

CAB
News, p. #1

CHAPEL SCANNING
News, p. #1-2

SAM KOCHERI
Feature, p. #2

CHRISTIAN CHOICES
Opinions, p. #3

ALIEN
Columns, p. #4

CIDER & CINEMA

VICTORIA ARDNT ('25)

This Saturday evening, the Campus Activities Board (CAB) will be putting on "Cider and Cinema" at Big Al's/Sizzle & Swirl. The event will host activities such as crafts, games, cider, donuts, mug cakes and show the movie "Fantastic Mr. Fox". The event is designed to be low-key and calm in order to encourage restfulness and a time of friendship and relaxation for students.

"Compared to a lot of the higher energy events that we do like Homecoming and Purple and Gold Week, I think this will be a great moment to have good fellowship," said Grace Stickels '27, one of CAB's core members. Jana Newberry, the Director of Student Engagement and the supervisor for CAB, agreed: "I think if they need a moment of rest, this is something they can look forward to. Hopefully they can fellowship with friends or get a snack."

Stickels also mentioned that "Cider and Cinema" might be a good destresser for some students after Grandparents Day this Friday.

"It's always the day after [a family event] where people are really homesick or sad," Stickels said, "and I think this is could be very beneficial, because if their grandparents leave the day prior, they could be really reminiscent or homesick, so maybe this could help be a pick-me-up."

One of the challenges for CAB while planning "Cider and Cinema" was finding a date for the event.

"We do a lot as a campus," Newberry said, "and so you don't want to overlap too much or take away from other events, but the easiest part is that everyone loves fall events, so it's nice to be in the lineup." She added, "Hopefully it's a nice restful moment in a busy season."

Alena Perkins '25, one of the event's main orga-

nizers, mentioned that the event, "is going to be a cozy vibe where people can come, watch the movie, get some cider, donuts, do homework. We might put out some watercolor supplies, some puzzles, just a place for people to come hang out and have a chill evening with CAB."

Perkins also mentioned that "Cider and Cinema" is not just a time for people to enjoy food and games, as they can study or work while they are there. "People can come do homework and just chill. It's not something that you have to be doing an activity while you're there," she said. "We just want to provide a chill time."

"Cider and Cinema" will be from 7 to 9. "Everyone is invited," Newberry said. "Come by yourself, bring friends. You can just show up, you can sit down, you can watch, or you can do something if that's what you want to do." ★



Cider and Cinema Poster

COURTESY OF CAB

Chapel Scanning Changes Once More

ANNA SUMNER ('25)

You enter the chapel and open the Campus Groups app on your phone. It's a new scanning method this fall, and it boots you from the app, blocking access to the QR code. You then sign in using the laptop.

Why does Houghton use Campus Groups, anyway?

Sadie Nakamura '26 said that she "was not as much a fan [of Campus Groups] as ID scanning"—a method used during the 2023-2024 academic school year. Both she and Kaitlyn Avery '26 expressed annoyance with the long line



Students walking into Chapel

COURTESY OF KAITLYN AVERY

and being unable to access the QR code.

Dr. Bill Burrichter, Vice President for Student Life, explained that the previous method of scanning student IDs for chapel and Around the Table attendance was becoming unpractical and outdated. ID barcode scanners collected student data, which then had to be manually uploaded

by a staff member to mark attendance. Several of these barcode scanning devices broke and needed to be replaced.

Houghton had a choice, explained Dr. Burricher, whether to replace the expensive barcode scanners or switch to an alternate method. Even when using the ID method, attendance was marked on Campus Groups and was

already implemented across campus. Also, most students already own mobile phones. It seemed like the obvious choice.

During the first two weeks of using Campus Groups for chapel scanning, Dr. Burricher said there were "some glitches." The app was not entirely equipped to handle the level of engagement across college

campuses. On the Houghton end, upcoming chapels were batch uploaded without being sorted properly, which needed to be manually fixed.

Dr. Burrichter said that the reason students are removed from the app is because of data signal confusion, chapel Wi-Fi and the app itself. Students log into the Hub using their data, and when they enter the foyer, their phones switch over to the Wi-Fi signal from the newly installed routers. The app detects the change and prompts a re-sign in.

