

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. Choral Contemplation is 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 McMahan
Director of Music: Will Dawes
Organ Scholars: Joseph Lord, Melissa Chang
Contact E-mail: chapel.office@some.ox.ac.uk



Somerville College Chapel

Termcard



Michaelmas Term 2018

“Soul Food”

'Soul Food'

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 includes the following speakers:

1st Week, Sunday 7th October

Dr Brian McMahon (Somerville)

“The Chapel: A Room of One's Own”

2nd Week, Sunday 14th October

Michael Pockley (Czech Academy of Sciences)

“Relax: You Have No Soul”

3rd Week, Sunday 21st October

Rev'd Helen Garton (St Columba's URC, Oxford)

“A Christian Perspective on the Soul”

4th Week, Sunday 28th October

Dr Deborah Casewell (Liverpool Hope University)

“Lose Yourself to Save your Soul!: The Philosophy of Simone Weill”

5th Week, Sunday 4th November

Dr Caspar Melville (SOAS, University of London)

“Soul Music”

6th Week, Sunday 11th November

Mark Bostridge

“Vera Brittain and the End of the War”

7th Week, Sunday 18th November

Professor Elizabeth Froid (St Cross)

“The Ancient Egyptian Concept of the Afterlife”

8th Week, Sunday 25th November

Carol Concert

[NOTE THE EARLIER START TIME OF 5:30pm]

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.
- **Catholic Mass**. At 5:30pm on Monday of 6th Week (12th November) 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
- **Public Speaking Workshop**. Between 2pm and 4pm on Saturday of 5th Week (10th November) actor and vocal coach Jack Blackburn will lead a workshop on developing your public speaking skills. This is particularly focused on developing conference papers, but is open to all Somervillians. Places are very limited, so it is essential that you sign up in advance by e-mailing chapel.office@some.ox.ac.uk
- **Frankenstein Study Day**. On Saturday 3rd November (4th Week), 2-4pm there will be a study day to mark the 200th anniversary of *Frankenstein* first appearing in print. The event is particularly recommended for students in the humanities, but is open to all. It will include talks by Dr Emma Whipday (Newcastle) and Professor Fiona Stafford (Somerville). Places are free but booking is essential: www.reverendproductions.com/frankenstein-study-day
- The termly choir concert will take place on Thursday of 7th Week, 22nd November at 6pm – all welcome!
- **Island Songs: A Sound Installation**. Somerville's JRF in Social Anthropology, César E. Giraldo H. is curating a sound installation in the Chapel later this term. Further details to follow... look out for posters around college.