

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 Georgina 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.

Sunday talks

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 brian.mcmahon@some.ox.ac.uk
Interim Director of Music: Hilary Davan-Wetton hilary.davan-wetton@some.ox.ac.uk
Organ Scholar: Nick Machin



Somerville College Chapel

Termcard



Michaelmas Term 2016

“Religion and Conflict”

Weekly Sunday Talks

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 "Religion and Conflict" and includes the following speakers:

1st Week, Sunday 9th October

Brian McMahon (Chapel Director)

"Somerville Chapel: One Compromise Too Many?"

2nd Week, Sunday 16th October

Rev'd Dr Robert Bates (Oxford Brookes University)

"German Christians in the 1930s and 40s"

3rd Week, Sunday 23rd October

Major Samantha Johnson (Salvation Army)

"Social Justice and a Skeleton Army"

4th Week, Sunday 30th October

Dr Clive Field OBE (University of Birmingham)

"Measuring Secularization in Britain"

5th Week, Sunday 6th November

Professor Andrew Spicer (Oxford Brookes University)

"Conflict and the Religious Landscape"

6th Week, Sunday 13th November

Remembrance Sunday

7th Week, Sunday 20th November

Professor Séan McConville (Queen Mary University of London)

"Religion in Ulster: Too Much or Too Little?"

8th Week, Sunday 27th November

Carol Concert

Other Chapel Events in Trinity Term

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

- **Catholic Mass.** There will be a Catholic mass on Tuesday of 3rd Week (25th October) at 6:00pm, open to all. This will be a short service led by one of the University's Catholic chaplains. All welcome.
- **Artist in Residence Exhibition.** From the 2nd November until the end of term an exhibition by Somerville's Artist in Residence, Patrice Moor, will be on display at the East end of the Chapel. Drop in at any time.
- **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, 5:45-6pm 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 Nuala Marshall (nuala.marshall@some.ox.ac.uk).
- **Another Gaze.** This film club meets in the Chapel at 8pm on Wednesday evenings during term for screenings of feminist and LGBTQIA+ related films and discussion. All welcome.
- **Somerville Orchestra Concert.** Saturday 26th June (7th Week) at 7:30pm in Chapel. Further details of the programme will be announced nearer the time.
- **Termly Choir Concert.** The Alumni and Benefactors' Carol Concert will take place at 7pm on Thursday 1st December.

The Chapel also has an events group, which helps to arrange the Sunday talks series and suggests which speakers to invite. If you are interested in getting involved, please speak to the Chapel Director.