

A brief history

When Somerville opened its doors in 1879 it was founded as a 'non-denominational' institution, meaning there would be no religious tests for admission. Non-denominational Christian prayers were said informally in College from the outset, and from 1912 in the Dining Hall. In 1935 the chapel was opened, following a generous donation from a former student, Emily Georgiana Kemp. Kemp was an adventurer, writer and artist, and came from a wealthy Baptist family. Through her extensive travels she had developed an interest in the world's religions and a wide, inclusive vision of Christianity. It was her intention that the Chapel, although ostensibly a Christian place of worship, would be a welcoming space for members of all religious and secular traditions. The Greek inscription above the main door may be translated as "A House of Prayer for All Peoples" - a verse from the Book of Isaiah, which is also referred to by Jesus in Matthew's Gospel. In keeping with its non-denominational tradition, the College does not have a chaplain, but a 'Chapel Director,' who, along with the Organ Scholar, Choral Scholars and Director of Music, arranges events and services throughout the year designed to reflect Somerville's own characteristically broad range of religious tastes and perspectives.

'Words and Music'

In recent years we have moved away from using the Chapel solely as a place for worship and re-modelled it as a space for visiting scholars, commentators and faith leaders to share reflections on a range of social, political, theological, historical and philosophical subjects. Each term a selection of speakers present on a common topic on Sunday evenings as detailed in this termcard. The topic of these talks varies from term to term and where possible we try to include a wide range of religious and non-religious perspectives. After the talk and accompanying music the speaker will usually join us for dinner in hall, which presents an opportunity for follow-up questions and discussions – do consider staying for dinner and taking part in the conversation. The great majority of Sunday evening events are also open to members of other colleges and to the general public.

Booking the Chapel

The Chapel is available to students for use during term, and can be booked for private music practice or for other purposes. To book the Chapel, visit www.some.ox.ac.uk/living-here/the-chapel and follow the instructions.

Chapel Director: Brian McMahon
Director of Music: Will Dawes
Organ Scholar: Joseph Lord
Contact E-mail: chapel.office@some.ox.ac.uk



Somerville College Chapel

Termcard



Michaelmas Term 2017

“Music and Spirituality”

'Music and Spirituality'

6pm in the Chapel

Somerville Chapel is a non-denominational and inclusive space. Every Sunday evening during term we host a speaker who gives a short talk accompanied by readings and music from the Somerville College Choir. The programme for this term's talks is entitled 'Music and Spirituality', and includes the following speakers:

1st Week, Sunday 8th October

Dr Brian McMahon (Somerville)

“Life, Liturgy and the Pursuit of Happiness: in Defence of the College Chapel”

2nd Week, Sunday 15th October

Dr Laura Slater (Somerville)

“Music and Lay Devotion in Late Medieval England”

3rd Week, Sunday 22nd October

Professor Guy Newbury (Pembroke)

TBC

4th Week, Sunday 29th October

Gwilym Tudur (Wycliffe Hall)

“The Person Behind the Liturgy”

5th Week, Sunday 5th November

Jeremy Montagu (Wadham)

“The Shofar and its Spiritual Impact on Jewry”

6th Week, Sunday 12th November

Act of Remembrance

Somerville's annual ecumenical service of remembrance for all who have suffered and lost their lives in war.

7th Week, Sunday 19th November

Rabbi Norman Solomon

“Music of the Synagogue: Ancient and Modern”

8th Week, Sunday 26th November

Carol Concert

Other Chapel Events in Trinity Term

In addition to the 6pm Sunday gatherings, this term the following events are taking place:

- **Daily Quiet Time**, each morning from 9:00-9:30am the Chapel will be open for quiet prayer and reflection.
- **Rosary Group**. Meeting on Tuesday mornings at 8:30am to say the Rosary together. Although this is generally considered to be a Catholic and High Anglican tradition, all comers are very welcome either to join in the prayers or sit in quiet reflection.
- **Catholic Mass**. On Friday of 2nd Week (20th October) we will welcome one of the University's Roman Catholic chaplains to say mass. This service will begin at 6pm and is open to people of all faiths and none.
- **Friday Evening Prayers**. Fridays, 1st-8th Week, 8-8:15pm in the Chapel. An opportunity to share intentions for the coming week, and to explore ways of praying drawn from different faith traditions.
- **Christian Union Meetings**. Somerville has an active and thriving Christian Union which runs its own events year-round. If you are interested in getting involved, contact Abi Payne (abigail.payne@some.ox.ac.uk). The 'Words and Music' event in 4th Week this term is a joint initiative organised by the CU.
- **Somerville Choir in Concert**. There will be a concert at 7:30pm on Saturday 25th November featuring the college choir. Full details of the programme will be circulated nearer the time.
- **Service commemorating the life of Constance Coltman**. On Saturday 21st October there will be an ecumenical service in Chapel led by the Rev'd Mia Smith (Hertford) to celebrate the life and achievements of Constance Coltman, a former Somervillian who was the first woman to be ordained a minister in a mainstream church in England. This is the culmination of a day of events coordinated by TORCH (The Oxford Centre for Research in the Humanities). The service begins at 5pm and all are welcome.