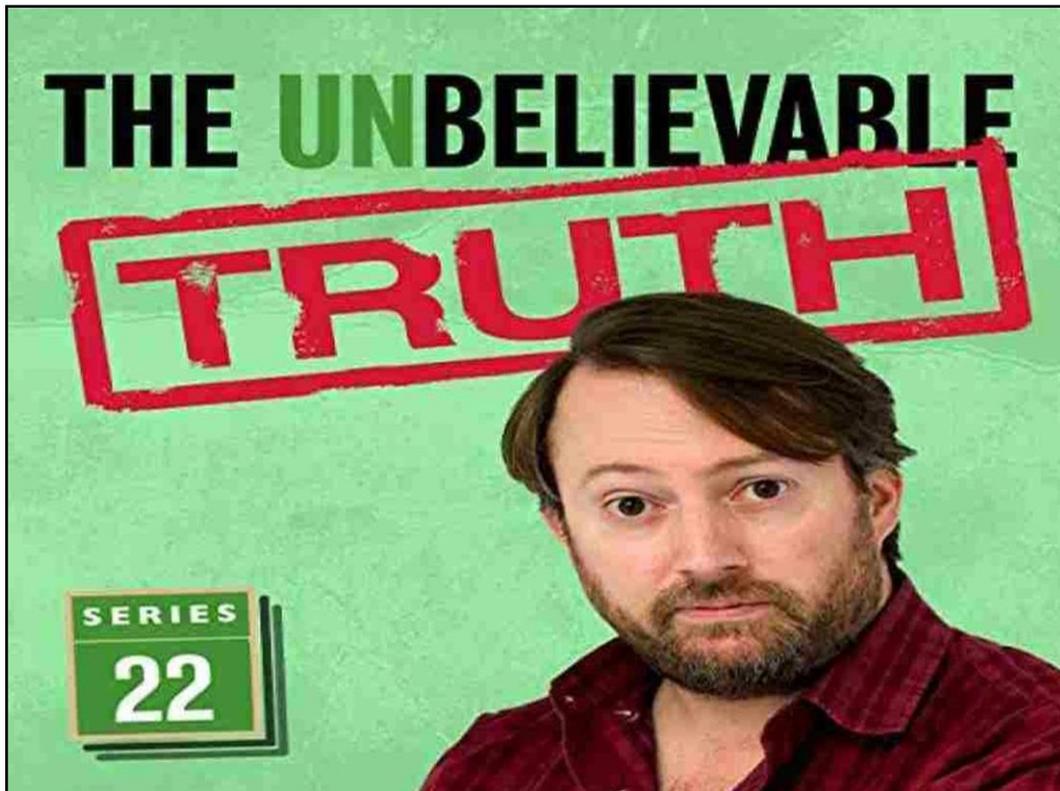


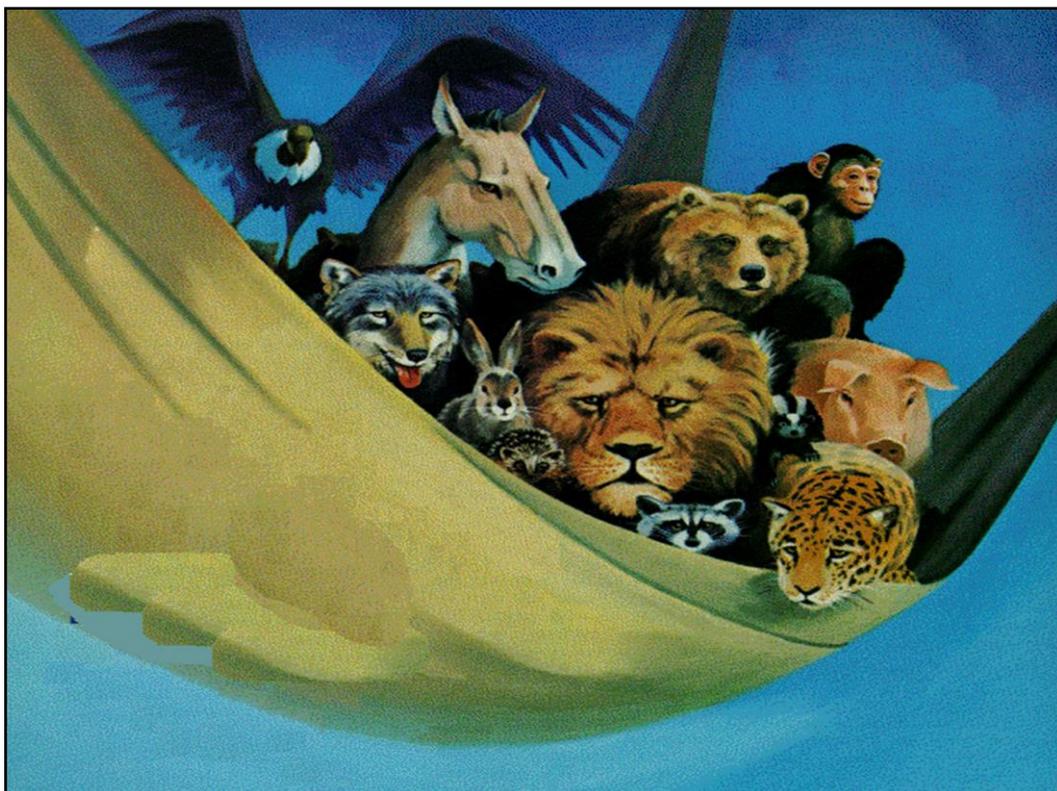
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You may have watched this quiz show on Radio 4 – it is very popular and has run for 25 series and there is a TV version of the panel quiz in Australia.

