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CENTER FOR SUSTAINABILITY TO HOLD CLIMATE VIGIL

SARAH BURTON ('23)

On Saturday, November 6 from 8-9 pm, the Center for Sustainability will be hosting a candlelight Climate Vigil. The Vigil is meant to offer a service of prayer regarding the major climate crisis that is occurring in the world, specifically correlating with the UN COP 26 event.

In an interview, the center's director Brian Webb clarified the meaning of COP as "Conference of the Parties," an annual "gathering of world leaders to address climate change." This year marks the 26th time this conference has occurred. Webb also discussed that the most crucial element of this conference: "it's the first year in which the Paris Agreement goes fully



Pictured: Candles at a prayer vigil in Notre Dame at the COP-21 climate conference in Paris, 2015. COURTESY OF BRIAN WEBB

into effect and the first time parties to the Paris Agreement have pledged to increase the ambition of their carbon reduction goals. Experts tell us we must reduce our carbon emissions 50% by 2030, which means we need the global community to step forward in Glasgow

(where UN COP 26 is being held) with more ambitious carbon reduction goals.

According to official website of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Paris Agreement is "a legally binding interna-

tional treaty on climate change. It was adopted by 196 parties at COP 21 in Paris, on 12 December, 2015 and it entered into force on 4 November 2016." There are a lot of hopes riding on the outcome of UN COP 26 when it comes to the climate crisis and the re-

duction of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

Vigils are not an uncommon event at Houghton, as they offer a way for students and faculty to come together and unite, pray and reflect on a common topic. The Climate Vigil is no different. According to Ashley Burton ('23), a member of the Center for Sustainability, and a part of the Eco Reps program: "This is going to be a critical time to come together as Christians to pray about the climate crisis because this is about God's creation and what we can do to help mend the damage done as a community of Christians."

A core aspect of this Vigil is prayer: going to God for guidance and help.

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FEATURE: Salvation Army Student Fellowship Offers Service Opportunities and Fellowship for Houghton Students

KAITLYN AVERY ('25)

The Salvation Army Student Fellowship (SASF) is a campus group for worship, fellowship, and service that is affiliated with the Salvation Army. Emily Stothart ('09) leads The Salvation Army Church in Wellsville, NY, and is the new official SASF Director on campus this year.

The Salvation Army is a church, and provides social services to those in need. Their Mission



Pictured: SASF members on an apple picking trip earlier this semester.

COURTESY OF EMILY STOTHART

Statement, provided by Salvation Army officer Carl Avery, states: "The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian

Church. Its message is based on the Bible. Its ministry is motivated by the love of God. Its mission is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human needs in

His name without discrimination."

While affiliated with The Salvation Army, Stothart explained, the SASF is open for Houghton students from

any denominational background to participate in a variety of activities, such as club events, a mid-week Bible study, attending church on Sundays, and enjoying home-cooked meals. Other highlights of SASF activities include an annual missions trip and connections for summer employment at youth camps across the country.

The SASF also provides winter service opportunities during the fall semester, such as The Red Kettle Campaign and Angel Tree. Angel Tree helps provide children of families in need with clothing and toys during the Christmas season. The SASF would love to see students ring bells at kettles and raise money to support their Christmas programs, as well as help out with other year-round

See **SASF** page #2

VIGIL *from page #1*

Webb mentioned this as well, saying, “Prayer is a powerful tool for making change. As Christians we believe prayer must be incorporated into everything we do – and especially with problems the size and urgency of the climate crisis.”

When asked what she would be looking forward to at the Climate Vigil, Allyson Waters ('23) exclaimed “Awareness!” This enthusiastic statement certainly highlights something the Center hoping to accomplish in holding an event like this. Indeed, the climate crisis is a crucial topic being discussed around the world today, and the Climate Vigil is one way in which we can do our part as Christians and citizens to both be aware of the world around us and to make a difference. ★

SASF *from page #1*

service activities, such as outreach programs in the spring.

Stothart helps provide rides to church on Sundays, along with Sarah Rider ('24), the President of the SASF. When Rider was asked what she enjoys most about the SASF, she responded that she “likes the fellowship experience of Sunday morning. It’s great to just slow down and enjoy time with people and it’s great that we get to grow in community but also meet new people.”

