



DECEMBER 2025 **NEWSLETTER**

WHAT'S INSIDE:


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- Pacifica Institute and BAYCC Fundraising Through an Art Auction
- Turkish Schools Alumni Reunion


PAST EVENTS:


- Women's Social Night: Henna Night
- Interfaith Thanksgiving Dinner at LDS Church
- Risale-i Nur Reflection Workshop
- Halqa on *The Words* (Risale-i Nur Collection)

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THIS MONTH WITH BAYCC

This issue features two exciting upcoming events—our joint Art Auction Fundraiser with Pacifica Institute and the Turkish Schools Alumni Reunion. We also recap recent community programs, including the Women's Henna Night, the Interfaith Thanksgiving Dinner, the Risale-i Nur Reflection Workshop, and our ongoing Halqa on *The Words*.

ABOUT US

Founded in 2002 by volunteers from diverse professional backgrounds, BAYCC harnesses the power of interfaith dialogue, community engagement, and education to promote the well-being of the community and foster stronger connections.

Visit baycc.org to learn more.

UPCOMING EVENTS



ART AUCTION FUNDRAISER

We are delighted to invite you to our upcoming Art Auction Fundraiser, a youth-prepared celebration honoring the generosity, leadership, and volunteerism that sustain BAYCC's interfaith, intercultural, peace-building, and artistic initiatives throughout Northern California. The evening will feature both auctioned and fixed-price artwork, live music, appetizers, and a chance to connect with our community.

RSVP



DATE:

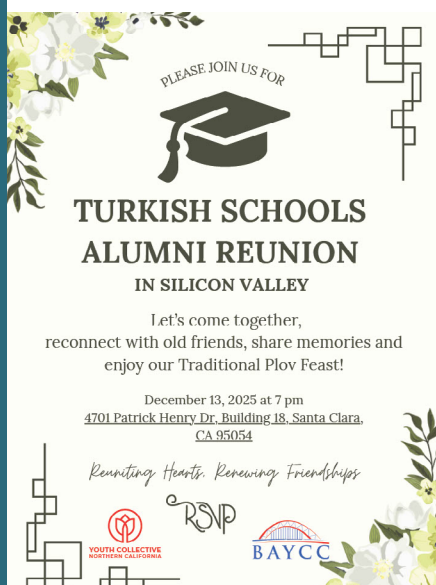
December 7,
2025

TIME:

5:00 PM

LOCATION:

BAYCC
Community
Center



TURKISH SCHOOLS ALUMNI REUNION

Join us for a warm get-together of Turkish Schools alumni living in Silicon Valley. We'll reconnect, strengthen friendships, and celebrate our shared memories and culture over a traditional Plov feast.

RSVP



DATE:

December 13,
2025

TIME:

7:00 PM

LOCATION:

BAYCC
Community
Center

PAST EVENTS

NOVEMBER 9,
2025



WOMEN'S SOCIAL NIGHT: HENNA NIGHT

Over the past weeks, the dedicated women volunteers at BAYCC organized a truly incredible Henna Night for our sisters. It was a beautiful and joy-filled evening — the atmosphere was warm, the traditional outfits were stunning, the music and dances were uplifting, and the food was absolutely delicious. Everyone left with smiles and heartfelt gratitude.

The evening also featured a wonderful spread of food and desserts. From authentic Turkmen Pilav to a variety of delicious Turkish dishes and homemade sweets, the sisters prepared an unforgettable feast that added even more warmth to the night.

Several sisters shared touching reflections. One mother said, “As a Muslim woman, I was grateful to show my daughter how joyful, meaningful, and fun a halal gathering can be.” This feedback alone captured the spirit of the night.

We were also blessed to welcome three women who are exploring or recently embraced Islam. They expressed how valuable it was to see firsthand how Muslims celebrate within the halal circle, with dignity, beauty, and warmth. This meant a lot to them.

The event drew positive attention community-wide. Sisters from the MCA women's volunteer group even visited BAYCC afterward to thank our volunteers and expressed interest in co-hosting similar programs together in the future — a wonderful sign of growing collaboration between our communities.

PAST EVENTS

The night included:

- Traditional henna
- Beautiful cultural attire
- Traditional music and halal-friendly dance
- A joyful environment rooted in sisterhood
- Strict Privacy Guidelines at every step



Because privacy was upheld with great care, we do not share event photos. Instead, any visuals posted publicly will be stock or general images, out of respect for the participants and our community's values.

It was a night to remember — joyful, meaningful, halal, delicious, and deeply appreciated by all who attended. May Allah reward every sister who prepared, volunteered, and participated.



INTERFAITH THANKSGIVING DINNER AT LDS CHURCH

BAYCC was honored to co-host this year's Interfaith Thanksgiving Dinner, "Feast of Friendship and Gratitude: Building Communities Together," alongside The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, SiVIC, and Pacifica Institute. Held at the LDS Church in Los Altos, the gathering welcomed 250 guests from more than 20 organizations, faith communities, civic groups, and families across the Bay Area.

**NOVEMBER
15, 2025**

PAST EVENTS

Volunteers prepared the space early in the day—setting up tables and décor, supporting A/V needs, carving the turkey, and contributing homemade dishes that added to the shared meal. As guests arrived, live piano music by Ipek Ozorpak created a warm and welcoming atmosphere.

