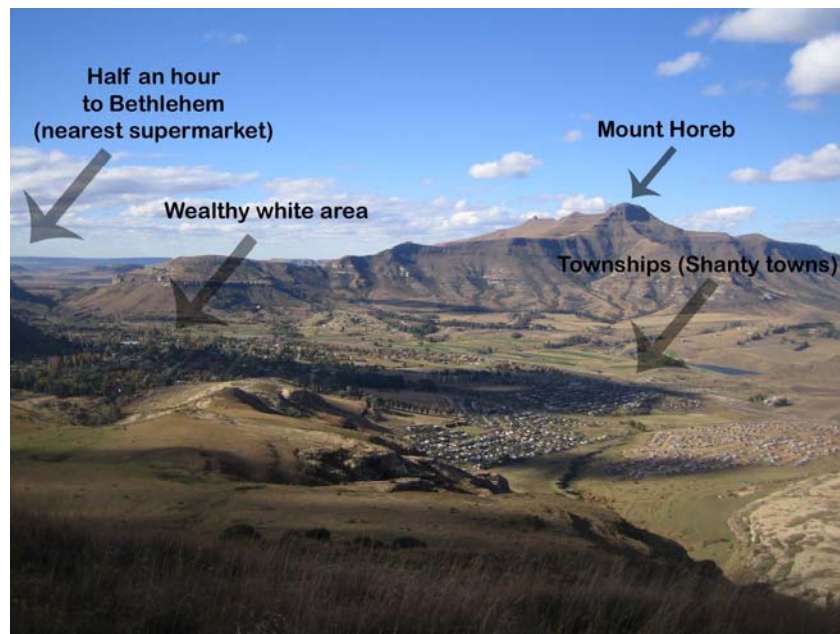


RACHEL'S AFRICAN ADVENTURES



Well this is the first of what I hope will be a monthly newsletter for those of you are interested in what I'm getting up to on the other side of the world.

I leave England on 23rd January, which as I write is just 8 days away. I have been planning this move for about 9 months now, so it's strange to think I'm almost ready to actually go. There's been a lot to do: I had a nightmare getting my visa which finally came through in October after months of work, I've been booking flights, sorting out somewhere to live, mending my laptop, working out my finances, looking at insurance, getting jobs up to date etc etc. Now all that's left are the non-essential things like making sure all my clothes are pristine ready for the first six month stint of not getting washed properly (the machines in Clarens don't wash with hot water & the powder is not good: that combines to mean your clothes are never fully clean!).



Below is a picture of Clarens:
I'm going to be living initially with a couple called Doug (Morena) & Karen Lengobala in an area of the township called The Congo. It's a good brick built house, but is next to an area called the Squatter Camp which is pretty self-explanatory: lots of tiny tin shacks. Doug & Karen are a mixed race couple: Doug's Basotho and Karen is English. I've stayed in touch with them since I've been back in the UK and I'm excited to be living with them.

Things that I'm looking forward to about the move:

- Warm weather.
- Spectacular storms.
- Seeing friends again.
- Finding out what's been happening since I was last serving at Dihlabeng Church & seeing where I will be serving this time.

- Crazy praise & worship times.
- Living in a beautiful rural village again.
- Having various people visit me from the UK in my first month.

Prayer Points:

1. That I really enjoy my last week in England & manage to have quality time with people before I go.
2. That I leave well: I don't want to spend my entire journey upset from the goodbyes I've had to go through.
3. That I settle really quickly back into life in Clarens: I'm very aware that it won't be the same as the last time I was there but I want to get on my feet quickly & enjoy making new friends.
4. That the Pound continues to strengthen against the Rand: in the New Year the exchange rate dropped massively & unless it continues to climb back up I may find that I'm left with a serious shortfall in my budget.

I will endeavour to write a monthly newsletter from Clarens. The internet connections are not reliable, but where ever possible I will also try and keep my blog updated:

<http://rachrigby.blogspot.com/>

Thanks so much for all your support!

Love Rachel xxx