In case you haven't come across it, the panel members have to discern what are true facts from different scenarios presented by the opposing team.

It hinges on the fact that the truth can sometimes be almost unbelievable.



If we go back in the chapter before the end verses that we have had this morning, we have the events of when God in a vision to Peter, let down a sheet that held all the wide variety of animals and birds that God told Peter to eat as he was hungry.

This was an unbelievable truth for Peter- so unbelievable that Peter argues back with God! God had to show Peter this vision 3 times for Peter to accept what God was saying to him and for the Gospel Mission implications of the vision.



Hang on, hadn't Jesus already told Peter and the other disciples in John 17 that He would be sending them out into all the world?

Yes he did – so what's going on?

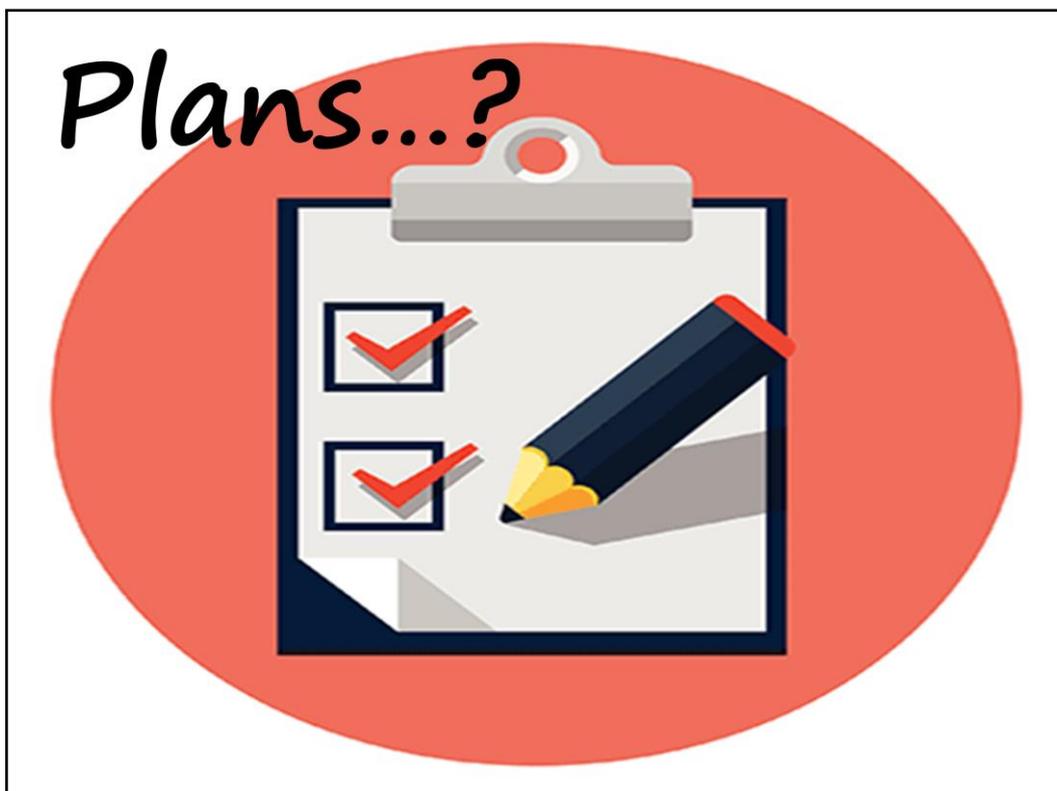
One way of looking at this, is that God is now filling in some of the details for Peter plus getting him out of the thinking that the Good News of Jesus was for the Jews only in every part of the world.

