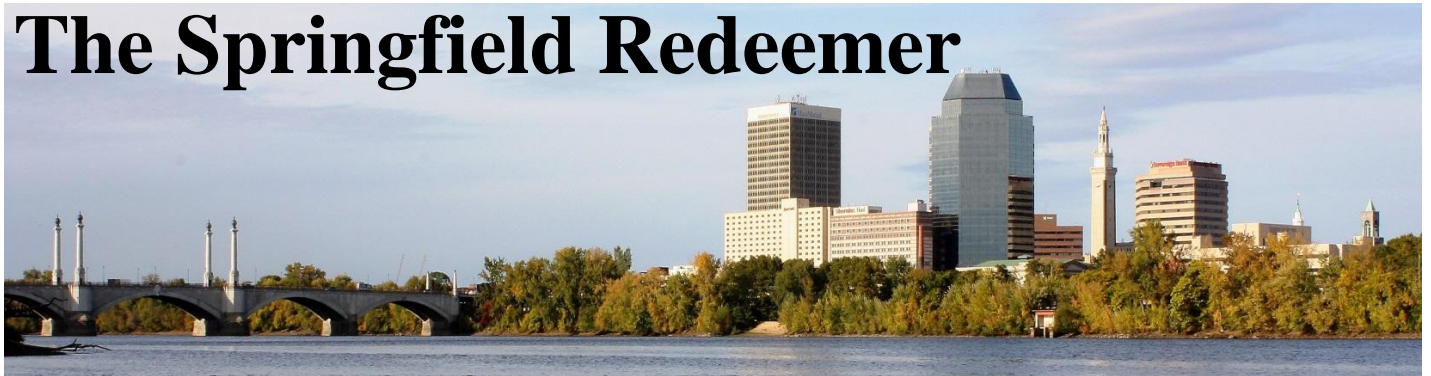


# The Springfield Redeemer



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Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all.” Mark 16:15

## Asking the Hard Questions by Roberta D’Amico

That is the topic of this year’s Apologetics Seminar, sponsored by Redemption Gate Mission Society! It’s coming up soon! It will be hosted by Pastor Juan Feliciano at Calvary’s Love Church, where we have been pleased to enjoy the Apologetics Seminars in the previous years. The date for it is Saturday, March 25, 2017, and the time is 9 a.m. to noon. After the Seminar, we will fellowship, eat pizza and salad, and discuss the Seminar! The address of the church is 19 Oakland Street, Springfield Massachusetts.



The guest speaker is the Reverend John Rankin, of the Theological Education Institute International (TEII). The title of his message is “Race, Islam, and the Bible: What are the most important questions?”

This topic will be very relevant to our country today, and sounds

challenging, but Pastor Cooley is impressed with his quality of faith and his views on our society and America. Pastor says his approach is gentle, not threatening, and aimed at bringing people back to God. Rev. John Rankin has done extensive study on these and numerous other topics. His International organization, TEII, is in West Simsbury, Connecticut.

“The vision of TEII is to promote the Biblical definition of Human Freedom,” his website tells us, and that “there is a need for biblically literate leaders in every sector of society.” The TEII believes that “the freedom to ask hard questions . . . is the strategy to change human culture, [and that] the Gospel of Jesus Christ advances religious, political, and economic liberty for all.”

Why is it so important to be Biblically literate and able to answer hard questions? Spiritually, as Christians, we need to be able to answer any question the world would pose to us.

Politically, we need transparency in government, honor, and truthfulness. Jesus is the Light of

the world and His Light and Truth exposes all things.

Intellectually, blessed is the person who is raised to think, to ask questions, to analyze, to look deeper than the surface to the causes. Some people are timid about analyzing truth, especially Biblical concepts, but it’s okay to question the meaning of Biblical words and ideas. Learning is growing! It takes a life-time of study, and then you still don’t know it all.

Rev. John Rankin, President of the Theological Education Institute, founded it in 1986. He and his wife come from Scottish Presbyterian backgrounds, from a long line of veterans, ministers, and physicians. He grew up in New England, converted at age 14, was baptized as a teenager by Rev. Peter Moore of Intervarsity Christian Fellowship, and ordained through Vineyard Christian Fellowship. His home church is in Simsbury, Connecticut.

It’s all there and more about this fascinating and accomplished speaker in his website, [TEII.org/about-us-main/john-rankins-biography](http://TEII.org/about-us-main/john-rankins-biography).

## Future Plans for Holy Grounds by Roberta D'Amico

This year's Annual Board Meeting was quite exciting, as details for the future plans for the Holy Grounds Coffee House were revealed. Pastor Scott Lively made a brief visit to Springfield on Sunday February 19th, 2017. He spoke on Sunday afternoon about his vision for this ministry, along with Pastor Renzo Ventrice, who normally leads the service at that time. Pastor Scott had already informed the Board of the direction he hoped the ministry would take, but he wanted to share more details and get the approval and blessing of the Board.

The mission for Springfield remains as it always has: to bring Christ to Springfield, as He is the ultimate answer to the problems that plague us, from homelessness, racism, broken homes, children growing up without fathers, violence, and drugs. Thanks to your prayers and generosity, Holy Grounds Coffee House has made a difference in downtown Springfield. It has become a place of safety, peace, a God-centered refuge. Here the Word of God is available to anyone who will receive it, a place where people are loved and respected. It has also made an impact through the student ministry, where daily 60, 80, or more high school students come in on their way to school!

Always, however, God would have us increase the blessing to Springfield. There is much work to be done; there is time to reach more. So, we need to expand.

The plan in brief is this: move the Coffee House to United Temple C.O.G.I.C. at 191 Walnut Street, remodel the existing building, adding on a large hall at the back

which will accommodate twice the capacity of 455 State Street, and converting the front part to the new Coffee House! This would allow us to do more plus give us ample parking on the property, something we have struggled with for 7+ years!

The Board of Directors of Redemption Gate Mission Society remains at 7 members, however Pastor Scott is stepping down to turn the Board over to local control and add a new member. God grows things organically, with a season for everything. Ministries must grow with and stay true to the vision, not institutionalize and perpetuate it. Our vision is to expand our impact on Springfield by increasing our ministry partners. Pastor Scott said, "We must go out to the suburban churches to get them to recognize the need of urban ministry."



Holy Grounds has been a model for the body of Christ, being composed of Believers from many denominations, nationalities, and backgrounds, all worshipping together, studying the Bible together, and learning together! It is a wonderful experience. Pastor Cooley has a message for the churches: "Let me share the expanding vision of Redemption Gate Mission Society with your church! Here is a mission field! Come, grow with us, it is easy to find a place to serve here."

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## Reformation of the Sixteenth century – 500<sup>th</sup> year Anniversary!

The date is October 31, 2017! Pray for this upcoming event. It will be a big celebration!

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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 Centered 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 with Pat and Barbara at 2 to 4 p.m.

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

**3<sup>RD</sup> SATURDAY:** March 18, "Singles with God" 4 to 6 p.m.

**SATURDAY NIGHTS:** March 11, 7 p.m., Gale B. Gardner. March 25, 7 p.m. Open Mic with Cathy Marvici.