

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.

Choral Contemplation

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



Trinity Term 2018

“Justice and Judgement”

'Justice and Judgement'

Sundays at 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 'Justice and Judgement', and includes the following speakers:

1st Week, Sunday 22nd April

Dr Brian McMahon (Somerville)

“Judge Not, Lest ye be Judged: Exploring the Relationship between Religion and Civic Justice”

2nd Week, Sunday 29th April

Joint event with the Somerville and St Bennet's Christian Union

3rd Week, Sunday 6th May

Peggy Morgan (Mansfield)

“What you Sow, you will Reap: A Buddhist Conception of Justice”

4th Week, Sunday 13th May

Dr Eleanor McLaughlin (Regent's Park)

“Ethics and Practice in Modern Christian Thought”

5th Week, Sunday 20th May

Chris Sloggett (National Secular Society)

“Towards a Secular Understanding of Justice”

6th Week, Sunday 27th May

Justice

Joint event with the Margaret Thatcher Scholarship Trust

7th Week, Sunday 3rd June

Professor Almut Suerbaum (Somerville)

“Beyond Despair: Medieval Mystics and the Abyss”

8th Week, Sunday 10th June

Leavers' Service

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.
- **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 'Beginnings' event in 2nd Week this term is a joint initiative co-organised by the CU.
- **Catholic Mass**. At 5:30pm on Tuesday of 7th Week (5th June) one of the University's Catholic chaplains will visit the college to say mass. All are welcome to attend.
- **Mindfulness Sessions**. Every Wednesday evening during term, beginning on Wednesday of 1st Week, there will be 45 minutes of mindfulness in the Chapel led by accredited instructor Michael Pockley, a 96th generation dharma heir of the Buddha in the Rinzai (Lin Chi) lineage. Sessions will begin at 5pm. There is no charge and no commitment – feel free to drop in now and then. For further information e-mail chapel.office@some.ox.ac.uk
- **Leavers' Service**. In 8th Week our usual speaker event is replaced by the Leavers' Service. Those in their final year are particularly encouraged to attend and we will hear reflections from the JCR, MCR and the Principal.
- **Commemoration Service**. The annual memorial for Somervillians who have died in the past 12 months will take place in the Chapel on Saturday 9th June (7th Week) at 2:30pm.