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CHRISTMAS PRISM

ISABELLA BRATTON ('26)

Houghton's Christmas Prism will be held on Friday, Dec. 1, at 7:30 p.m. at the Victory Highway Wesleyan Church, and on Saturday, Dec. 2, at 8 p.m. in the John & Charles Wesley Chapel. After Saturday's performance, there will be a After Prism Party in Van Dyk Lounge at 9:30 p.m.

The concert showcases several of Houghton's music ensembles such as the Men's and Women's Choir, Symphony Orchestra and soloists.

The ensembles have been preparing for months, and are looking forward to seeing their work come together.

Freshman Zoe Zachery ('27) expressed excitement for her first choir concert at Houghton. While she's excited, she explained how it is also nerve-wracking due to Prism's commendable reputation.

Zachery stated, "The most challenging part of



Christmas Prism Photo

COURTESY OF SAVANNAH STITT

preparing for prism is the memorization of all the songs that we are performing ... it's kind of nerve racking but I know that I'm prepared. It's just the fact that prism is such a big concert and it's really important to people."

Sophomore Anthony Fry ('26), a member of the Houghton Choir, reiterated

Zachery's statement, specifically noting that the most challenging moment for him was memorizing a song in Haitian Creole.

A member of the Women's Choir, Sophomore Elizabeth Wertz ('26), is looking forward to showcasing the hard work all the ensembles have put in.

Wertz said, "The song

I'm looking forward to most is called 'What Strangers Are These?'. This song really builds and it tells an incredible story."

Senior Kaitlin Kleinau ('24) appreciated the efforts of her choir director, Dr. Kevin Dibble, to keep their heads in the right place before performance.

Kleinau wrote, "Dr. Dib-

ble always reminds his ensembles, during prayer and devotional time right before the concert, to be present, spiritually and emotionally. The audience before us will never be the same group again, and our peers will be ever-changing. However, God is with us in this moment, and we simply have to make music for Him. If we can reach one soul because of our worship, then all praise be to God."

Wertz hoped that the audience would not only enjoy the concert but take away something valuable.

"I hope," Wertz wrote, "that the audience will be able to see God's glory from our performance and realize that nothing is possible without Him. He is the reason for our successes, and He is the one that should be praised." ★

Houghton Announces Spring 2024 Commencement Speaker

JOSHUA CARPENTER ('24)

Today, Dec. 1, Houghton administration announced that Dr. Wayne Schmidt was selected as the commencement speaker for the senior class of spring 2024.

President Wayne D. Lewis, Jr. met Schmidt early in his presidency and has been working closely with him ever since. When the time came to select a commencement speaker for the Class of 2024, there was more that stood out to Lewis than Schmidt's experience in pastoral ministry and higher education.

"In addition to being the capable leader of our



Dr. Wayne Schmidt

COURTESY OF MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Wesleyan movement in North America," says Lewis, "[Schmidt] is a trusted friend and mentor ... I thank God for his continued guidance and encouragement as a Christian leader, husband, and father."

Serving as General Superintendent of the Wesleyan Church since 2016, Schmidt has attended

various Board Meetings over the years, which is how he met Provost David Davies.

"While we've not had extensive interaction," says Davies, "I've found him to be a humble, Godly man with a clear heart for the students of Houghton University."

Before he was elected General Superintendent,

Schmidt served as the chief administrative officer of Wesley Seminary at Indiana University from 2010-2016. In 1979, he co-founded Kentwood Community Church (KCC) in the Grand Rapids, Michigan Area, first serving as a co-founding pastor and then as a senior pastor until 2009. His contributions to

KCC include leadership in planting the church, as well as 10 other daughter churches across his tenure.

"With a career in both academic and church environments," says Davies, "and a lifetime commitment to our sponsoring denomination, he is well suited to serve as Houghton's commencement speaker."

When asked what he would like to say to the senior class, Schmidt says, "I believe God honors a heart of humility with abundant measures of His grace. Being humble and hungry (lifelong learner) leads to fullness of life."

For more information on Dr. Schmidt, visit his blog on the Wesleyan Church's official website where he discusses what he has learned from 40 years of ministry. ★

Naughty vs. Nice Professors

JULIANA SCHMIDT ('25)

The results are in for the Naughty or Nice Professor Poll!

