

## **Brief Reflections from Two Weeks in Cape Town, October/November 2010.**

It was an amazing time. Here are six separate but related thoughts.

1. The fun of it all. The six of us had a fantastic time together. It was refreshing, stimulating, encouraging, challenging and more.
2. The generosity we received. The Anglican Communion came alive to us. We were received as real brothers and sisters in Christ, with much in common and many different experiences to share. We saw the ministry of the church in all its variety – worship, evangelism, social engagement – but also with all its limitations, like ours.
3. The political history we learnt. What's two weeks, I know, but in many conversations, visits to places like Robben Island and District 6 (the notorious slum area where those of different races were forcibly segregated) we learnt a lot in a short time. The way that apartheid flourished as it did is almost beyond belief.
4. The contrasts. I am used to the contrast between east and west Hull. The contrast between, for example, the townships and the prosperous parts of Cape Town is a hundred times greater. We were privileged to experience the whole spectrum in a short time.
5. The church in a post-apartheid society. Some told us that in the apartheid era the church had a role to resist apartheid and bring about change. Now that apartheid has ended – albeit with many vestiges still apparent – it's not always clear how the church should engage with local communities.
6. The worship. Much of it was inspirational and heart warming. The township congregations were large – more than 1000 in some cases – and had a wonderful mixture of pentecostal, evangelical and catholic aspects to the worship. Some of it was depressing – cathedral evensong was like something from England in the 1950s. Some of it was ordinary, just like some of ours back home.

The link has enormous potential: please keep it flourishing!

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