

Call for Papers

**Global Mennonites and
the Justice System Since 1525:
Martyrs, Perpetrators, Enforcers, and
Advocates**

October 3–4, 2025

Hosted by the Centre for Transnational Mennonite Studies
at The University of Winnipeg

From their persecution in the sixteenth century to the diverse realities of the present, Anabaptists have been subject to and participated in systems of discipline, punishment, and the administration of justice. Mennonites have carried and consecrated memories of martyrdom and incarceration—from the Reformation to the Gulag—as core elements of group identity. They have also resisted participation in state institutions, and this has led to accusations that they seek to “live outside the laws” of host societies, a critique amplified in moments when Mennonites have appeared as perpetrators of crime. At other moments in their 500-year history, Mennonites have turned to the state to discipline their own recalcitrant members and to police the actions of neighbours. Gradually, they have also come to serve in roles throughout the justice system including in policing, the courts, and corrections. Simultaneously, Mennonites have become advocates for reforming aspects of the justice system that reflect differential privilege and systemic racism.

This conference invites submissions for papers that consider the many entanglements of Mennonites and the justice system—as martyrs, perpetrators, enforcers, and advocates. We welcome proposals that extend the stories of Mennonites and the justice system to a variety of contexts—early modern, imperial, postcolonial—and approach these subjects from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds.

Please submit your proposal and a short CV to the Chair in Mennonite Studies by email to b.nobbs-thiessen@uwinnipeg.ca by March 1, 2025. Limited funds are available to support travel and accommodation for invited presenters.

**For more information and to register to attend visit
ctms.uwinnipeg.ca/events/mennonites-justice**