

THE PARISH OF WANSTEAD



# FAITH SEEKING UNDERSTANDING Series

**REVD DR JOHN  
BROWN**  
VICAR OF  
GREAT ILFORD: ST LUKE'S



**ON LOCAL  
REFORMATION  
HISTORY**

**REVD DR DAVID  
LAPPANO**  
CURATE IN THE PARISH OF WANSTEAD



**LEARNING FROM  
LILIES OF THE FIELD  
AND BIRDS OF THE AIR**

**£5/SESSION**

**DATES: 7 JUNE, 5 JULY, 6 SEPT, 4 OCT.  
WHERE: CHRIST CHURCH, WANSTEAD, E11 2SW  
TIME: 4:00 - 5:30**



The Faith Seeking Understanding Series invites people to in-depth and focused discussions on a range of topics or questions in Christianity past and present, and to begin working out how to take what we're learning into our daily lives.

### Sessions Include

- Small amount of assigned pre-reading
- 40 minute presentation
- Small group discussion
- Questions for presenter
- Light refreshments and nibbles



# Session 1: The English Reformation from Essex Sources

The English Reformation is less an event than a process that has its roots within the late Medieval Church. Drawing on Essex sources we will look at how the Reformation developed and impacted ordinary people. What will emerge is a process that will shape the lives of an entire population, change England forever and lay the foundations for the modern Church today. The journey will reflect the often painful events that created the Reformation and respond to the question; was the Reformation a good thing, and explore why it succeeded.





# Session 2: The Victorian Church

The Victorian era is one of the most revolutionary periods in British history. It begins at the dawn of the Industrial Revolution and ends with the invention of new technologies, transport, and social theories that would have been unimaginable in 1800.

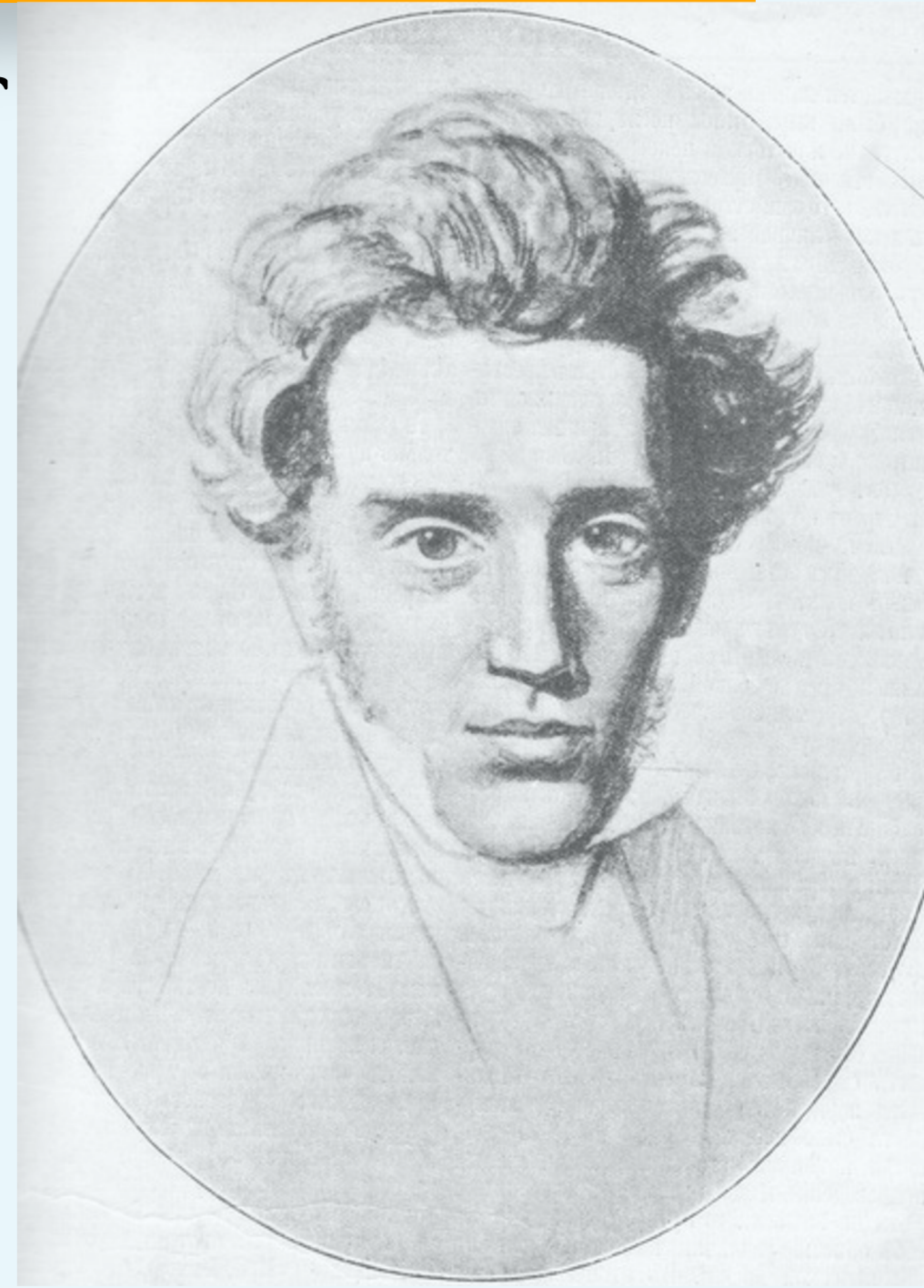
England moved from a population of ten million people living in rural settlements to over fifty million urban dwellers. This transformation was something that the Church had to adapt to and make sense of. How they did this and how they creatively responded to the challenge is the aim of this session.





## Session 3: Søren Kierkegaard on Learning from the Lilies of the Field and the Birds of the Air.

Søren Kierkegaard was a fierce critic of social and spiritual life in his 19<sup>th</sup> century Denmark, which on its own is unremarkable, but his particular concern with how daily media and public discourse affects people is perhaps more applicable today than it was nearly two hundred years ago.



This first session will introduce you to some of Kierkegaard's key concerns about modern social life, communication, and technology. Then we will explore his response to those concerns, which involves learning how to be more human from the lilies of the field and the birds of the air. And what can we learn from them? Silence, obedience, joy. In this first session we will reflect on silence.

A question we'll consider: while it might be easy to imagine how silence assists our spiritual lives, we'll ask how silence benefits our social lives?



## Session 4: Learning from the Lilies of the Field and the Birds of the Air: Silence, Obedience, Joy

In this session we continue exploring Kierkegaard's spiritual discourses and what we learn from lilies of the field and birds of the air. This session will focus on obedience and joy.

It may be surprising to discover that a philosopher famous for theorizing freedom and anxiety also asks us to consider obedience and joy. Is he contradicting himself or is there something to be learned about how these ideas work together?

Finally, we'll ask if Kierkegaard's insights only give us something to think about, or can we activate these lessons in our lives in some way?

