

## Debbie Blane Update

Dear Friends,

Greetings! The second semester has begun now in the Academic Year of 2010 here at the Nile Theological College in Khartoum, Sudan. In December the seniors will graduate with their Bachelor Degrees in Theology. Normally for this college sometime in January a new batch of juniors would arrive and the current juniors would become seniors. The college does intake for new students every two years so the juniors are juniors for two years and the seniors are seniors for two years.

This coming year things may be different. The Referendum where Southern Sudanese will vote to remain unified with the North or to create a new country and separate from the North is due to take place on January 9<sup>th</sup>. There is a great deal of uncertainty in the air here in Khartoum and at the college in general. The vote has the potential to change the lives of the Sudanese people for a long time to come.

In the meantime I began teaching again last week and have three academic subjects. This semester I am teaching one subject to the seniors. There are twelve seniors so we have a very nice class size. There is one woman among the eleven men and she is a trailblazer here at NTC as she is a mature learner.

The water flowing from the taps in Khartoum at this time of the year becomes brownish. I have not been able to find out why. My first thought was that maybe it comes directly from the Nile River, but then I was told that it goes through some sort of filtering system. It is very odd to wash dishes in brownish water! They do appear to be clean when all is said and done.

I am struggling to increase my vocabulary in Arabic; I have plenty of eager “teachers” at the college as my students delight in hearing my attempts. I often take rickshaws (a small motorized vehicle) to and from home to the school and back when it is too hot for my comfort in walking. The rickshaw drivers are getting better at understanding my “schway schway Arabic” (little little Arabic), or is it that I am getting better at Arabic?

Last Sunday I preached at an Anuak (one of the Sudanese/Ethiopian tribes) worship service. I find that the drumming in the worship is a real focal point that creates a tremendous feeling of community. Eventually everyone present is drawn into the beat of the drums. Very different, to me, of the more individual expression of European music.

Many Blessings,  
Reverend Debbie Blane



