

# The Springfield Redeemer



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“A new day will dawn on us from above because our God is loving and merciful. . .He will guide us into the way of peace.”

Luke 1:78-79

## My First Christmas by Roberta D’Amico



God revealed Himself to me in unexpected ways. Like when I heard, really heard, the words to the Christmas Carols that I had been singing since childhood. I had become a Christian in the middle of my life, at age 33, after being devoted to religion for years. The same age Jesus’ earthly life ended, my spiritual life began!

That was many years ago now. As I grew in my new faith, I learned that to be complete, life has to include more than the physical, more than thinking and feeling, it has to include a relationship with God.

God began to awaken a desire for Himself early in my life, as I knelt by my bed and prayed, “Now I lay me down to sleep . . .” or when in Catholic School we stopped for a

short prayer every hour. Not yet Christians themselves, my parents still encouraged a devotion to God. My first introduction to the Bible was through a weekly radio drama called The Greatest Story Ever Told.

Christmas was a big deal at my house, with singing carols and turkey dinner and the tree and visiting my beloved relatives. But, by far the best part of Christmas was setting up the Manger Scene. Over the years it became rather extensive, as was my dear Memere’s. But even with all this, there was a hunger in my heart that no presents could satisfy; and questions: why was Jesus killed, and how can I get to heaven?

Then, when the time was right, God invaded my life. He used a college professor who assigned a book on the Reformation; a neighbor and friend who taught a Children’s Bible Club; my kids who were coming home with new ideas and Bible verses. Just before Christmas that year, I said “YES!” to God: “I believe Jesus came to die for my sins and rose again to new Life.” Now, with the Spirit of Jesus in my

heart, I was born again and experienced my first Real Christmas! I sang the same carols, but heard not just the words but the message! I looked at the Christmas tree with the star on top and saw of the Star of Bethlehem and all the tree lights as representative of the Body of Christ, the lights in the world. I saw lost people without hope all around me and realized they were trying to fill that void in their lives that I had had. They didn’t understand that only God could satisfy the longings of their hearts.

I have been a Christian many years now. God continues to reveal Himself to me. Like realizing that the favorite color of Christmas is *red*, the color of the Blood that Jesus came to shed for our sins. Every Christmas I remember with awe the year Jesus saved me; how He spoke to me through my friend, revealing the Truth to me in the Bible Club, and in my college history class.

I realize now that my existence up to that point was just a preparation for my real life. All my life, the Hound of Heaven had been pursuing me and I didn’t know it. He

came to seek and save those who are lost. But having saved me, He continues to pursue a deeper relationship with me, using my whole life here on this earth as

preparation for living with Him forever in heaven. Christmas is over for this year, and we do not know what next Christmas will bring, but

now is the time to say YES to a deeper relationship with Him, where everything becomes an occasion for bringing honor and glory to God.

## New Ministry Comes to Holy Grounds by Roberta D'Amico

Things are still happening at the Holy Grounds Coffee House! In November, a ministry called Transformation Center Healing Ministry came to use the Coffee House for their weekly service, after Sister Deborah told them about us. She met them in Springfield where they had come from Trinidad so Pastor Susan Thomas could get her license in Social Work. She had previously gone to Bible College, and her husband, Prophet Eric Thomas, went to Seminary.

Their weekly service is conducted by Pastor Susan Thomas at 6 p.m. at Holy Grounds. She does praise and worship while Prophet Eric,

temporarily in Trinidad, participates in teaching via the internet, using Skype.



Prophet Eric and Pastor Susan

They have a holistic ministry helpful for believers wounded by church experiences or those who are disappointed in God. They

meet many people who need healing in their relationship with God, and lead them to resources. Pastor Susan believes people in the church can benefit by this help, especially in building relationships within the family.

On Friday, December 30 they held a Talent Show, called "I Matter", from 5 to 8 p.m. This was planned to be an opportunity for people to use their gifts in singing, dancing, comedy, and the spoken word. It was held at Commonwealth Academy, 1 Ames Hills Drive, in Springfield.

We weren't able to report how this event went, but calling 413-885-8366 might supply some details.

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**2017 – a New Year! We are looking forward to a good year, a blessed year! Peace and prosperity; a renewed freedom to live our Christianity in public. Lord, grant us the freedom to share the gospel! Bless our national leaders; our new President Trump. Lead him in his relationship with Jesus, in wisdom, good health, his choices of staff, cabinet, and judges, and personal safety. We cannot fix what's wrong with our nation, but we look to You, Lord, for help with jobs, healthcare, national defense, finances, and especially revival all across America! Amen.**

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## Ongoing Events

**SUNDAY SERVICES: 10 a.m.-** Pastors Bobby & Kim; **2 p.m.-** Pastor Renzo & Betsy Ventrice; and **6 p.m.-** Transformation Center Healing Ministries with Prophet Eric Thomas & Pastor Susan.

**MONDAY -- FRIDAY:** Morning Bible Study at 7:30 a.m.; **WED.:** Bible Study - 4:30 p.m.; Recovery at 6:30 p.m.

**THURSDAY:** Women's Bible Study 1:00 p.m.

**SATURDAY:** Sabbath Service 9 a.m. to 12 noon; Lunch 2 to 4 p.m.

**1<sup>ST</sup> SATURDAY:** "Marriage with God" 4 to 6 p.m.

**3<sup>RD</sup> SATURDAY:** "Singles with God" 4 to 6 p.m.

**SATURDAY NIGHTS:** Jan. 14, 7 p.m., Band: *Never Forgotten*. Jan. 28, 7 p.m. Open Mic with Cathy Marvici.