

2025 EDUF April News Briefs and Nuptials in South Africa



Dear Friends of Nazarene Education in Africa,

We trust you greatly enjoyed your Easter celebrations on Resurrection Sunday as my family and I did in our local churches. Then Jon and I traveled to Nashville and met with several special people, old friends and new. We spoke about EDUF. More to follow.

In this newsletter, we have new briefs for your attention and a very unique personal report and photos:

- Update from Marg Strahlbaum regarding the container shipment with items from Eastern Nazarene College: Having left Ontario, Canada, it's on its way by sea and train to Eswatini. It's due to arrive on July 10th at the dry dock in Matsapha, a town in central Africa near to Manzini and Mbabane.
- Repeat announcement: Churches can receive 10% giving to EDUF by donating through the link **Closing the Clergy Gap Partnership** (give.nazarene.org/donate/153841). If your church chooses to give that way, please forward to us a copy of the receipt for our accounting. We thank you in advance for doing this.
- Two EDUF Fellowship Meetings are coming up:
 - May 13th we'll have a Zoom chat at 6:30 p.m. EDT. Want to join us? Email Admin@eduf.org to request the Zoom link.
 - May 31st EDUF Fellowship Gathering in Nampa, ID.
 - TIME: Noon to 3/4 PM MDT
 - PLACE: Lakeview Church of the Nazarene, 608 14th Ave. N., Nampa, Idaho
 - RSVP for us to get a headcount for lunch.

If you have ever been to Africa, you know that there are many, many positive words to describe the sights, the rhythms, the tastes, and especially the spirit of the people. When we return, we are eager to share the joy with others. That's what Rev. Lisa Morrison reports in the story below of orchestrated connections that God has designed for her. Lisa is a trustee of EDUF, instructor at Nazarene Bible College, and pastor of Faith Community Chapel in Ludlow, Massachusetts.

In our eleven years living and serving in Africa, Jon and I happily participated in several weddings of our Nazarene young people, but we missed the parent's-eye view that Lisa has as American-mother-of-the-bride. I know you will enjoy her article. To God be the glory! In Christ, Margaret Scott, EDUF President

In 2015, God provided the opportunity for me to go to **Nazarene Theological College in Johannesburg, South Africa** to be a guest Lecturer for a semester. God had even given me a vision to do this years before so when I arrived on campus I saw the fulfillment of my vision before my eyes. Little did I know how my life was going to change in those few short months on campus.

I fell in love with the African people. They were so warm, welcoming and relational. I loved teaching and I loved my students. At the end of the semester, God woke me up at dawn and spoke to my spirit about one of my students being the daughter I always wanted. To make a long story short, God began to reveal to both of us that he wanted her to come to the United States to get her education and I was to step down from my ministry positions because she was now going to be my ministry. Thapi moved to the United States to live with me while she acquired her degrees from Eastern Nazarene College and Nazarene Theological Seminary. She lived with me for five years and upon returning to South Africa she became the Academic Dean of Nazarene Theological College where our journey began.

In March 2025, Thapi got married. I returned to South Africa to be part of the wedding festivities. Due to my staying on campus with her and my previous time on campus, I was asked if I would preach during the Holiness Conference. The Lord laid it on my heart to preach a message about setting those called to be ministers apart as holy unto the Lord.

While I was working on my message, I got the idea of having gold headbands made that said "Holy unto the Lord" on them. I also sensed that I was to anoint each student and pray over them while the rest of the congregation sang the hymn *Holiness Unto the Lord*. The Lord was present in our service, and I was honored to be used of God to do this for His chosen ones.

I thought the students would wear their headbands only that evening, yet, during my month stay on campus, I would see them wearing their headbands as a reminder that they had been set apart unto the Lord.



Holiness Unto The Lord

Thapi had been telling me for 10 years how an African wedding took place. It certainly was different from our American weddings. The more she talked about it, the more I came to realize that it sounded close to the weddings described in the Bible. The families negotiate the price for the bride, which is called lobola. We would call it a dowry. I was surprised when I was asked to speak about Thapi's living in the United States with me and acquiring her education at one of the last negotiation sessions. After I shared our God-ordained journey, the groom's family teased and said that they should have paid more money for her, but they were honored to have her becoming part of their family.

The South African wedding is more than just the couple being wed. It involves both families coming together. His family presents her family with a cow that is delivered a few days before the celebration takes place. They slaughter the cow at her family's home, and it is served when his family comes to be joined with hers. His family presents her family with gifts as a way of bringing the families together.



On the day that the groom and his family are coming to her home, the bride stays hidden away until her groom arrives. Then her family brings her out to present her to her groom and his family. A great celebration takes place with dancing, singing and feasting. At the end of the celebration, her family presents his family with a sheep that will be slaughtered and eaten when the bride is presented to his family.



The next celebration is what they call the white wedding, which is what occurs at our weddings in America. Because my daughter and her husband are Christians, they had a Christian wedding. I was honored to take part in sharing the Word of God at their service, and to anoint and bless them.



The bride and groom do not come together until she is presented to his family the following day. She comes in her white wedding dress and is escorted by her family. She has to bring a bed that will be placed in the groom's room at his parents' house. Once the bed is placed into what is now going to be their room, no one other than the bride and groom can enter into the room. She also has to bring what is known as a kist, which is a coffin symbolizing that she will only be leaving this family when she dies. She would be expected to live at his parents' house if they married when they were young so that his mother could teach her how to cook and clean for her husband. Since they both have their ministry careers and homes, they were only required to stay a week with his parents.

Another feast takes place as well as her family bringing gifts to his family, and the slaughtered sheep is served. Both the bride and groom will change into his traditional attire from his ancestral tribe. At the end of the feasting, dancing and singing, she will be escorted into their room, signifying that from now on she is family's responsibility. Her family is entrusting his family to take care of her.





It was a blessing to take part in these festivities and see how a South African wedding takes place. It was a gift to be able to experience a wedding that has family, relationships and community as its main focus reflecting the same message that the Bible communicates to us. – Rev. Lisa Morrison, mother of the bride