restructure the center to become proactive in celebrating diversity.

Some students are also concerned with removing a safe space for people of differing racial and ethnic backgrounds. Sophomore Kimberly Borges Edwards ('25) and Junior Caroline Zimmerman ('24) wrote about the negative impact closing the center will have

on diversity at Houghton, and the lack of care and support marginalized students feel from administration as a result of this decision.

Women's Area Coordinator Raegan Zelaya remarks that while she understands the reasoning behind closing the Mosaic Center, Houghton—as an institution—can't claim to value diversity if we aren't doing everything we can to safeguard and develop it.

"If anything," Zelaya writes, "it feels like it just further demonstrates that the university is only interested in the kinds of diversity that are convenient for marketing purposes. It is outrageous to have diversity as a pillar in our strategic plan when we are actively cutting the programs and spaces that help empower diverse students to succeed."

The Intercultural Ambassadors, renamed from the current ambassador program, will provide intentional and impactful programming on campus to foster intercultural connections and learning through student leadership. President Lewis writes that these student leaders will

INSIDE THE STAR

STAR EDITORS

Have you ever wondered what goes into publishing each issue of the Houghton STAR?

As you may know, each issue is a team effort, with two Editors-in-Chief at the helm. Junior Christian Welker is one of them. He explained that the Editors-in-Chief "work with the editors to edit articles, lay out the issue, and deal with any problems that may arise in the process." He also added that the Editors-in-Chief meet bi-weekly with the STAR's Faculty Advisor. In addition, the Editors-in-Chief "speak with members of the administration, staff, and faculty teams on behalf of the STAR." They also complete various



STAR Editors study this week's edition of the paper

COURTESY OF NATHAN VERSARI

website and paper-related projects, as well as odd jobs in the office.

Senior Victoria Hock, another Editor-in-Chief, further added that the Editors-in-Chief "Collaborate with each other and the other Editors to come up with story and writer ideas for the STAR."

Additionally, Welker and Hock stated that, despite some rumors, the Faculty Advisor has little oversight over the article

editing process. They are only given access to articles pre-publication if the Editors-in-Chief see a potential issue they want feedback on. Most of the time, the STAR's Faculty Advisor only sees articles after publication, at the same time as the rest of Houghton's Campus.

In addition to the Editors-in-Chief, there are Four Section Editors, News, Opinions, Columns, and Photo and Media.

Junior Joshua Carpen-ter is responsible for overseeing our News section. He said that he is "responsible for finding three writers to cover either a news or feature story. Once I receive their articles, I edit them and lay them out in Affinity Publisher (the software we use to create the print form of the newspaper)."

Overseeing our Opinions section is Sophomore Victoria Arndt. Dis-

cussing her responsibilities, she stated, "As the Opinions editor, I collect writers for opinion pieces and then work with the writer to edit them, as well as format the piece within its section of the newspaper."

Sophomore Caleb Tiedemann oversees our Columns section, which is found at the back of each issue and contains anything from reviews to artwork. He explained that he is "responsible for finding someone to write an article and someone for Artist of the Week. I edit the submitted article and then format it, as well as the Artist of the Week submissions, onto the back page of the STAR."

Junior Savannah Stitt is our Photo and Media Editor. Each week, she will "photograph, or source the photos of people and events the STAR features in each issue." Stitt also runs our Instagram account.

Layout occurs each Wednesday in the

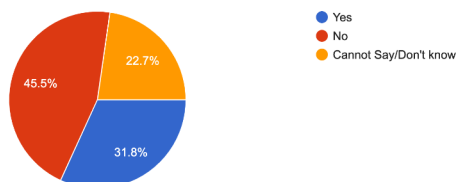
See **INSIDE THE STAR** page #2

We Asked, You Responded!

Thank you to everyone who filled out our Mosaic Center Survey.
Here are some of the responses you had.

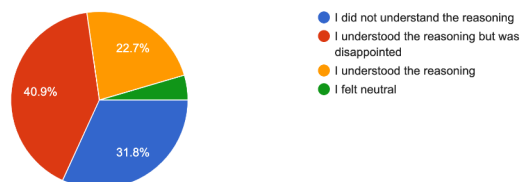
Do you believe the Mosaic Center was fulfilling its stated purpose "to be a dynamic space that hosted conversations, programming, and educational ...ivities that promote issues of cultural diversity"?

44 responses



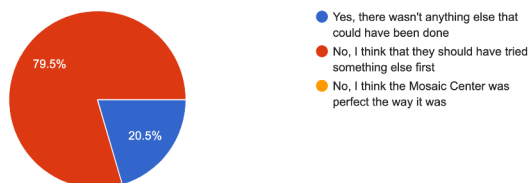
What was your initial response to President Lewis' email?

44 responses



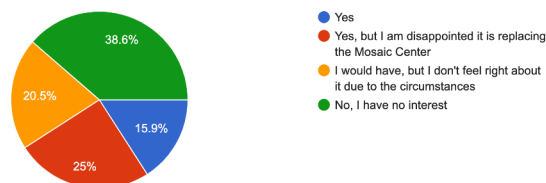
Do you believe that the decision was the best path forward?