Signing in again is a slow process. The app needs to receive the signal, find the Houghton Hub again and requires password input. Dr. Burrichter explained that the signal is often impacted by the walls and glass between the sanctuary and foyer. They have already placed two routers in the

Feature: Sam Kocheri

JULIANA SCHMIDT ('25)

As the new Professor of History, Sam Kocheri Clement might be new to teaching at Houghton University, but he is familiar with the world of history.

Kocheri grew up as the youngest of four in a small family in India. He dabbled in other avenues before he decided to pursue a career in teaching.

"I went to join a Catholic seminary to become a priest. After I realized that was not my calling, I discontinued it," he explained.

Kocheri graduated from Mahatma Gandhi University—located in Kottayam a city in the Kottayam district of Kerala, India—with a bachelor's degree in English. He then obtained his masters in English from St. Aloysius university in Karnataka, India. In 2021, Kocheri successfully defended his PhD thesis in Postcolonial History at the University of Birmingham in the United Kingdom. He returned to India to work for ten months, and during that time he received his postdoctoral funding.

At the time, Kocheri wanted to look for a place that aligned with his beliefs. He found HU while searching for Christian institutions.

"I wanted to go somewhere where I could profess my faith much more clearly," Kocheri said.

While Kocheri feels comfortable in his faith now, there was a time when he felt disconnected from God. He opened up about how he felt numerous times away from Christianity and how he was an atheist for about four years before he found his way back to God.

Kocheri talked about how important it is for him as a teacher to show his students that he is not and has not always been perfect in his faith. By showing that side of himself, he believes it will allow him to relate to his students more in their own faith journeys.

He was inspired by various people along his journey to becoming a history professor. He shared a quote from Carl Gustav Jung: "One looks back with appreciation to brilliant teachers, but with gratitude to those who touched our human feelings. The curriculum is so much necessary raw material, but warmth is a vital element for the growing plant and for the soul of the child."

Kocheri tries to live by Jung's quote in his teaching. Additionally, he mentioned the professors Andrew Davis and Dr. Berny Sebe.

"Both of them guided me like their brother," Kocheri

remembered. Dr. Sebe was, "Extremely kind to me, compassionate. I want to be someone like him."

In 2020, he married his wife, Claire, in Birmingham, England. Three years later they welcomed their daughter, Lydia.

Kocheri reminisced about what he used to do with his free time. A few years ago his answer might have been movies, but after his baby came almost all the movies he watches now are Disney movies. In his free time Kocheri now just wants to "chill."

"I don't know how long she'll be a small kid, but I want to enjoy every second with her," he explained. Kocheri expressed an interest in fishing with his daughter when she grows older. He also likes raising animals and would love to have some chickens or goats.

While Kocheri has only spent a few months at HU, he described the community as sacrificial. Everyone "cares for one another," which is not something he had experienced as much at previous jobs.

He found the first two weeks hard, but with the help and support of Houghton's community and students, he has settled in and feels welcomed.

Currently, Kocheri is "Loving the peace and calm Houghton has." ★

CHAPEL from page #1

foyer and are planning on more.

"As an institution, we are committed to figuring it out." Dr. Burrichter added that "we are trying to make the best of technology, and technology is challenging for all."

In the 2022-2023 school year, HU used a QR code projected onto the wall that students would scan using the Campus Groups app. It was "chaos and mayhem," Dr. Burrichter said. The method encountered frequent problems.

Rachel Wright, the Director of the Office of Vocation and Calling, is on the team with Jana Newberry (the Director of Student Engagement) to make Campus Groups work for HU.

"As a Houghton alum and as somebody who's worked here in a variety of roles, I don't think

I've ever met anybody that is not willing to listen to students," she said.

Rachel Wright is an advocate for Houghton students to the organization, and is in frequent contact with Campus Groups. She described herself as a "buzzing fly."

She has several tips for students to improve their chapel scanning experience. Firstly, students should reinstall the app, because it doesn't update automatically. The most recent update was in September. Secondly, she recommended taking a screenshot of the QR Code on Campus Groups. Thirdly, if students receive an error message, they can send an email to her with a screenshot of the error and their phone model. She will report this error to Campus Groups who can then pinpoint the glitches. ★

Question of the Week

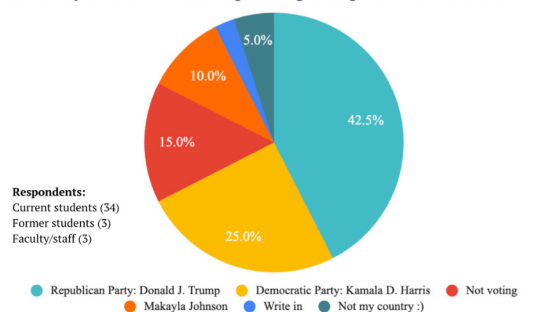
Would you rather find your passion or your purpose?



