

In today's [York Press](#), Archbishop Stephen writes that God invites us to be people of loving action, positive change and inner transformation.

It was a moment of great joy recently for all who work and minister at Bishopthorpe Palace. We welcomed back Spikey the hedgehog! He was released back into the palace grounds after receiving excellent care at the local rescue centre. Our eagle-eyed warden, David, had noticed that he was unwell and took him in. Now Spikey is now back with his friend, Pumpkin, and seemingly loving life.

On my frequent walks, I've noticed that when our hedgehogs feel threatened or scared, they curl up into a tight, spiky ball. It is their best defence. I can certainly relate to that. There are times when my life often feels threatening, hard or hopeless. We are daily awash with news of tragedies, violence and injustice that we wish weren't happening - like in Gaza and Ukraine.

So sometimes, like our hedgehog friends, our human instinct is to curl ourselves up, sharpen our spikes and hope that it will all go away.

And yet the power of the Easter story shows us that God calls us to a better way. Through his cruel death and glorious resurrection, Jesus Christ invites us to a new way of living. With kindness and gentleness, he promises to provide the strength to stand up and face up to whatever life is throwing our way. He longs to stand with us as one who knows how we feel.

Jesus suffered and died on the cross at Calvary so we don't have to live in fear or despair. His rising again three days later gives us the hope of eternal life and the fullest life possible now.

We are invited to seek God in both familiar and unfamiliar places: in darkness and in quiet. In the weeping of Holy Week and in the joy of Easter morning. To be people of loving action, positive change and inner transformation.

I see evidence of that all over our city and region. I was encouraged to see the community come together for the recent anti-racism summit in Bishopthorpe recently. Racism has been growing problem in York and North Yorkshire. We can't curl up and pretend it will go away. I believe we must be pro-active in stopping it for good. I urge everyone to get behind the ambition for York to be the first anti-racism city in the north.

My prayer is that in big and small ways, we can all be people of justice and peace. That is the Easter story in action. The resurrection shows us that we have a future with God - starting now!

It is why Easter Day is such a cause for joy and celebration. A day to uncurl ourselves from fear, stand tall and shout 'Alleluia! Christ is risen!'

From myself, Spikey and all who live and serve at Bishopthorpe Palace, a very Happy Easter!



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