44 responses



Would you be interested in participating in Dean Jordan's new "Campus Ministry Space" or the new Campus-Wide Discipleship Program?

44 responses



INSIDE THE STAR from page #1

Houghton STAR office, which is located in the Campus Center basement. Each editor is responsible for inserting and formatting their content in their respective sections. After the Editors lay out their articles, the Co-Editors-in-Chief go through the entire issue again, checking for mistakes and filling any leftover space with puzzles, advertisements, and more. Then it is shipped to the printing press, where it is printed and prepared for handout after Friday Chapel.

After the physical issue is sent to the printing press, each article is formatted into an online version for publication on the STARs Website. The online articles are scheduled to be posted at the same time as the physical copies are distributed so that interested parties both on and off campus can get the issue at the same time.

The Editors may be responsible for putting each issue together, but this would not be possible without contributors, which we are always looking for more of.

If you are interested in contributing to any section of the Houghton STAR, please email the Editor of the section you're interested in. We would also welcome Letters to the Editor in response to our previous pieces, which can be sent to star@houghton.edu. Letters to the Editor can range from a few short sentences to a maximum of 600 words.

If you are interested in becoming an editor, feel free to fill out the application below to become our new News Editor as Carpenter is joining Welker in the Editor-in-Chief position after Hock graduates at the end of this semester.

If you want to contribute, but are not sure if or where your idea would fit, feel free to email one of our Co-Editors-in-Chief. ★

MOSAIC CENTER from page #1

help plan events for heritage months, assist the MLK Day Committee, and organize campus conversations. It is simply the space being closed, he comments.

"Houghton remains committed to intercultural education and engagement," President Lewis explains, "which is why the ambassadors [program] is remaining, with an explicit focus on facilitating and supporting Christ-centered intercultural education and engagement."

Contact Vice President Marc Smithers for more information on the Intercultural Ambassadors. ★

Join our Team!

Do you think that you can make the STAR a better paper?
Then we want you!
Apply below to our new News Editor.



More God, Less World



VICTORIA ARNDT ('25)

Here at Houghton University, students are required to attend a mandatory chapel service on Mondays and Fridays, with an Around the Table program on Wednesdays which allows students to hear about God's work in the lives of others.

Although these chapel times help students have a break between classes and let them give a moment of their time towards God, I've found that sometimes I head to chapel with a faint feeling of dread, not because there are many other things I could be doing with that time, but because of what the message will be that day.

Since my freshman year, I quickly came to re-

alize that I wasn't connecting to the messages I was hearing in chapel. It wasn't that the messages were bad or held no relevance to us as students, but that they didn't resonate with me in the way I thought they would. Some messages had little relation to the Bible verses read before it, instead mostly focusing on a current-day issue or concept rather than how the verses tied into the message, while others had good relation between message and verses but felt a little lackluster in terms of spiritual emphasis on God or what the Bible was trying to teach us through the verse. Some messages from guest speakers even

"I quickly came to realize that I wasn't connecting to the messages I was hearing in chapel."

felt more than a little preachy on their topics, speaking directly on the topic with no mention of God or the Bible. It was all well and good, but those messages left me feeling

confused and most of all dissatisfied, with me questioning how I was to utilize what I'd heard when I felt no emotional connection or calling towards it, especially when it felt like I had just been listening to someone's soapbox rant for half an hour and had gotten nothing substantial out of the message.

More often than not, instead of the speakers' messages actually affecting me and making me want to listen to what they had to say, their messages started to lose my interest as soon

"I want to listen to a message that encourages me to continue my walk with God. I want to hear about how a particular verse can relate to me as a Christian and as a weary college student."

as I heard more about current-day issues rather than the goodness of God. At times it was even frustrating, and it made me start to wonder if the chapel message I was about to hear was going to be about the Bible and God in a way that resonated with my spirit, or if it would just be another sermon on more world issues.

Don't get me wrong. I understand the importance of speaking on current-day issues and how we are supposed to approach them as believers in the Church. Christianity and worldliness go hand in hand, and it's definitely important to hear about issues that affect us as individuals and as fellow Christians and what we can do to help change them. But when I attend chapel, I want to listen to a message that encourages me to continue my walk with God. I want to hear about how a particular verse can relate to me as a Christian and as a weary college student, not on topics I hear about nonstop on social media. Chapel is supposed to be a time when we can relax and spend a moment with God and hear a small message to encourage us throughout the rest of our day.

When that time is filled with topics other than God and the Word, what once was a time of worship and reflection becomes a time of listening to what feels like activism from the pulpit, with messages that have nothing to spiritually or emotionally connect with.

My point here is not to slight any of the chapel speakers or their messages, but just to share the respectful musings of a college student looking for more God and less world in the messages she hears during chapel. My hope is that future chapel messages will have a more spiritually substantial and emotional impact on its listeners going forward, not through simply discussing modern issues and problems, but with an emphasis on the power and hope of God as something to look to even throughout troubling times, so that those who need to hear a certain message on those days can hear a message that encourages their souls. ★

Victoria Arndt is a sophomore studying Communications with a minor in Creative Writing. She enjoys reading, watching movies and television shows, and coming up with another new story in a long list of yet unfinished works.