Also on the STAR website

Weekly questions open to anyone affiliated with Houghton University.

Who will you vote for in the upcoming U.S. presidential election?



Puzzles

All sudokus provided by sudokuoftheday.com.

Difficulty: Medium

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Difficulty: Tricky

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It All Matters: Complicity, Choice, Repentance and Politics



MICHEAL JORDAN

Because of print turn-around time, I'm writing this before Tuesday's presidential election. You are reading this after the election, and so you know more than I do about how it went. Some of you are probably pretty excited for the future of America; others of you are hurting and confused, maybe even angry. No doubt almost all of you feel misunderstood and concerned. Because of the way elections happen now in America, we are all encouraged to think the worst of each other, and any attempt to truly understand what another person thinks is understood as weakness. And you can't get elected if you're weak.

Sometimes we try to solve this by talking about how people are more important than issues. Since there are good people on both sides

of an issue, we reason that we shouldn't really treat the issues as very important in the end. Let's not let issues divide us.

That doesn't really work for me. Sometimes, following Jesus means taking a side. The issues that divide America—and divide towns, and churches, and families, and even Houghton—are substantial. The life of the unborn matters. Poverty matters; it grinds away at communities, and when we ignore poverty so that we can feel more connected with each other, the poor suffer. Our inability to speak honestly about race, and to make amends for racism, matters. The gross inequality and at times abject failure of our public school system matters, as does Christians' response to this tragedy. War around the world matters, and

“But a better way to solve our lack of unity is not to minimize the other side's error; instead, we should be more honest about the fact that our own side also has errors.”

So how do we do life together if we don't agree? It's not like the only two choices are “ignore it” or “think the worst of each other.” I think the way forward is to start with each of us, individually.

Think about your choices in this election. Who did you favor? Why? Somewhere along the way, you learned to fear what would happen if the other person won. Usually, the

our lack of unity is not to minimize the other side's error; instead, we should be more honest about the fact that our own side also has errors. You probably know this in your head, because all of us would say that we don't have a perfect candidate. But in order to justify our choices, we minimize our candidate's weaknesses to feel better about voting for them. We tell ourselves that the situation is so dire, so bad, that we have to vote for someone who's not perfect.

Yes, of course. We have to vote for someone who's not perfect. That's life. But in what way are you working against the imperfections that you perceived in your candidate? If you really think your candidate isn't perfect, then do more than just tell me you had to vote for them. Tell me how you are planning to build a world that mitigates their errors and weaknesses.

Are you pro-life, but had to hold your nose and vote for Kamala? I get it. But let's dig deeper than just justifying your choice. What are you doing to dig in and help the pro-life cause? Put your money where your mouth is and show me.

On the other hand, are you bothered by some of Trump's attitudes and statements, but felt you had to hold your nose and vote for him? I get it. But don't just justify your choice. Show me what you will do to work against misogyny, or

how you will welcome and care for immigrants and strangers in your communities.

Life gives all of us imperfect choices almost all the time. Christians don't live only in the city of God, but the city of man, and life here is tricky. But following Jesus in a deep, radical way means more than just recognizing other people's errors. It means looking at our own hearts and recognizing the ways that our own choices have consequences for other people.

We understand this interpersonally. If I have an anger problem, it's not enough for me to snap in anger sometimes and say, “well, that's just the way I am, and other people ought not to make me angry.” Instead, I need to think about the way that my anger problem impacts my wife, my kids, my students, and work to be sure that my anger hurts them as little as possible.

This goes for us politically as well. Hard choices, hard times. The cross is hard too—hard wood, hard nails. As we observe and experience the cross, we learn to grieve our own complicity. Then we find God's healing; and then we can stop building others' kingdoms, and start building His.★

Michael Jordan is Associate Professor of Theology. He likes to write, sing, preach, teach and do crossword puzzles. He is the author of Worship in an Age of Anxiety (IVP Academic, 2024). You can follow Mike's work at theothermichaeljordan.substack.com; subscribe there for free to receive his writing in your inbox each week!

“But in what way are you working against the imperfections that you perceived in your candidate?”

