

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



Trinity Term 2019

“Division and Unity”

'Division and Unity'

Sundays at 5:30pm 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 28th April

Dr Brian McMahon (Somerville)

“What’s more Divisive: Brexit or Religion?”

2nd Week, Sunday 5th May

Rabbi Michael Rosenfeld-Schueler (Jewish Chaplain to the University)

“Disagreement in the Name of Heaven”

3rd Week, Sunday 12th May

Indriyasha Das (Hinduism Education Services)

“Diversity within Hinduism: A Place for Everybody”

4th Week, Sunday 19th May

Cecilie Jørgensen Strømmen (Den Norske Kirke)

“Luther, Lutheranism and Christianity”

5th Week, Sunday 26th May

Professor Jacqueline Stevenson (Sheffield Hallam University)

“Belonging and Mattering in Higher Education: The Experiences of Muslim Students”

6th Week, Sunday 2nd June

Dr Laura Premack (Lancaster)

“Contemporary Evangelism”

7th Week, Sunday 9th June

The **Queynte Ladies** Present...

“Marge and Jules”

8th Week, Sunday 16th June

A Fond Farewell

Readings and Music to mark the end of the Academic Year

Other Chapel Events in Trinity Term

In addition to the 5:30pm Sunday gatherings (note the earlier time than in previous terms), 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 (3rd 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 0th 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 Rinzaï (Lin Chi) lineage. Sessions will begin at 5pm. There is no charge and no commitment – feel free to drop in now and then. After the session, meditators are welcome to adjourn with Michael at the Royal Oak for supper. For further information e-mail chapel.office@some.ox.ac.uk
- **Pride Prayers**. Beginning at 10.30am on Saturday 1st June (5th Week) at the University Church of St Mary the Virgin. A simple service of readings, prayers and music reflecting on freedom, love and identity; afterwards gathering in Radcliffe Square to march to the Castle Quarter with 'Christians at Pride' at 12 noon.
- **The Commemoration Service**, in which we recall the legacy of Somerville's benefactors and all the Somervillians who have died in the past year will take place on Saturday 8th June at 2.15pm. If you are interested in attending, please let the Development Office know.
- **The Organ Scholars' Recital** will take place at 6pm on Tuesday 7th May in the Chapel and last for an hour. All welcome!
- **Marge and Jules**. In 7th Week the usual format of Contemplation will be substituted for a play about the lives of Julian of Norwich and Margery Kempe performed by the theatre company Queynte Ladies. Free and open to all.
- Finally, there will be two major choral concerts: the termly choir concert **The Birds and the Bees: Music about Birds and Love** at 8pm on Thursday 20th June and a **Choir Reunion Concert** at 5.30pm on Saturday 22nd June.