

Robert "Bob" James Brennan

August 24, 1935 ~ April 10, 2025

Bob Brennan was born in Lackawanna, New York to Robert Emmet and Anne Marie (Corcoran) Brennan. He is the eldest of 5 children: Don (Barb), Jimmy (Teresa, Cathy), Kathleen (Joe), and Michael (Lee).

Bob was a convert to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. He accepted a job to teach science and physics at Pasadena High School in California and traveled there from New York with his brother Jim. There he met his future wife, Shirley, at her company's Christmas party. After their first date (they saw "West Side Story" at Grauman's Chinese Theater in L.A.), she wouldn't agree to go out with him again because he wasn't Mormon. He suggested that they study each other's religions (he was Catholic) and continue seeing each other. Two months later, on her birthday, he was baptized, and a year after that they were married in the L.A. temple.

Bob received a Bachelor's degree from Buffalo State University, a Master's degree from Ohio State University, and a Doctorate from BYU. He prioritized education, and made sure all his children knew it was important.

He was employed as a seminary and institute teacher, and coordinator for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for 35 years. He was the second American sent to New Zealand to begin the seminary program there in 1971. He was the first Institute Director of the Auckland Institute.

Bob loved reading and instilled that joy in all his eight children. He constantly read both fiction and non-fiction and loved to talk about what he was reading. He was especially interested in reading books about science and scientific discoveries. It was not unusual to find him with a bowl of popcorn and a cold root beer nearby, rubbing his feet together as he read with a smile on his face. He loved sailing the waters of the Puget Sound on his boat, the "Lucky Us." He was curious and competent, building two houses with little help from others. He inherited his love of figuring out how things work from his father, "Bud." His office and garage were filled with gadgets and contraptions that puzzle his children to this day. He loved trying out new things: grinding flour to make fresh bread, and trying out recipes for fudge, chocolates, and any other sweet thing. Bob had a massive sweet tooth, and didn't see anything wrong with including Hershey's chocolate syrup and some whipped cream on top of his morning cereal.

Bob's sense of humor was legendary. There was nothing he loved more than making people laugh, whether it be by a joke, self-deprecating anecdote, or story his dad used to tell. Wherever he was, laughter was sure to follow. He loved to relate how a co-worker once told him, "When I see you coming, I start to laugh!" with a wink at what the co-worker might have meant. He lived as though his calling in life was to make others smile.

Bob loved the scriptures. He read them faithfully and loved to share what he learned with others. He was very tender-hearted and was often teary-eyed as he related what the Spirit was teaching him. He accepted and served in many callings in the church, including Bishop, High Council member, ordinance worker in the Seattle and St. George temples, and Gospel Doctrine teacher, to name a few. Bob, his wife, and youngest daughter Katie served

two missions for the church, one at BYU-Hawaii and the other at a church property in Washington State. Bob and Shirley also served as missionaries at the Purdy Women's Prison in Washington state.

He loved singing in the ward choir, although his diminished hearing made that effort quite entertaining for others. Singing is a big part of the Brennan family culture, and Bob joined in as his wife Shirley led the family through song after song on road trips. He especially loved the songs "Nessun Dorma" and "Somewhere" from "West Side Story."

Bob had a strong testimony of the Book of Mormon, Joseph Smith, the Restoration, the Plan of Salvation, and especially Jesus Christ. In his final days of diminishing health, he talked with everyone who entered his hospital or rehab center rooms about Heavenly Father's love for them. He entered the spirit world shortly after all his children had the opportunity to say goodbye to him in person.

He is survived by his wife Shirley, daughters Carlene, Cherilyn (David Williams), Jennifer, LeAnne, Veronica (Jeff Haymond), Megan (Daniel Crowley), Katie, and son Robert (Carrisa Calderone), grandchildren Seth (Riana) and Josh (Cesilee) Williams, Kit and Adam Reiche, Jamie Hansen, Robert and Annabelle Brennan, Luca Radabaugh, Isaac Crowley, and great-grandchildren Niall and Harriet Williams. He is preceded in death by his brothers Jimmy and Michael, sister Kathy, and his granddaughter Hannah Williams.