

***The purpose of the First Baptist Church of Auburn is to glorify God by developing disciples who know Christ personally as prescribed in God's Word, through worship, teaching, fellowship, and outreach to our community and world.***

## ***From the Pastor ... Loving in a Hate Filled World***

In Matthew 24 Jesus speaks of the destruction of the Temple, and I believe, of the eventual overthrow of Israel. The disciples then ask Jesus, *"Tell us, when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?"* Among other signs, Jesus says, *"...because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold,"* vs. 12.

Brian Thompson, CEO of UnitedHealthcare, was shot and killed in New York City on December 4, 2024.

The police say the shell casings that remained at the scene were inscribed with the words "deny", "defend", and "depose." Many believe the killer purposely left the casings in protest to the words UnitedHealthcare allegedly used to deny claims made by insured clients. Stories abound chronicling the company's refusal to pay for health services recommended by doctors.

Those stories are made worse by the fact that UnitedHealthcare is one of the largest health care insurance companies in the US. They reported a net income of \$22.3 billion in 2023. The website Macrotrends reports that UnitedHealth Group total assets for the quarter ending September 30, 2024 were \$299.309 billion.

UnitedHealthcare may be an unfair giant, but the cold blooded murder of Brian Thompson is a tragedy. But the response to his murder makes my heart cry out. Here are some of the headlines and comments that followed this senseless act.

**Headline:** "Killing of insurance CEO reveals simmering anger at US health system."

**Headline:** "The Replies to the Murdered Insurance CEO's Final Social Media Post Are Chilling."

**Comment:** "...the widespread and public celebration that followed [the killing.]

**Comment:** "Thoughts and Prayers Are Out Of Network"

Laura Lyster-Mensch, an advocate that helps people navigate the process of death and also helps people navigate costs involved in health and funerals, writes, *"I'm very concerned about the cruelty and depersonalization,"* noting she's seen people posting laughing emojis on social media when talking about Thompson's death.

I understand the anger. Health insurance costs more each year and seems to cover less. Doctors seem to be rationing health care because insurance companies are making it harder to be reimbursed for medical procedures.

But the ineffectiveness of health coverage does not justify the hate being spewed over this man's murder. Truly this demonstrates a hardness and coldness of heart that permeates society and shows itself in shootings, increased hate crimes and, now, rejoicing over someone's death.

Jesus tells us: <sup>43</sup> *"Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy*

*(Continued on page 3)*

# Welcome January 2025!

## Upcoming Events

### Every Sunday –

Sunday School – 10:00 a.m.  
Worship Service – 11:00 a.m.  
Prayer Meeting – 4:00 p.m.  
Small Group Service – 4:45 p.m.

### Every Wednesday –

Game Time – 4:30 p.m.  
15 minutes of Prayer – 5:30 p.m.  
AWANA – 6:00 p.m.

**Every Thursday** – Quilting Circle –  
9:00 a.m. thru 4:00 p.m.

**Wednesday, January 1** –

*Happy New Year!*

**Saturday, January 4** –

Men's Breakfast – 9:00 a.m.

**Sunday, January 5** –

*Happy Anniversary  
Pastor Ed and Leslie*

**Sunday, January 12** – 2024 Annual  
Committee Reports Due

**Tuesday, January 14** –

Special Advisory Board Meeting –  
7:00 p.m.

**Sunday, January 19** – All church  
potluck (*right after the  
morning service*)  
2025 Annual Evaluations Due

**Tuesday, January 21** –

All Church Business Meeting –  
7:00 p.m.

**Sunday, January 26** –

Food Pantry

**Tuesday, January 28** – Women's  
Breakfast at Bob Evans in  
Bay City – 9:00 a.m.

**From the Pastor ...** Continued from page 1

*neighbor, and hate thine enemy. <sup>44</sup>But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;”*

Matthew 5:43-44

I understand that the world is not fair. Insurance companies sometimes refuse to pay for needed procedures and when pushed make it hard to question their decision. But nothing justifies hate. The cold, callous response of some in regard to this

man’s death demonstrate hearts grown cold to righteousness and void of love.

It makes me wonder if the Lord’s return is near. It makes me wonder if that coldness of heart and absence of love will one day overflow to any who believe an unacceptable ideal.

