

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



Hilary Term 2018

“Beginnings”

'Beginnings'

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 'Beginnings', and includes the following speakers:

1st Week, Sunday 14th January

Dr Brian McMahon (Somerville)

“Infinite Regression: Where does Faith Come From?”

2nd Week, Sunday 21st January

Matt Lee (Wycliffe Hall)

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

3rd Week, Sunday 28th January

Fr David Goodill OP (Blackfriars)

“St Albert the Great: Scientist and Theologian”

4th Week, Sunday 4th February

Tas Cooper (Quaker Chaplain to the University)

“George Fox and the Founding of the Quaker Movement”

5th Week, Sunday 11th February

Professor Nicholas Davidson (St Edmund Hall)

“The worst crisis in its entire history'? : The Origins of Modern Catholicism and its Contemporary Discontents”

6th Week, Sunday 18th February

James Fox (Courtauld Institute of Art)

“Roots of the Renaissance: the Art of Giotto and his Successors”

7th Week, Sunday 25th February

Professor Christian C. Sahner (St Cross)

“Islam and Other Religions: A Comparative Approach”

8th Week, Sunday 4th March

Music and Readings for Lent and the Spring

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.
- **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.
- **Refugees**. At 5pm on the 1st February the Principal will host an event to discuss the experience of refugees around the world. This will take place in the Chapel and will incorporate music, speeches and discussion, with a drinks reception to follow at 6:30pm. The keynote speaker will be Lord Alfred Dubs. Further details will be available nearer the time.
- **Margaret Thatcher Scholarship Trust**. The latest in the now-termly events hosted in the Chapel by the Trust will take place on the evening of Friday 16th February at 5:30pm (finishing in time for Special Guest Night). The theme this term is 'Love'.
- **St John Passion**. On Tuesday of 8th Week (6th March) the choir will sing the St John Passion by J. S. Bach accompanied by baroque instruments and featuring soloists from across College. This is sure to be a very popular event so it is advisable to book early. Tickets cost £12 (£5 for students) and can be reserved by e-mailing choir@some.ox.ac.uk