American response to wars matters. All of it matters, and when we say it doesn't matter so that we can enjoy a peaceful life together, we lose the ability to shine Jesus' light into these issues and many more.

way we try to solve our lack of unity is to remind each other that this fear is baseless, because there are good people on both sides, or because God is still on the throne no matter who wins.

But a better way to solve

Have an opinion you want to share?

CONTACT
Rebecca.Dailey25@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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Review

Alien: Romulus (2024)

Written By: Caleb Tiedemann

Color me surprised. It's no secret that the last couple of films in the Alien franchise have been questionable in their quality. Even the director of the original 1979 movie, Ridley Scott's return to the franchise resulted in lackluster films. With that in mind, I was excited when I heard rumors of a new Alien movie. *Alien: Romulus* is a sick name, and upon seeing the trailers, I became even more excited and hopeful that this movie would turn out great. After watching it, I am so happy with the final product.

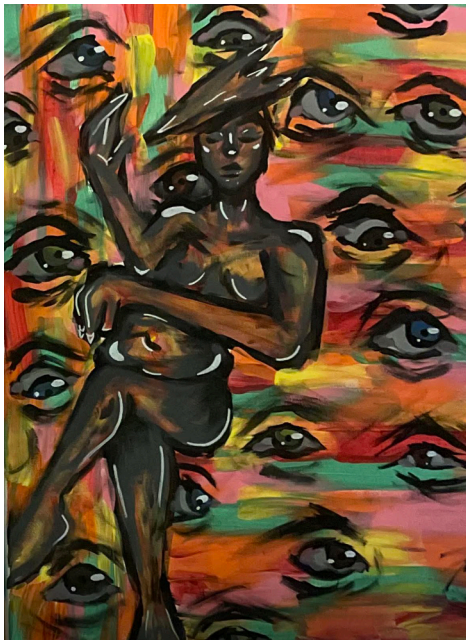
Fede Alvarez's take on the Alien franchise connects to both the original story and Scott's prequels marvelously. Not only does it expand on the original story, but also adds more depth to previously established characters, monsters, and events. Despite this movie being the seventh movie made about the titular creature, in the universal timeline this movie is number four. With a smaller cast, the movie harkens back to the original Alien without repeating the same narrative. Each member felt important and relevant to the plot in some way. Despite getting killed off, each character added something of benefit to the overarching narrative. The standout was David Jonsson as Andy. He not only pulled off a believable performance as a bit of a buffoon, but a very convincing cold android one as well. I loved the homages to the original movie and the prequels as well. I rewatched the series, so I was ready for any name drops or references.

The cinematography was excellent. Alvarez's hand behind the camera high-

lighted the beauty of the natural world, or in this case, space. He also captured the tension and claustrophobia of the original film well. The use of space itself was impressive, utilizing zero-G to create new and tense action sequences, and introducing water to add a new level of horror to the already terrifying face-hugger—both excellent decisions. The lower lighting, with the flashing strobe lights of the Romulus and various flashlights, did wonders for keeping the Xenomorph shrouded in mystery.

Both the score and sound design were excellent as well. The tense sections of the film that relied on pure silence were some of the best. The drop into complete silence followed by a piercing scream was a great way to build tension before a kill. I have to say I was very impressed with the finale. It was fresh and added a new horrifying creature to the franchise's repertoire. The human-Xenomorph hybrid was miles better than the one from Resurrection. It retained its human form but was gangly and distorted, highlighting the skeletal structure of the Xenomorph. The scene where only its silhouette is seen was chilling! It was very reminiscent of Dead Space, and anything that can capture the quality of such a well-made game deserves praise. It will probably be the closest thing we Dead Space fans will get to a Necromorph.

I can't wait to see this again and spot all the small details I missed. Alvarez's contribution to this franchise is a great one and certainly should not be missed. ★



Artist of the Week

Grace Stickels ('27)



Heyo, happy Friday! My name is Grace Stickels and I'm a Communications major with a Digital Marketing concentration. I also minor in Art and Art Business. I am from Binghamton, New York and I absolutely love all kinds of art mediums, but my favorites are acrylic, oil, gel pens, photography, and digital. My inspiration for art is people, their emotions, their culture, and overall, the "human condition". I like creating more abstract/odd pieces to make people think, paving a way for them to individually paint the story in their own minds. Art is my outlet, as well as fashion, and I want my work to reflect the intricacy of God's creation. Thank you :D

