

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



Somerville College Chapel

Termcard



Hilary Term 2019

“Unity and Division”

'Unity and Division'

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 13th January

Rev'd Dr Richard Ounsworth OP (Blackfriars)

“Being a Twenty-First Century Friar”

2nd Week, Sunday 20th January

Dr Brian McMahon (Somerville)

“Talkin' 'bout My Reformation”

3rd Week, Sunday 27th January

Dr Peter Forsaith (Oxford Brookes)

“Methodism: The Teenage Years”

4th Week, Sunday 3rd February

Sr Jessica Gatty (Convent of the Assumption)

“A Poet's Journey: Siegfried Sassoon's Path to Peace”

5th Week, Sunday 10th February

Alice Blackwood (Linacre)

“Seats for Sale: Gender and Property within the Post-Reformation Parish Church”

6th Week, Sunday 17th February

Fr Ian Graham (Holy Trinity Church, Oxford)

“Division and Unity within the Orthodox Church(s)”

7th Week, Sunday 24th February

Dr Sophia Vaoalou (Birmingham University)

“The Phenomenon of Wonder”

8th Week, Sunday 3rd March

Readings and Music for Lent and the Spring

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 (18th February) 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. For further information e-mail chapel.office@some.ox.ac.uk
- **Visit of the Archbishop of Canterbury**. At 3:30pm on Sunday 27th January The Most Reverend Justin Welby will give a talk at the University Church of St Mary the Virgin entitled “Reimagining Britain: Values for a Changing World”. This is a ticketed event and some tickets have been reserved for Somervillians. If you would like to attend, contact the Chapel Director
- During **Arts Week** (6th week of this term) there will be a concert in the chapel involving the college choir. This will be on Tuesday 19th February at 8pm.
- **Choral Scholars' Recital**. This will take place at 6pm on Friday 1st February and will be open to all.
- The termly **Choir Concert** will take place on Wednesday of 8th Week, 6th March at 8pm.