



## Camarillo Church of Christ

515 Temple Ave.

Camarillo, CA 93012

[www.CamarilloChurchofChrist.com](http://www.CamarilloChurchofChrist.com)

**To:** The People of Camarillo and the Area  
**From:** L. Keith Whitney, Senior Minister of the church that meets at the corner of Lewis Road & Temple Ave.  
**Subject:** The Sharing of Our Building with **The Temple Ner Ami**

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Speaking for some Christians who meet together at 515 Temple Avenue, I am pleased to announce our decision to welcome the congregation of The Temple Ner Ami to share our building. As a Christian community, we recognize that others may disagree with our decision. Indeed, some within our own faith community expressed disagreement, as did some within the Jewish community. ***We believe these very concerns make it desirable for us to demonstrate to everyone that Jews and Christians can live together in mutual respect and sincere love.***

One of our purposes in this relationship is to highlight the distinctiveness of the Jewish and Christian traditions and confront the dangerous misunderstandings that have evolved in our two communities. Unfortunately, I believe that Christians and Jews fail to understand the beliefs and practices of the other. Shamefully, some Christians still hatefully refer to Jews as those who took the life of Jesus. Such ignorant, bigoted hatred is not Christian! Clearly Christian Scripture teaches that the death of Jesus is a result of *our sins*—whether Jew or Gentile! In fact, the earliest Christians were Palestinian Jews. Today, while our two groups of believers in Almighty God, the Father of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Creator of the entire universe, may disagree about the identity of Jesus, we can love and respect each other. Our messages diverge at some point, but our emphasis on loving God is commonly held. Our belief in the Hebrew Scriptures (what Christians often refer to as the Old Testament) is foundational to each of us. In other words, we hold much in common.

***On the other hand, The Temple Ner Ami has never asked us to compromise anything we believe or teach.*** They likely would lose respect for us if we were willing to do so. As Christians, we follow the admonition of the Apostle Peter who

told followers of Jesus to “show proper respect to all men.” Additionally, we are told to “always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give a reason for the hope that we have.” [See 1 Peter 2: 17 and 3: 15.] Since we believe in mutual respect, we will not seek to force our beliefs on others, including our Jewish friends. Since they too believe in mutual respect, they agree to respect our beliefs and practices. ***Likewise, we have not asked them to compromise what they teach or practice either!***

Jews and Christians can work together for justice and peace. Further, we believe that a relationship between Christians and Jews will not weaken the work or practice of either group. Indeed, religions that teach mutual respect and love for others benefit all participating members and the peoples they impact.

In brief, the doctrine we preach and teach has not changed. As members of the Camarillo Church of Christ, our faith is still informed by the Bible. Our belief in Jesus Christ as Immanuel—God is with us, the Incarnate One, Lord and Savior—has not changed. We still believe in the Resurrected Christ and that he is the door through whom all people come into God’s eternal salvation. We simply do not see that as inconsistent with ongoing love and respect for others, especially people of faith, who love and worship the same God we do.

***As a church reborn itself, we pray for other ways to serve others to the glory of God our Father! To heal the wounds of the past, to enable people of faith to understand each other, to promote a climate of peace and mutual respect while affirming our differences—this is God’s work!***

***This work excites us.***