



James A. Bontempo

November 6, 1951 - December 30, 2025

James A. Bontempo, 74, of Mentor, passed away December 30, 2025, at his home. He is survived by his wife, Catherine; children, Daniel and James (Alyssa); grandson, Joshua; brother, John (Kindy), and sisters, Marian (Paolo Marenghi) and Joanne Bontempo. He was preceded in death by his parents, Anthony and Mary Lou Bontempo.

Jim was born November 6, 1951, at St. Ann's Hospital in Cleveland. He grew up in Cleveland Heights on Severn Road and graduated from Cleveland Heights High School in 1969. Jim's fondest high school memories involved forming the Mark Four rock band with his friends as the drummer. The Mark Four played the after-game dances on Football Fridays, Cain Park open house dances, Case Western parties, and the Teen Fair at Cleveland Convention Hall. His Rodgers sparkle red drum kit is proudly restored and in his house to this day. On rare occasions, he would set the drums up in the living room to remind his sons who was in charge. He sold his original drum throne to a Las Vegas-based Beatles tribute band, where it lives on during performances.

Jim entered the building trades after high school, completing his apprenticeship in carpentry at Max S. Hayes Vocational School. Jim was a member of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters union for over 50 years. Jim, his brother John, and his father Tony owned and operated Bontempo Builders,

Inc., a general contractor in Lake County. He proudly worked on many commercial, industrial, and institutional building projects in Northeast Ohio including Willoughby Hills City Hall, Geauga County government offices, Advent Lutheran Church, and the Progressive Field team shop, among many others.

Jim met his future wife Cathy in high school and married her in 1976 at St. John Vianney in Mentor. They were married for nearly 50 years. They were longtime residents of Mentor, moving into their home on Bryson Drive during the “Cleveland Superbomb” blizzard of January 1978, remembered for extreme wind, snowfall, and atmospheric pressure typically found only in hurricanes.

Jim and Cathy raised two sons at their home, Danny (born, 1980) and Jimmy (born, 1983) along with a long line of adopted canine companions including Sonny, Jake, Coco, and Bree. He enjoyed a quiet, simple life with his family. He loved working on his cars and motorcycle - a 1982 Chevy Camaro, 2009 Chevy Corvette, and 1992 Harley Sportster.

After retiring, Jim and Cathy enjoyed traveling to Florida beaches and Las Vegas shows to escape the cold winters and enjoyed walking the dogs at Headlands Beach and attending the Mentor Rocks concerts in the summers. He loved a good meal, especially Italian fare with generous portions. He became a proud father-in-law in 2022 when he welcomed his daughter-in-law Alyssa into the family. A special memory for Jim and Cathy was their first passport stamp when traveling to Italy in the summer of 2023 with their son Jimmy. They visited Milano, Torino, Venice, and Rome on a very memorable trip.

Unfortunately, after returning from Italy in summer 2023, Jim was diagnosed with an aggressive form of thyroid cancer, which he fought valiantly for over

two years. The illness stole so much from Jim - his vitality, his ability to speak, his ability to eat. With the support of the professionals at University Hospitals Seidman Cancer Center, he was rewarded for his impossibly difficult treatment program when he became a grandfather with birth of his grandson Joshua in October 2024. Joshua loved his "Papa".

A Memorial Mass to honor Jim's life will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, January 10, 2026, at St. John Vianney Church, 7575 Bellflower Rd., Mentor, OH 44060. The family will receive friends following the Mass. A luncheon at St. John Vianney Social Center will follow.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests contributions be made to University Hospitals Seidman Cancer Center. Online donations can be made at www.UHGiving.org or checks may be mailed to University Hospitals Institutional Relations and Development, P.O. Box 94554, Cleveland, OH 44101-4554.

Please offer condolences at www.brunners.com.

Previous Events

Memorial Mass

JAN 10. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. John Vianney Catholic Church
7575 Bellflower Road
Mentor, OH 44060
(440) 255-0600

Visitation following the Mass

JAN 10 (ET)

St. John Vianney Catholic Church
7575 Bellflower Road
Mentor, OH 44060
(440) 255-0600

Tribute Wall

RB

“ So sorry to read of my cousin Jimmy's passing. Best wishes to family. Richard Bontempo (Uncle Lou's son in St. Pete, FL)

Richard Bontempo - January 10 at 10:48 AM

CA

“ Chrissy and David Axner purchased the Beautiful Heart Bouquet for the family of James A. Bontempo.



Chrissy and David Axner - January 09 at 01:25 PM



“ Basket Full of Wishes was purchased for the family of James A. Bontempo.



January 09 at 07:57 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of James A. Bontempo.



January 08 at 08:38 AM

XB

“ xoxo Aunt Barb and Uncle Brad purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of James A. Bontempo.



xoxo Aunt Barb and Uncle Brad - January 07 at 04:48 PM

XB

“ xoxo Aunt Barb and Uncle Brad planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of James A. Bontempo.

xoxo Aunt Barb and Uncle Brad - January 07 at 04:48 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of James A. Bontempo.



January 05 at 06:10 PM

HB

“ Heisley Bootcampers purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of James A. Bontempo.



Heisley Bootcampers - January 03 at 01:43 PM

HB

“ Heisley Bootcampers planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of James A. Bontempo.

Heisley Bootcampers - January 03 at 01:43 PM

GN

“ Gary & Judy Nehls purchased the Small Garden Dish for the family of James A. Bontempo.



Gary & Judy Nehls - January 03 at 10:52 AM

GN

“ Gary & Judy Nehls planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of James A. Bontempo.

Gary & Judy Nehls - January 03 at 10:52 AM