Was Peter perhaps trying to keep their missionary activities within his comfort zones?

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Maybe Peter thought he'd found wriggle room in Jesus' commission...Peter goes but only to those who are culturally the same as him...it took this Divine intervention to get Peter firmly on track that the Good News is for everyone, Jews and Gentiles (us) alike...how might the Christian faith have been if God hadn't got Peter off his own version of the plan and back onto God's original Plan A for the Good News for everyone – no exclusions.



God's Plan and Divine knowledge and plan for us as well as for Peter (and every other Christian person and church) leads me into the detail of this Vision Sermon (and we will return to Peter and our passage from Acts).

In September last year I gave the deferred Vision Sermon as to where I believed that God would be leading us...

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## SECOND LOCKDOWN



Then this happened.  
Back into lockdown and as we know we are  
still emerging from the restrictions..  
Yet here's a reminder of the plans from that  
Vision Sermon...



Some of these were carried over – again due to more plans than available time...

1. Aim to develop the schools work with the other schools in the parish
2. Establish a regular pattern for the Mens' Group
3. Work on developing mission outreach initiatives into the housing estates in the Parish.
4. Develop & instigate plan to grow 'Sundays Kool' (the number of children is increasing)
5. Complete the central heating project in Church of the Saviour.



5. With a ministry team develop the possibility of a different use of the Sunday Evening Service time; e.g. Healing Services; Deeper teaching on specific Bible passages; Contemporary Worship time.
6. Pay as much as possible of the Parish Share.
9. Appropriate Christmas Tree Festival 2020
- 10 Summer Fayre in 2021
11. Uniform Bank across the whole City. (with others)
12. Christmas Fayre 2020?
13. More Hampers – Christmas and beyond.



Even before Covid, God always worked in us and through us – God is bigger than Covid and He never sleeps or lapses in His love, care and plans for us...so what did happen?

The mains gas installation, central heating and new hot water system was installed and completed.

Church of the Saviour was vandalised but the community raised the money to cover all our repairs plus!

The site is now painted with anti vandal climb paint (duly signed) and is ready for us to use. We re-opened for live services in 2021 on Easter Day.



And from September onwards...

70 x Christian craft summer packs made up  
and delivered in 2020 during lockdown

170 x light party packs

Carols on the car park

73 families received Christmas hampers (272  
people fed through these)

Christmas Eve online celebration 1,000 views

A year in the life of Chell Parish video 1,800  
views

50 Easter packs distributed plus 100 crosses  
hidden around the Parish

Uniform bank 224 children clothed ( and  
ongoing)

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AND

### Pop Up Pantry

**1.5 tonne** of food collected from Tesco Crewe  
operated for 25 weeks since September 2020  
total 3,025 food parcels given out = **15,120  
meals**

average weekly attendance = 121 people (42  
families)

busiest week served 77 families (255 people)

Feb half term 2021

also provided toiletries and baby supplies



We now have the following companies and organisations working with us for our Community Outreach and Support;

Fegg Hayes Futures  
Tesco, Co-op, Warburtons, Lidl, Aldi,  
Fareshare, Morrisons, Period Power,  
Hygiene Bank, NSPCC, Kidsgrove Care  
Solutions, Port Vale Foundation,  
Salvation Army Smallthorne & SNBL (Stoke  
North Big Local)



Since my last Vision Sermon there's been a few changes...

Becky is now a Locally Commissioned Lay Minister for Chell Parish

Norma has retired as a Reader but will be continuing on the Bible Reading & Prayer rota plus her Tuesday Bible Study Group.

Rev Robert is continuing to help.

Rev Paul is now half way through his Curacy and he and Rev Linda have committed to being part of the Chell Parish Ministry Team, beyond the end of Paul's Curacy.



### **How was this achieved?**

Two ways – exactly as in every year.