The SASF is currently looking for new members. If you’re interested in joining, feel free to email Emily at emily.stothart@use.salvationarmy.org, or visit the SASF room located in the basement of the Campus Center during her office hours. ★

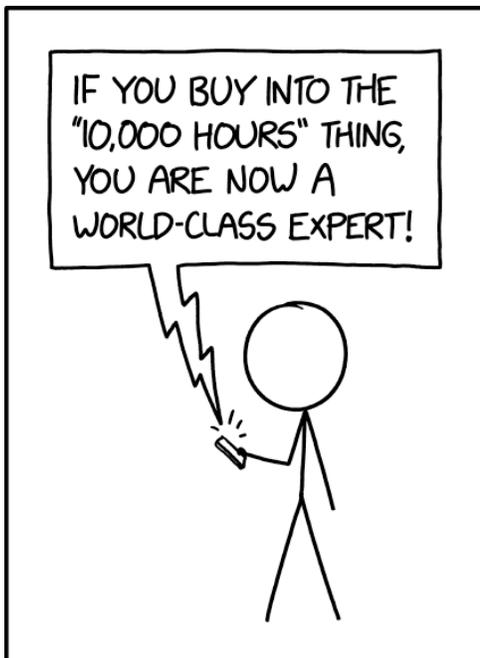
PHOTO OF THE WEEK - “Party Animal”

MEGAN BROWN ('23)



Comics

XKCD - 10,000 Hours



FROM XKCD.COM/749

MY SCREEN TIME REPORTS HAVE STARTED TRYING TO PUT A POSITIVE SPIN ON THINGS.

Sudoku

Difficulty: EASY

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

Solution will be printed in next week’s issue!

FROM SUDOKUOFTHE DAY.COM

Evangelism Privileges Revoked



EMILY WARNER ('22)

As Christians, we believe that nothing a person does could ever change the fact that they are God's beloved creation, made in God's image. Unfortunately, that's not always what comes to mind when the broader world thinks about Christian beliefs.

For a lot of people, "Christian beliefs" are thoughts like these:

The Christian God is all about punishment.

I'm from a different religion, so Christians only see me as a potential convert.

I'm not straight and cis-gender, so the Christian God doesn't love me.

Christians care more about maintaining a good image than protecting children from abuse.

Christians are glad when bad things happen to non-Christians because that's God's punishment—they deserve it.

A Christian's first response to this understanding of Christianity might easily be defensive: "That's not me! Not everyone is like that! You need to stop making assumptions and give Christians another chance." That is, in my opinion, one of the worst possible responses a Christian could have.

When a person shares their understanding of "Christian beliefs" as a negative thing, an empathetic listener would accept and validate that person's emotions. A good start might be to say, "I'm sorry that you or people you know have been hurt by Christianity. That was wrong of us, and it makes sense for you to feel the way you do." No need to follow with defensive comments—this moment is about the hurting person alone.

"So in response to the ways that Christianity has hurt so many people, I think we need to rein in our evangelism and pour energy into simply caring for people as an end unto itself."

"Christian beliefs" listed above ring true. It's fairly common for church leaders to get away with all kinds of abuse. I've certainly had Christians call me slurs and tell me I'm despicable to God because I'm in a lesbian relationship. The proposed "Christian beliefs" might not be true about God, but speaking broadly, they are pretty true about Christians.

So in response to the ways that Christianity has

I'm saying that we're far enough off-balance in our ministry that it would be worthwhile to put evangelism on the back burner and just focus on caring for people as they are. To bring someone into Christian environments that we know aren't safe for them would be salt in the wound, and we're not meant to be that kind of salt. Instead, we should repair our own Christian communities and focus on non-evangelistic ministry in the broader world.

Besides evangelism, we're also called to "act justly and to love mercy/and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8); to "care for orphans and widows in their distress" (James 1:27). So let's redirect our energy from evangelism to service. Specifically, let's cultivate empathy, advocacy, and autonomy to keep us from hurting people in the name of Christ. Emphasizing those three things helps us restore dignity to people who have been robbed of it—especially when Christianity was responsible for the indignity happening in the first place.

To me, advocacy means defending a person's rights and insisting that they be treated with respect. I'll dive straight into some charged examples: We defend gay couples' right to get married, we provide sexual health care for sex workers, and we demand and we respect Indigenous nations' sovereignty. Christians have a history of mistreating

those groups, so those groups include some of the people who have been hurt the most and are most in need of an advocate.

Finally, autonomy. Each person must be free to accept or reject Christianity without retaliation—there can be no strings attached to our care for them. As we serve, we aren't surreptitiously trying to win converts, protect our pride, or "make sinners leave their evil ways." We're just caring for people well because that's what God calls us to do.