The encouragement is to follow the words of Jesus, not the emotions of our heart. ***“Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you....”***

**For Your Information ...**

*The church’s phone system is currently **NOT** working. If you have an emergency, please call Pastor Ed on his cell phone at **(989) 450-7216**. Normal calls may be made to Jennifer Burnaby at **(989) 662-6512** during regular business hours — Tuesday thru Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.*

**Thank You for your patience in this matter.**

**Men’s Breakfast!**

**Saturday, 9:00 a.m.**

**January 4**

**Ladies’ Breakfast!**

**Tuesday, 9:00 a.m.**

**January 28**

**Bob Evans in Bay City**

# ***A Poem by Brandon Pawley***

## ***A Candle In The Darkness***

*As a candle in the darkness  
So must a Christian be.  
To light up all the right paths  
And help the blind man see.*

*We shall not judge our neighbor  
Lest we ourselves be judged  
And lose out on the grace and mercy  
Of His glorious love.*

*He died upon that cross for us  
And carried away our sins.  
His blood has washed away the grime  
That burdens us within.*

*The Lord, He is our Savior.  
He saves all who will believe.  
Our praises and our prayers  
Are made blessings we receive.*

*Living our lives for Jesus Christ  
Is a beautiful life we share.  
If we turn and walk away from Him  
Our lives fill with despair.*

*He's standing right outside the door  
Knocking to be let in.  
Open that door within your heart  
And share your life with Him.*

*January 1981*

# First Baptist Church of Auburn

## Pastor Ed Lawrence

### 2025 Church Officers

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Moderator                                 | Mike Parker   |
| Clerk                                     | Arlene Parker   |
| Treasurer                                 | Christy Ziehmer   |
| Assistant Treasurer                       | Betty Day   |
| Financial Secretary                       | Jackie Ware   |
| Asst. Financial Secretary                 | Jan Ensing  |
| Sunday School Superintendent              | Waiting for a Volunteer   |
| Asst. Sunday School Superintendent        | Waiting for a Volunteer   |
| Head Usher                                | Bill Potts  |
| Nominating Committee                      | Carrie Davis<br>Elizabeth Sova  |
| Deacon Board                              | Wayne Day   |
| Trustees                                  | Roy Alexander<br>Mike Graham<br>Larry Grove<br>Phil Loiacano<br>Graham Parker<br>Barry Sova<br>Scott VanDenBoom |
| Board of Christian Education and Missions | Wayne Day<br>Earthia Klein<br>Julie Kukla<br>Nancy VanKleek   |



# MICHAEL W. COLLINS

*June 21, 1946 - December 5, 2024*  
*(age 78)*

## **Michael W. Collins**

June 21, 1946 - December 5, 2024

U.S. Veteran

Auburn, Michigan

Went home to be with his Lord on early morning Thursday December 5, 2024 at Covenant HealthCare-Cooper in Saginaw, MI at the age of 78 years. Michael was born June 21, 1946 in Bay City, MI to the late Wesley A. and Leona (Evans) Collins. Michael has resided in this area all of his life. Michael had worked at Dow Chemical as a Journeyman Welder; he was also a master mechanic at Collins Sales and Service. Michael served in the U.S. Army in Germany. Michael loved the outdoors, whether it be riding his dirt bike, going on bicycle rides, fishing and camping. On August 16, 1975 Michael married Regina F. Kalinowski, she survives him. Also surviving Michael are his two daugh-

ters; Lisa Collins of Diamondale, MI and Michelle (David) Bleeke of Decatur, IN.

Funeral and committal services will be held 12:00 p.m. Friday December 13, 2024 at the Cunningham/Taylor Funeral Home, Auburn, MI. Rev. Edward Lawrence will officiate. Burial will follow in Pine Grove Cemetery in Auburn. Friends may call at the Cunningham/Taylor Funeral Home, 312 W. Midland Rd. Auburn, MI on Friday from 11:00 a.m. until time of services. Those planning an expression of sympathy are asked to consider Rescue Mission of Bay City, First Baptist Church of Auburn or the Amazing Grace Animal Rescue, Saginaw or the donor's favorite charity.



# ***Roofing Project***

***PRAISE THE LORD!***

*The roof is finished and paid off!*

## ***Finances***

***through December 22, 2024***

***We are currently in the BLACK!***

***\$32,515.89***

## ***Missionaries' Special Offering***

***as of December 22, 2024***

***(with more to come on the 29th)***

***\$2,426.00***

***THANK YOU TO ALL WHO GAVE!***

***to each of the above.***

***We could not have made our goals  
without your help!***



# Great Job Quilters!

I'm sure the ones who get these quilts will really enjoy them!

