So Long, and Thanks for All the Fish.

So Long, and Thanks for All the Fish is the fourth book of the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy 'trilogy' written by Douglas Adams. Its title is the message left by the dolphins when they departed Planet Earth just before it was demolished to make way for a hyperspace bypass, as described in The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy. The phrase has since been adopted by some science fiction fans as a humorous way to say "goodbye". I am, of course, one of those fans.

It is also a good way to say thank you and goodbye to all of you as it hints at a greater depth of feeling at this time of transition. Incidentally the *Online Entomology Dictionary* says that goodbye is a salutation in parting, it comes from godbwye (1570s), a contraction of God be with ye (late 14c.), influenced by good-day, good evening, etc. As a noun from 1570s. Intermediate forms in 16c. include God be wy you, God b'uy, God buoye, God buy, etc. And so, as I say goodbye, I am expressing my wish that God be with you.

Even though our time with you has been relatively short, certainly shorter than either Denise or I had expected, we have enjoyed being in the Uttoxeter Area with you and hopefully you have enjoyed sharing your time and space with us.

In the book, just as the dolphins were trained and fed by their keepers, so have I received this from you, and I hope you have from me.

I believe that the Church is about community and friendships and we have made some good friends whom we will miss. As a Church we are the body of Christ, and as St Paul says, we are called in all things to build up the body of Christ. To that end I would encourage you to continue to help each other as we follow the way of Jesus.

We pray that you will soon find a new Team Vicar who will be able to walk with you on the road of discipleship for many years to come. They, learning from you, and you from them.

With all that in mind, my parting message in this newsletter is as I began.

So Long and Thanks for All the Fish.

Every Blessing for the future.

John.  
Reverend John Jukes.