Have an opinion
you want to share?

CONTACT
Victoria.Arndt25@houghton.edu

SPEAK OUT!

Letters to the editor
should be less than 600 words

SUBMIT TO
star@houghton.edu



The mission of the Houghton STAR is to preserve and promote the values of dialogue, transparency and integrity that have been the ideals of Houghton University since its inception. This is done by serving as a medium for the expression of student thought and as a quality publication of significant campus news, Houghton area news, and events.

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The Houghton
STAR

2022-2023 Staff

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SAVANNAH STITT // Media Editor

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CHRISTIAN WELKER // Co-Editor-in-Chief

CALEB TIEDEMANN // Columns Editor

VICTORIA ARNDT // Opinions Editor



Review

Into the Woods Review

Kat Wojsiat ('24)

I had the pleasure of seeing Houghton University's production of Stephen Sondheim's *Into the Woods* twice! Director Amanda Cox did something a little different and split the cast so that many roles had two actors, and I wanted to see and compare both casts.

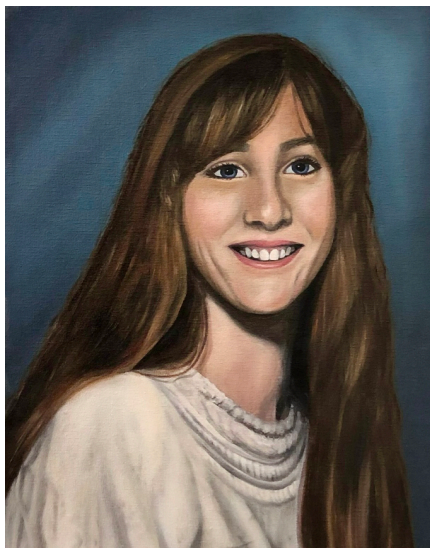
Both did an amazing job, and it was fun to see each actor put their own spin on their character. For those of you who did not get to see it, *Into the Woods* follows a baker (Luc Peirera) and his wife (Rebekah Scharf) as they journey through the mysterious woods to find four objects demanded of them by their neighboring witch (Linnette Taylor).

Along the way, they come across multiple fairytale characters who live in their world, including Jack (Thomas Auld & Ethan Carr), Little Red (Grace Vuolo & Josey Ikker), and Cinderella (Emily Quick & Rachel McVeigh). Together, they face giants, death, princes, and a race against time.

All of the actors in the show clearly put a lot of work into learning their lines, choreography, and characters, and it is clear that there was so much fun and dedication

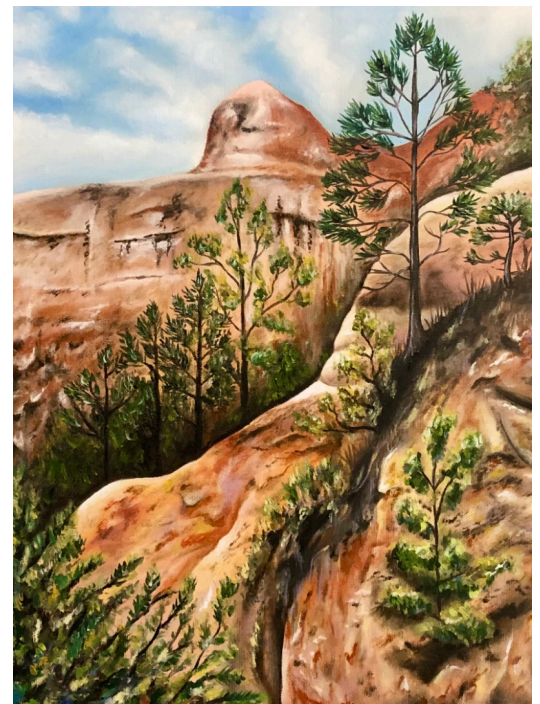
put into these performances. The vocal performances put out by the leads were highly impressive. Most of the leads had at least one solo or duet where the audience got to see them shine.

Surely word has spread, but this show was made even more eventful thanks to the campus-wide power outage that occurred on Saturday. Right toward the end of Auld's solo during the matinee, the power went out, causing the stage and the mics to go dark. Auld continued without faltering, delivering an impressive and composed performance through the confusion. After his scene ended, the show took a brief intermission during which the tech team went to work finding solutions. They quickly found lights, and the rest of the performance was completed in darkness, as well as the Saturday night performance. The actors adapted very well and delivered a great performance. I got to go to three of the four performances (although I did not get to stay the whole time for each one) and each one was meaningful and fun. They did a great job, and I highly encourage students to go to future Lyric Theatre productions!



Artist of the Week

Hannah Roeske ('24)



Hannah Roeske is in her junior year at Houghton. She is pursuing a major in Studio art as well as Inclusive Childhood Education. She enjoys being a part of the women's basketball team at Houghton, as well as singing as a part of the Koin worship ministry on campus.