Think of a church-run food bank. If visitors must agree to come to a Bible study to receive food, that church is not giving food-insecure people real autonomy. Instead, they're sending the message that food-insecure people only deserve care if they behave how Christians think they should. We can certainly answer faith-based questions when asked, but we cannot impose our faith on others by attaching a Christian obligation to the offered food. If the person doesn't feel free to say "no," there can be no genuine "yes."

Right now, the Church has a well-deserved reputation for mistreating others. We haven't given people a good reason to believe us when we say that God loves all people unconditionally. If we want to communicate that message properly, we need to become a Church that is characteristically supportive rather than characteristically destructive. It would be nice if our reputation got better along the way, but we'll know we've really succeeded when others' well-being is more important to us than our own pride.★

Emily Warner is majoring in Equestrian Management and Mathematics with a minor in Theology. They use she/they pronouns.

"We need to become a Church that is characteristically supportive rather than characteristically destructive."

And thoughts like the above don't appear out of thin air; they're based on people's lived experience with Christianity. A lot of horrible things have been done in the name of Christ, and if we're really being honest, some of those

hurt so many people, I think we need to rein in our evangelism and pour energy into simply caring for people as an end unto itself.

Please don't burn me at the stake, Houghton, I'm not saying that no one should ever share the gospel again.

Have an opinion you want to share?

CONTACT
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SPEAK OUT!

Questions, comments, or concerns about something you've read in the paper? Write a letter to the editors! Letters can be any length, but we would prefer pieces shorter than 600 words, due to space constraints.

Send 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 College 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
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In Review

Dune (2021)

CALEB TIEDEMANN ('25)

It is hard to think of a movie not from the Star Wars, Marvel, or DCEU universes that has garnered as much attention and advertising as 2021's *Dune*, an adaptation of Frank Herbert's 1965 novel of the same name. Needless to say, all of this positive press had me hyped for the movie and I hoped it would be amazing. After watching the trailer, I was instantly excited and optimistic, as it seemed that Hollywood would step out of their usual, repetitive, copy-and-paste style and bring a surprise. When I found out that this movie would be headed by Denis Villeneuve, I knew it would be something special. I am glad to report that Villeneuve did not steer us wrong, instead creating an excellent movie, one that diverges from the usual cookie-cutter formation.

The story of *Dune* centers around Paul Atréides, a young man destined to rule the noble House Atréides. However, Paul also possesses an extraordinary power: he is capable of seeing into the long-term future. When instructed by "The Emperor," House Atréides is forced to leave their home planet to preside over the desert world of Arrakis—a command which they must obey. Unfortunately, this came about as a result of The Emperor having removed the previous nobility who had ruled Arrakis, House Harkonnen. The Harkonnens, obviously, are not happy about this, which drives the film's underlying conflict.

Dune has been confirmed to be a multi-part series, and this year's film is only the first. Due to the fi-

just the first week of release, a second part is already in development. With forthcoming sequels in mind, the movie does a magnificent job of setting up the universe and characters. The writers flesh everything out just enough to allow the viewer to understand what's going on, while they still keep certain cards close to their chests in order to build intrigue. The movie's pacing is slow, which may be a pro or a con depending on a given viewer's personality, but its time is well-spent. The scenery is beautiful, even if most of it is CG. On top of this, the cinematography is breathtaking, a quality particularly strong in Villeneuve's work, and one that I have consistently enjoyed across his filmography. The cast is amazing, featuring Timothée Chalamet, the dream boy of many a girl, as well as Zendaya, likewise the dream girl of many a boy, in the lead roles. I, however, think Oscar Isaac is the epitome of cute in this movie. Let's normalize Oscar Isaac (with a beard, as an important clarification) as being cuter than Timothée Chalamet! Joining these three are Jason Momoa, Stellan Skarsgård, Javier Bardem, Rebecca Ferguson, Dave Bautista and Josh Brolin. Obviously, the cast is stacked brilliantly. I have no serious issues with the movie, and essentially it can be seen as the child of Star Wars and Game of Thrones. It was very enjoyable and I highly recommend it.

Final Grade: B+

Artist of the Week

Nicole Dubay

**About the Artist**

As a senior, Nicole is currently double majoring in communications and art. Her preferred media are printmaking and photography. She got into art because that is what was natural for me from the beginning, I could not imagine my life without it. My art is fun and clever, it does not take life so seriously, it adds color to life. It allows me to take comfort in the tension between maximalist color palettes and minimalist designs. My work explores how far my mind can go with a certain inspiration. I like to take something from life and interpret it into a new vision that is a reflection of myself. My artistic vision maximizes boldness of color and simplicity of form.