Professor Kevin Dibble of the Music department, Professor Don Wilcox of the Biology department, and Professor Hannah Kim of the Psychology department tied in third place for the Nicest professors.

Freshman Kareena Ulfig comments on how kind Professor Kim is to her students. "She's so sweet and thinks everyone's ideas are worth mentioning."

Junior Olivia Carr adds, "She understands and asks about you daily and always incorporates our lives in class."

Professor Poythress took the poll (wait, was that allowed?) and wrote of Professor Wilcox: "Prof Wilcox is the sweetest, kindest, and most eager guy to help!"

In second place for the Nicest professor is Professor Craig Whitmore, who is the Assistant Professor of Education.

Freshman Elizabeth Borchers comments, "[he's] energetic, always willing

to help and hands out minimal homework!"

In first place for the nicest professor is, unsurprisingly, Dr. Douglas Gaerte! He is a Professor of Communications at Houghton.

Senior Cody Johnson says, "Dr. Gaerte answers my emails faster than Santa."

"He is always the first to ask how you are doing, and he notices if you look upset." Freshman Madeline Bailey states.

Sophomore Warren Torraca says the reason he voted for Dr. Gaerte was because of his, "Demeanor and care for his students. He will just listen for hours or teach for hours or just talk for hours."

With the Nicest out of the way, time to find out who's on the Naughty List this year!

In second place for the Naughtiest professors is Professor Kevin Dibble, making him the only professor on both the Naughty and Nice list.

Torraca says, "Oh he's great. He just goes off on tangents and occasionally makes unhinged comments."

Tied for first place are professors Benjamin

Wheaton and Sarah Massey, although no one was brave enough to say why.

While he ultimately did not make the list, one of the funniest comments received from the poll is about Professor Jonathan Case.

Junior Faith Coolbeth states that Dr. Case deserves to be on the Naughty list because "He tried to show an episode of South Park!"

Maybe next year Dr. Case.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Poll, and a big thanks to all of the Professors. Whether Naughty or Nice, we appreciate all the work you do for Houghton. Thanks for taking part in this light-hearted competition. ★

Puzzles

One more Crazy Challenging Puzzle for the Christmas Season.

Congratulations to all of our Puzzle Masters this semester: **Jaeden Zabula, Harrison Watts,** and of course, **Josey Ikker.**

Your Profound Puzzle Proficiency is awe-inspiring

(There will be no answers next week, Merry Christmas!)

Sudoku

	6		1		8			
	5						9	
8	9	3			4			
4								3
		6		4		9		
2								1
			5			6	2	9
	1						3	
			6		3		7	

Difficulty: Diabolical

Provided by Sudokuoftheday.com



Last Week's Solution

1	5	4	6	7	8	3	9	2
3	7	2	1	9	5	8	4	6
8	6	9	3	4	2	7	1	5
2	8	7	9	3	1	6	5	4
6	1	5	8	2	4	9	7	3
4	9	3	5	6	7	2	8	1
5	3	1	2	8	9	4	6	7
9	4	6	7	1	3	5	2	8
7	2	8	4	5	6	1	3	9

Come Work With Us!



Good Tidings & Good Grief



MOLLY CONNOLLY ('25)

As the holiday season runs its course, we see familiar scenes of warmth: being wrapped up in flannel and knit blankets, lilting melodies drifting through the air with warm sugar and spice scents swirling around us. We see friends and family gathered around tables filled with favorite foods as good conversation and love abounds. However, in those beautiful moments of fellowship and company, it can sometimes make the spaces once taken up by loved ones who aren't with us anymore that much more obvious.

Grief in a season mar-

keted on the basis of curating an exuberant display of joy, excitement and sociability can make an already incredibly complex experience that much more difficult to process. The ever-looming pressure to be a chipper Kris Kringle for Christmas can make the growing and groaning of grief feel Grinchy. If we're lucky enough to not be the ones grieving, which can be complicated in its own right, seeing friends, family or loved ones in pain, being distant, or just not quite being themselves can be tense, awkward or even isolating, not just for us, but for all involved.

