

Call for Submissions to the October 2023 Issue of *Anabaptist Witness*

New Anabaptist Communities

Submission Deadline: July 1, 2023

Starting new communities of worship and witness has been a major aim of mission work throughout the centuries. For many Anabaptists and Mennonites, categories such as church planting, church growth, and church multiplication remain significant for organizing mission efforts. Proponents of such an approach to mission often highlight Jesus's calling of his disciples and Paul's missionary activities as portrayed in the Book of Acts. Anabaptist history, too, offers abundant examples of bold attempts to form new congregations—even in the face of persecution.

In the past century, however, various Anabaptists and Mennonites have raised questions about whether starting new communities ought to be the priority, or even a priority, in mission. One strand of questioning came from missionaries who had become wary of contributing to denominational competition over converts. Wouldn't it be better, these missionaries asked, to focus on helping other Christians to become faithful followers of Jesus? Mission strategies that prioritized partnerships emerged from this and related questions.

Another strand of questioning came from those Anabaptists and Mennonites who view service, justice, and peace as the most important features of Christian mission. This perspective has fostered a theory and practice of mission in which the intent to create new Anabaptist communities is at best seen as a byproduct of mission and at worst a continuation of the legacy of colonial mission patterns. These reflections raise the question as to whether starting new Anabaptist communities should be a goal of mission at all.

Submissions on these and other topics connected to the theme of "New Anabaptist Communities" are welcomed for the October 2023 issue of *Anabaptist Witness*. All submissions should relate to the journal's overall focus on Anabaptist and Mennonite churches in mission. Additional topics to investigate might include the possibility of integrating the approaches outlined above; the growth of Anabaptist communities in the global South; South-to-South church planting; new immigrant communities in North America and Europe; other Anabaptist-related new community movements in the global North, such as the New Monastic Movement, Urban Expression, and Mennonite Mission Network's "planting peace churches" project. Historical, biblical, and theological approaches are welcome.

Anabaptist Witness publishes academic essays as well as short reflection pieces and testimonies. We are also open to publishing sermons, poetry, interviews, and visual art. All selected submissions go through a peer review process.

Guidelines and deadline:

Submissions on this topic are welcome through July 1, 2023. Please familiarize yourself with our editorial process and technical requirements at <http://www.anabaptistwitness.org/guidelines/>.

If you would like feedback on a submission idea, please contact editor Jamie Pitts (jpitts@ambs.edu) by June 1.

If you are interested in reviewing a book or film for *Anabaptist Witness*, please contact the editor. Review suggestions are welcome.

Anabaptist Witness is a publication of Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Mennonite Central Committee, Mennonite Church Canada, and Mennonite Mission Network.