

**Sonoma Valley Interfaith**  
**Wednesday, January 28, 2026 / 12 pm–1 pm**  
<https://www.sonomavalleyinterfaithma.org>

**Present:** Claire Ginesi, Cindy Beck, Jason Mayer, Dave Gould, Donna Thomas, Curran Reichert, Dave Gould, Manette Fairmont.

**12:00 pm**

**Welcome/Opening Blessing** - Deacon Dave reads a paragraph from Victor Frankl's "Man's Search for Meaning"

**Check in with the group:**

- Donna reported that the Church of Scientology continues to offer self improvement classes open to the community focusing on supporting reactions to current events.
- Claire reported that Trinity Episcopal will be continue their free movie series with The Mortal Storm on Wednesday, February 11th at 6pm. Free snacks. Cindy wants to remind you to respond to her email regarding an interfaith service soon "Lament in a Time of Fear" to address the fears and thoughts of current events and how community members can find peace. It would be nice to be a continuance of the Community Thanksgiving Service. Cindy will reach out to Nicole to see if they can coordinate the use of St Andrew as a location. Cindy and Rabbi Steve are co teaching a class based on the book "The Bible With and Without Jesus". All are welcome and more information will be shared soon.
- Dave reports that it is Catholic Schools Week as well as St Francis' 80 year anniversary. Special events on campus are ongoing. They are also reconstructing the Men's Conference which hasn't been done since Covid hit.
- Jason reports that Sonoma Collective had a successful Christmas pageant with over 20 students participating. They are on to a new year and a new practice teaching about solitude.
- Curran reports the First Congregational Church is continuing talks with MidPen Housing. The property will be sold to them to build approximately 80 affordable housing units. The chapel and redwood grove will remain in use by FCC. This will be several years of planning before building begins. She would like to recommend the following books: "Inspired" by Rachel Held Evans, and "Healthy Congregations: A Systems Approach" by Peter Steinke (being used at their board retreat). Everyone is invited to "Seven Pauses: getting grounded, staying there longer, and helping others find the way home" a free event in Burlingame Hall on Saturday, February 7th from 11am-1pm. To

read more and to RSVP visit [HERE](#). Curran would also like to suggest a “Peace in the Valley” community interfaith concert. We have several singers and musicians amongst this group who can participate and others can do readings throughout. She would like it to be in May on a Saturday afternoon/evening maybe 4-6pm. More information to come but please reach out to Curran if you can help.

-Manette reports that their church renovation is underway and will be ongoing. The church building on Second Street East is about 110 years old. Spring classes are being planned and will be shared later.

**Today’s guest: Patricia Cullinan, President of the Sonoma Valley Historical Society**  
Sonoma Valley Historical Society was established in January of 1937 by a small group of citizens to collect, share, and preserve the history of the Valley of the Moon. The Society, a non-profit organization, has operated continuously ever since that time. Since 1979, they have been sharing the Sonoma Valley story at our museum in Depot Park.

The history of churches in Sonoma: Please see the notes attached in the email.

The revitalized Sonoma Valley History Museum opens in June 2026. See their newsletter [HERE](#) for upcoming events. Visit their website [HERE](#).

**Closing:** Jason closes with a blessing.

**Next meeting: February 25th, 12pm. Guest: Care Partners Bereavement Program**

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**KSVY - Tuesday mornings. Please mark your date on your calendar.** If you are unsure of your assigned date please check the website [HERE](#), the schedule is set through June 9th. Please have the courtesy to check your date and make arrangement to trade with someone if you are not available. And remember that if you don’t show up then Pat is left hanging on the air. The studio is located at 680 W. Napa Street Sonoma. The call in number is [707-933-9133](tel:707-933-9133). The information is on their website [www.ksvy.org](http://www.ksvy.org)

**KSVY - Thursday afternoons.** Please consider joining our 3pm Thursday afternoon show for any amount of time you can participate. Our regular and rotating guests discuss various topics. For more information please reach out to Rabbi Steve.

February 10	Steve Finley	rabbisteve.shirshalom@gmail.com
February 17	Jason Mayer	jason.mayer@sonomacollective.com
February 24	St Andrew TBD	nicoletrotter@comcast.net
March 3	Dave Gould	dgould837@gmail.com
March 10	Pam Nadeau	singingdogs@vom.com
March 17	Manette Fairmont	manetteart@aol.com
March 24	Peadar Dalton	peadaradalton@comcast.net
March 31	Steve Finley	rabbisteve.shirshalom@gmail.com

## Patricia's Notes:

### Churches

As you probably know the mission was the first Christian church in Sonoma. By 1829 there was a large church (the size of Mission San Miguel 25 x 105 ) built by Father Fortuni on the eastern end of what is now the one story part of the Mission complex. That building had a tile roof and the Russians from Fort Ross provided some of the religious artifacts to use in the church

The materials of that church were used to build other local buildings after secularization of the missions by the Mexican government here in Sonoma by General Vallejo. At that point the missions became essentially parish churches.

Frustrated with the actions of Vallejo's majordomo Antonio Ortega and General Vallejo's brother Salvador Vallejo the priest Father Quijas left the Sonoma mission for San Rafael Arcangel and came periodically to Sonoma to tend the parishioners. Debauchery and insolence

As the city of Sonoma was being laid out in 1835 Quijas did request a plot of land for a public and Catholic that is the current Catholic cemetery

The current chapel was built in 1840-41 by General Vallejo supposedly at his wife Benica's behest to provide a place of worship here in Sonoma since the old church was in ruin having its building materials stripped for the construction of other buildings

Following the acknowledgement of the church owning the mission properties by Abram Lincoln Archbishop Alemany sold the mission to Solomon Schocken

The local Parish church was St. Francis Solano and although located on the current site the current church is the 3<sup>rd</sup> built there. The previous 2 were made of wood and burnt.

The Methodist's in town ordered a kit church about 1850 to be sent to Sonoma and built what is now the Baptist Church on 1<sup>ST</sup> St East The first Public School was in one of their buildings

The extra wood from the church was used to build the Toscano Hotel.

As education was an important part of religion, so church members of various churches brought education to the Sonoma community. These were private schools.

1852 St. Mary's Hall Episcopalian school begun by Dr. Ver Mehr  
1852 in Vallejo's Casa Grande home on Sonoma Plaza.

1858 Cumberland Presbyterian Literary College was established in the Salvador Vallejo Adobe on the corner of West Spain and First St West and in 1864 they built a new school on the corner of

MacArthur St and Broadway. It would close when UC Berkeley was founded.

Congregational church Sonoma was founded in 1871

The church started with the establishment of a Sunday School by a few pioneer settler families, including the Dunns and the Coopers.

The first church building was on Broadway Avenue, where the Shell Station now stands.

Early members of our congregation were involved with the founding of the first public Library in Sonoma as well as the founding of the Sierra Club. Carrie Burlingame, for whom our social hall is named, was an early member of the Sierra Club. In fact, she wrote a book of poetry about the Sierras and the proceeds were used to help establish the Sierra Club. Ms. Burlingame was also a friend of Jack and Charmian London.

Our church building on Broadway also housed the Sonoma Vintners Association in the basement. Our current sanctuary on West Spain Street was the main floor of the original church. In 1960, the building was put on the back of a truck and moved to our current campus near the Vallejo Home State Park in order to get out of the commercial district and enjoy the natural setting.

“Good Will” is a Chapel Car that brought religious services via railroad from several denominations is located at 125 Orchard Ave since 1938