



Sidney Sussex College
Cambridge, CB2 3HU

The Rev'd Dr Brett Gray
Chaplain and Pastoral Tutor

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Hello, and welcome to Sidney,

I am writing to all new undergraduates to introduce myself and explain a little bit about what I do as the College's Chaplain and Pastoral Tutor. Most Cambridge colleges have a chaplain (usually, like me, an ordained Anglican priest) and a chapel, a tradition that goes back to the very beginnings of the University.

In line with that tradition, at Sidney we would normally maintain a regular round of services that you are always welcomed to — whatever your beliefs. Things are a little uncertain this year, because of the pandemic, and we aren't sure yet what we'll be able to offer but, when the opportunity does come, hearing a world-class choir, such as the one we have at Sidney, sing a choral Evensong is one of the unique delights of Cambridge. It is something you really should experience in your time here. Also, at different times throughout the year we might host discussion groups, reading groups, or one off special events. Every term we issue a 'chapel card' (available on the College website) that will let you know what is coming up.

Everything that happens in the chapel is open to every member of the College, and it is important to know that a chaplain isn't just there for religious purposes, or religious students. This is why I am also the College's Pastoral Tutor, which means I work closely with my colleagues, including the nurse and the tutorial staff, to provide support and care for every member of the College. I am available as a non-judgemental, un-shockable, and discreet ear, whatever your concerns or background. Knock on my door, or drop me an email, I am always happy to talk.

But I am not just there for when you are in trouble. These next few years will be some of the most formative, challenging, and exciting of your life. Ideas and possibilities will come at you thick and fast, and an education — if it is worth anything — is not just about what you know, but about the sort of person you will become. That is also what a chaplain is for. The presence of a chaplain, and a chapel, are an indication that there is more to the University experience than acquiring knowledge and improving your job prospects. There are bigger horizons and bigger questions in play, and part of my job is to help you raise and pursue those questions.

I look forward to seeing you in person, and to getting to know you in these next few years.

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