

A Statement of Support for Dr. Amy-Jill Levine

The Association of Partners in Christian Education (APCE) celebrates the election of Dr. Amy-Jill Levine as president of the Catholic Biblical Association of America and stands in solidarity with her in the face of the antisemitic rhetoric and personal attacks that have followed her election.

For APCE, this is personal.

Dr. Levine has long been a teacher, colleague, and friend of our community. She has served as a keynote speaker and workshop leader at APCE Annual Events, and countless pastors, educators, church professionals, and volunteers have been shaped by her books, lectures, biblical scholarship, and teaching. We know firsthand the wisdom, humor, generosity, and intellectual rigor Amy brings to her work, as well as the deep respect with which she engages Christian faith and Scripture.

As followers of Jesus, we cannot forget something fundamental to our faith: Jesus was Jewish.

We cannot fully understand his life, his teaching, his parables, or the world in which he proclaimed the love of God and neighbor without understanding the Jewish world in which he lived and taught.

For decades, Amy-Jill Levine, herself a faithful Jewish scholar, has generously helped Christians do exactly that. She has invited us to encounter Jesus within his Jewish context, to recognize ways Christian interpretations of Scripture have sometimes perpetuated harmful understandings of Judaism, and to read familiar biblical texts with greater historical understanding, humility, and care. In doing so, she has helped those of us who teach, preach, lead, and serve in the church become more thoughtful readers of Scripture and more faithful followers of Jesus.

That is why the antisemitism directed toward Amy following her election is especially painful.

Questions or theological disagreement about Dr. Levine's appointment are not themselves antisemitic; attacks upon her because she is Jewish are. There is a profound contradiction in invoking the name of Jesus—a Jewish teacher who drew upon his own Jewish tradition in calling us to love God and love our neighbors—while using language that demeans, excludes, or attacks another person because she is Jewish. The Christian faith we seek to teach and embody leaves no room for antisemitism. Theological disagreement can never become permission to diminish the dignity, faith, or humanity of another person.

APCE joins the many voices standing with Dr. Levine. We celebrate this recognition of her extraordinary scholarship and leadership, condemn the antisemitism directed toward her and Jewish communities everywhere, and recommit ourselves to teaching and living our faith in ways that honor Christianity's Jewish roots, resist antisemitism, foster understanding across religious traditions, and bear witness to the love of God and neighbor.

Amy has spent much of her life helping Christians understand our Scriptures and Jesus more faithfully. We are grateful for what she has taught us, for the friendship she has shared with APCE, and for the ways she continues to challenge all of us who teach, lead, and serve the church to become more faithful followers of Jesus.

Dr. Levine, APCE celebrates with you, stands beside you, and gives thanks for you.