The program opened with remarks from Paul Hepworth and Esma Sultan Altun, followed by reflections on interfaith cooperation and community building from Congressman Sam Liccardo, Santa Clara City Councilmember Karen Hardy, and Assistant Special Agent in Charge Scott J. Hellman. A highlight of the evening was the “12 Months By the Bay” presentation by Anita Siu and Fatih Cansizoglu, which shared stories of Jewish and Muslim families spending a year learning, traveling, and celebrating together—an inspiring example of friendship nurtured through shared experiences.

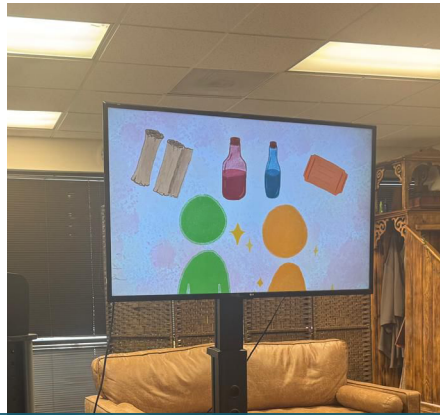


Three blessings over the Thanksgiving turkey were offered by Tina Teng-Henson, Jessica Blitchok, and Yusuf Ozgen before dinner was served, accompanied by piano music from Jackie Ricks. The night continued with reflections from Garth Pickett and Ibrahim Okuyucu, a musical performance by Joseph and Sarah Cloward, and closing words from Eric Bettinger and Rev. Pastor Dave Samelson.

Filled with gratitude, music, and meaningful conversations, the evening strengthened bonds across traditions and reminded everyone of the power of coming together. Guests left with a renewed sense of connection, hospitality, and shared purpose.

PAST EVENTS

NOVEMBER
16, 2025

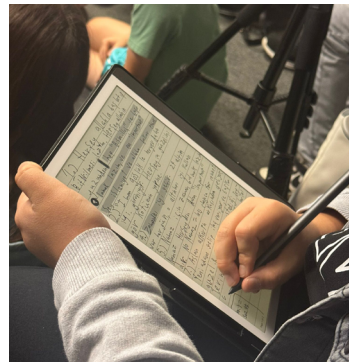


RISALE-I NUR REFLECTION WORKSHOP

We were delighted to host a vibrant and engaging workshop dedicated to exploring the first eight Words, or chapters, of the *Risale-i Nur* through creative, modern, and interactive methods. The goal of the program was to present these profound teachings in a way that speaks to the language, challenges, and rhythms of contemporary life—making timeless truths newly accessible and meaningful.

Each of the eight Words was brought to life through a different artistic or technical format, including theater, poetry, talk-show dialogue, AI-generated video, storybook narration, illustration, and more. This diversity allowed participants to connect with the material from fresh perspectives and rediscover familiar concepts in unexpected ways.

The workshop was presented in two sessions, first covering Words 1–4 and then Words 5–8. Volunteers arrived early to prepare the space, set up seating and displays, and organize event materials. After the main presentations, the program continued with a community raffle, followed by shared food and warm conversation.



We concluded with a small exhibition of posters designed for each Word, offering attendees a visual reflection on the themes explored throughout the day.

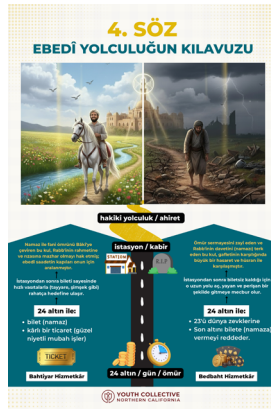
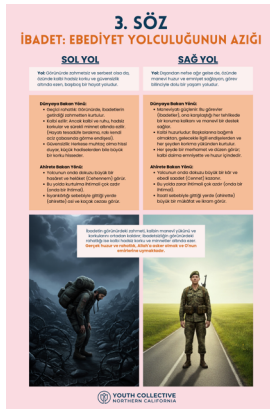
One of the most memorable aspects of the workshop was the enthusiasm across all age groups. Participants were attentive, curious, and fully

PAST EVENTS

engaged—and even the children followed along with excitement until the very end. Their energy brought a special sense of joy and vibrancy to the gathering.

Looking ahead, we plan to offer future programs with bilingual content in both Turkish and English, introducing new themes and formats as we continue to explore the stories of the *Risale-i Nur* through creative and interactive methods.

Poster Gallery:



PAST EVENTS

NOVEMBER
30, 2025



HALAQA ON THE WORDS

We are hosting a bi-weekly halaqa series with Dr. Ferhan Tunagur, exploring the Risale-i Nur Collection and focusing on the first eight Words from *Sözler (The Words)*.

Our series began on October 30 with the first halaqa, followed by the second session on November 14. Alhamdulillah, both gatherings had excellent participation and deep engagement, and together we completed the First and Second Words.

These sessions have been profoundly thought-provoking and spiritually enriching. Participants frequently share how much they benefit from Dr. Ferhan's insights, the reflective discussions, and the clarity these halaqas bring to foundational concepts of faith.

We also offer a delicious community dinner before the halaqa. Many attendees highlight the food, hospitality, and warm atmosphere as key parts of the experience—enhancing the sense of togetherness, brotherhood, and sisterhood.

We warmly invite you, your family, and your friends to join this ongoing bi-weekly series and continue growing together in understanding and spirituality, inshaAllah.

To read about these events in more detail:
VISIT [BAYCC.ORG/EVENTS](https://baycc.org/events)