1. God's guidance and direction.
2. The church members working together – in the big tasks and the behind the scenes jobs – and as previously **my sincere thanks to every person for all that each of you has done and continues to do.**

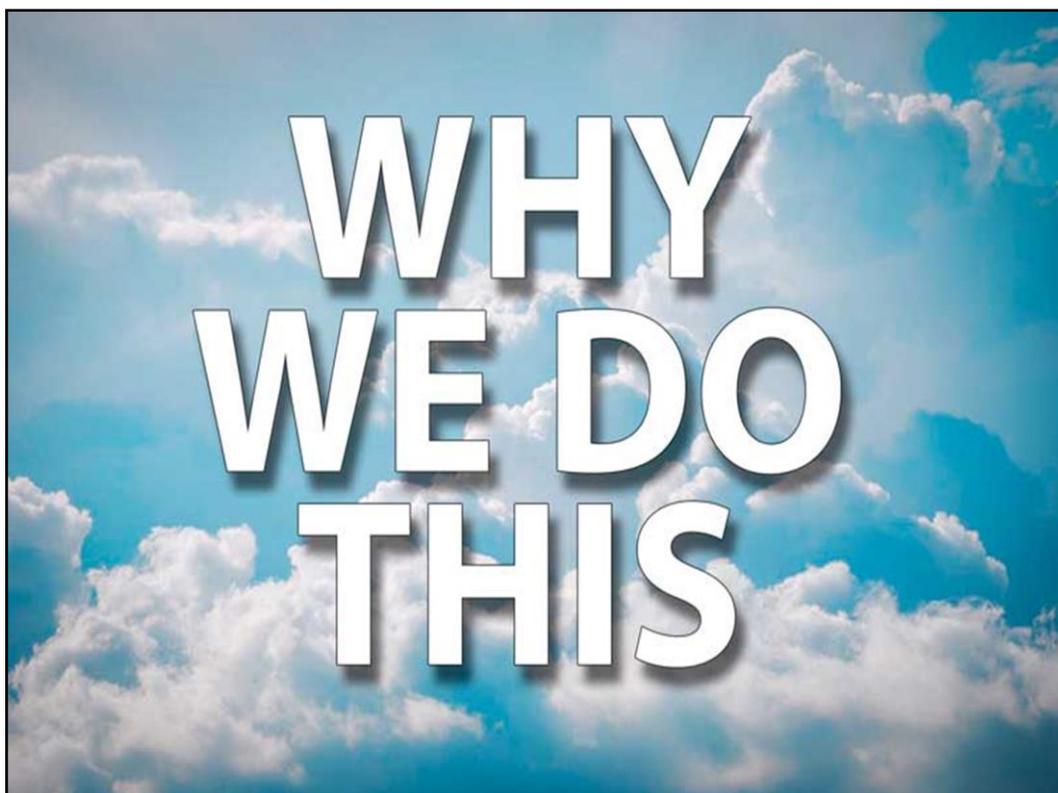
1 Corin.12 'Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ...Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.'



1. Resume the development of the schools work with the other schools in the parish
2. Establish a regular pattern for the Mens' Group
3. With the ministry team and others develop mission outreach initiatives into the housing estates in the Parish so that we have both churches fit for purpose
4. Revisit plans to grow 'Sundays Kool'
5. Develop a different use of the Sunday Evening Service time; e.g. Healing Services; Deeper teaching on specific Bible passages; Contemporary Worship time.



6. Pay as much as possible of the Parish Share (again)
7. Christmas Tree Festival 2021
8. Community Event at Church of the Saviour in the Summer to promote the church's refurbishment – Hot food, bouncing castle, activities etc.,
- 10 Chell Parish Summer Fayre in 2021
11. Run the Uniform Bank again with partners across the whole City.
12. A church van required for the ongoing collection and distribution of the food for Pop Up Pantry & Food Bank (funds are already coming on!!)



This may be a fair question to ask – and it isn't wrong to ask questions.

We do what we do because it is how God leads us – not anyone else, to minister to each other and our parish community.

Back with Peter in our passage from Acts, he said in verse 47a “How can anyone object to these people being baptized in water?...’ Peter was enabling the household to be baptised which was part of their journey in faith.

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What we do and how we undertake our outreach, is enabling all those we are led to, to begin or continue part of their journey to faith in Jesus as their personal Lord and Saviour. On the screen is our Vision Verse for 2021-22 and it also reminds us that what we do, and how we do it is the outworking of each of us being and bring the Light of Christ into the lives of others.

The Unbelievable truth is that God is at work in us and through us – and more so we know it is believable because we are seeing God's Hand at work.

COMMIT TO  
THE LORD  
WHATEVER YOU DO,  
AND HE  
WILL ESTABLISH  
YOUR PLANS.  
-PROVERBS 16:3

Each Vision Sermon finishes with this call to prayer and the committing of our coming year to the Lord.

This I believe is equally vital this year and the Covid season that we are slowly emerging from. What else could we do?

It's same answer: Pray, pray and pray again.

In prayer we commit our way forward, our plans and trust God to keep His promises; *especially* this promise from **Proverbs 16:3 (NIV)**

**'Commit to the LORD whatever you do,  
and he will establish your plans'**