"Allow yourself to be sad, angry, and hurt when those feelings come up. You do not owe anyone the comfort of convenient emotions, and you deserve to feel fully and deeply in all circumstances."

I want to encourage all of us to take those tense or awkward moments, or the moments where we feel alone in our grief, and embrace the heart of our hurt. When we are

"Grief in a season marketed on the basis of curating an exuberant display of joy, excitement and sociability can make an already incredibly complex experience that much more difficult to process."

missing the loved ones we no longer gather with, I want us to reflect on the memories and traditions we had with them. Continue those traditions or make new ones in remembrance of them. Allow yourself to be sad, angry, and hurt when those feelings come up. You do not owe anyone

one close to us who is living with grief, don't be afraid to be beside them at this time. Be a constant and supporting presence. Ask them about their lost loved one. Don't force a silver lining, but give them a way to share the love they have for the person they are missing. In those moments we are given the bittersweet blessing of getting to share this love, and learn about the love we wouldn't have been able to experience without that person.

There isn't any right way to process loss and there isn't a set way to support someone going through that process, but I urge each and every one of us to take those opportunities to grow closer together rather than to shy away from those "uncomfortable" or "inconvenient" emotions. Instead, embrace it all throughout the holiday season. Ways we can incorporate the grieving process can take a myriad of different forms, whether that's trying to follow their famous cookie recipe, watching their favorite Christmas

movie, singing along to their favorite seasonal songs, hanging up their stocking and filling it with some of their favorite snacks. Regardless of its form, let that love be lifted up in ways the season already encourages. Let laughter, tears, and everything in-between flow freely and make space for those feelings to be felt for those around you. ★

Molly Connolly is in her junior year pursuing a double major in Bible and Theology with a concentration in pastoral ministry. Along with her academic pursuits she is the ARD of Gillette and Spiritual Life Representative on Student Council and can be found working a shift or two at the Highlander Shop. When she's not busy with work and school she can be found spending time with friends, playing with her cat Soap, and going to concerts and shows whenever she can.

Have an opinion you want to share?

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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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Reviews

The Grinch (2018)

Kat Wojsiat (*24)

The Grinch (2018) was a controversial movie upon release. The 1966 Dr. Seuss story already had a classic cartoon rendition that lived in the hearts of all, and a 2000 goofy, well-known live action film featuring Jim Carrey.

When the 2018 remake was announced, many people felt as though it was unnecessary, and that Benedict Cumberbatch was not a good fit for the role of the Grinch. I, myself, did not have high hopes for the movie, and I actually didn't even bother to watch it for the first couple of years after it was released. During the first Christmas of Covid, I was in desperate need of more Christmas movies to watch, so I gave it a try - and quickly fell in love.

The rich, vibrant colors of the animation, the aggressively intense Christmas decorations, the lack of physics, the carolers chasing people down... No movie better captures the Christmas spirit for me. It has become a yearly staple of the Christmas season for me to wrap myself in a fuzzy blanket with a peppermint hot chocolate and watch this movie. Benedict Cumberbatch's energy is goofy and fun, but it also brings something new to the table that separates it from the first two movies.

This Grinch is given more of a backstory and a more fulfilling redemption arc. He also appreciates Max more than the previous two Grinches, which I greatly appreciate as an animal lover. I also love the addition of Bricklebaum, a jolly Christmas-loving man who lives at the bottom of Mount Crumpit and thinks he and the Grinch are best friends. It adds a psychosocial dynamic to the story of the Grinch only being able to accept love when he lets go of his deep-seeded bitterness.

One of the best things about this movie is that it is wonderfully ideal for us college students who are in the finals season leading up to Christmas, because it is only 90 minutes long. It is the perfect short, easy-to-watch, light-hearted Christmas movie to take your mind off finals for a few minutes before diving back into work, and I look forward to it every year.

Merry Christmas from the STAR



Why put a star on top of the tree when you can put STARS all over the tree?

Courtesy of Chunsun Lei

Thank you for reading the STAR this semester! We are so grateful for all of your support and look forward to continuing to grow and improve as we continue to be the voice of the Student Body on Campus.

We're so excited to see what next semester brings. Have a merry Christmas and a happy new year!

With love,
The STAR Team