

Words of Bishop Graham Usher

Norwich Synagogue 5th May 2026

Dear friends, chaverim yekarim

It is a profound honour, as a Christian, to have been invited to say a few words at the opening of this Jewish living experience exhibition.

We gather not only to celebrate a faith and a community, but to affirm something deeper: that sharing and learning is one of the most powerful ways we build understanding, dignity, and shared humanity.

But we do so under dark and foreboding clouds. Far, far too often I am sending messages of support and solidarity to this community via Marian. Good Lord, deliver us.

Jewish tradition shares a moral vision rooted in responsibility, memory, and hope. The late Lord Sacks of blessed memory spoke with extraordinary clarity about both the beauty of the Jewish tradition and the dangers that arise when it is misunderstood or rejected. He warned that: *“The hate that begins with Jews never ends with Jews.”*

Those words are not only a warning—they are a call to responsibility. Antisemitism is a light sleeper, and it is currently wide awake on the streets of our country. But antisemitism is never just a problem for the Jewish community to resolve; it is a sign of a deeper fracture in society itself. Those who are not Jews must speak up at this moment.

As the Archbishop of Canterbury said last week: *“There must be zero tolerance for antisemitism or any other form of hatred – and faith*

communities must work together urgently to counter violent extremism. We must stand together as a country. An attack on one community is an attack on us all."

Exhibitions like this do more than inform - they shape character. My prayer is that it will foster the formation of hearts and minds that can resist hatred, cherish difference, and recognise the face of God in one another. Exhibitions like this do more than inform - they build bridges. My prayer is that it will allow us to encounter people of a living tradition not as strangers, but as neighbours.

Later this week the Christian Church remembers Mother Julian of Norwich. Her surviving work - the *Revelations of Divine Love* - focuses on divine love, suffering, and hope. Even in bleak times, I try hard to hold onto her vision that "All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well."

We need that well-ness for our Jewish neighbours, for our life together as a society, and to mirror how God would have us be.

May this exhibition inspire not only knowledge, but understanding. Not only memory, but responsibility. Not only dialogue, but lasting solidarity.

I pledge my part in that. Will you too?

Thank you.