

Mount Carmel Norwegian Christian Heritage Tour

August 15-30, 2025

A Message From the tour hosts, Tim and Donadee Peterson

Mount Carmel has a long history of sponsoring trips, including a trip to Norway about 20 years ago. We believe that these trips provide a wonderful opportunity for Christian fellowship and renewal of our faith, as well as having the opportunity to learn about the beauty of God's Creation and God's People.

We have visited Norway and lived in Norway several times. Tim was the interim pastor of the American Lutheran Congregation in Oslo for 7 months, right before we came to Mount Carmel. Tim also had several opportunities to work in Norway as a software developer. And he was the interim pastor of the Norwegian Lutheran Memorial Church in Minneapolis for 16 months, where he had the privilege of preaching in the Norwegian language. Both of us had ancestors that came from Norway and we have been able to visit relatives that still live in Norway.

We are thankful to our ancestors who brought their Christian faith with them to the United States and Canada. As Christians we are members of the Body of Christ which stretches around the world and throughout history. There is a tremendous diversity among Christians who live in a variety of cultures with a variety of languages. As Norwegian-American Christians, our faith has been influenced by the history of Christianity in Norway – one little piece of that tremendous diversity. We are going to be exploring the connection that we have with the Norwegian Christian heritage.

In many ways this tour will be like a normal tourist trip to Norway. We will visit some historic cities – Oslo, Fredrikstad, Bergen, and Trondheim. We will see the majestic Norwegian fjords. We will go to famous parks, museums, and historical landmarks. We will learn about Norwegian history and culture.

But this will also be a different kind of tour. We will be visiting a variety of churches. We will be worshiping with Norwegian Christians; visiting the home of Hans Nielsen Hauge, the great lay Norwegian evangelist; and learning about the history of Christianity in Norway – how Norway became a Christian nation one thousand years ago and how the Norwegian revivals of 200 years ago had a tremendous impact on Norwegian life and the life of the Norwegians that came to the United States.

Mount Carmel was founded by Swedish and Norwegian pastors that were greatly influenced by the 19th century Scandinavian revivals. Some of our cabins have been named for the leaders of those revivals. Cabin 30, for example, the first of the new cabins built on the north ridge, is named for Hans Nielsen Hauge. In many ways Mount Carmel's mission is a continuation of the revivals that began with Hauge's preaching in Norway. And, whether you have any Norwegian heritage, it is always good to celebrate the way the Christian faith has been passed down through the generations.

We have worked out a tentative schedule for a trip. We are hoping to have the details more definite by this June, along with a cost estimate. At each of our Family Camps and other events in 2024 we will schedule a time to talk to people who are interested in this trip. And then in August of 2025 we'll be ready to go! We hope that you will consider joining us.

In planning this trip we are working with a tour company called Nor-Am Tours, as well as with friends we have from the American Lutheran Congregation in Oslo and other friends we have in Norway.

Tentative Schedule for the Mount Carmel Norwegian Christian Heritage Tour

Note: None of this is finalized. There may be significant changes from what is described here. We are hoping to have a more definite proposal ready by June 1, 2024. But changes can still be made – even after the tour has started, as unexpected events occur.

Friday, August 15, 2025

We are expecting that most of our group will be flying together from Minneapolis. It would be possible for you to fly to Oslo from other cities or to go earlier and meet us in Oslo.

12:00 Noon – We are planning to have our first gathering at the Norwegian Lutheran Memorial Church in south Minneapolis. This is the only American congregation that is still using the Norwegian language. We will tour the building and meet with members of the congregation. We will also be touring Norway House, the Norwegian cultural and business center that is located next to the church.

7:25 PM – Departure from Minneapolis Airport. We are hoping to fly Icelandair to Oslo, stopping in Iceland's main airport near the capital of Reykjavik. This is the most direct route from Minneapolis to Oslo and Icelandair often has very competitive prices.

Saturday, August 16

It's a 6-hour flight to Reykjavik. On the Icelandair schedule that's now in effect, we would have a short one hour fifteen-minute layover in Reykjavik, moving quickly to the plane that will take us to Oslo. The second flight is only 2 hours and 45 minutes, so we would arrive in Oslo around 12:30 PM. After going through customs and taking the train from the airport, we would be arriving at our hotel in downtown Oslo in the mid-afternoon. We'll be tired but would have a chance for a little walking around the city before our dinner.

We'll be staying at the same hotel in Oslo for 5 nights.

Sunday, August 17

10AM – Visit to the Frogner Church

11AM – Attend worship at the American Lutheran Congregation, followed by a fellowship time with the people of the church.



Afternoon – Visit Frogner Park, which is the site of the Vigeland Sculpture Park.



Monday, August 18

Morning – Visit the Norwegian Folk Museum – This is a large outdoor museum that has buildings from many different parts of Norway and many different time periods.



Afternoon – Visit the Kon-Tiki Museum and/or the Fram Museum or other museums – There are many museums in Oslo. It is not possible to visit all of them, but we will provide you with a list of all the options.

Tuesday, August 19

On this day we will take a tour bus to the city of Fredrikstad.

Morning – Visit the museum in the house where Hans Nielsen Hauge was born. We will have a presentation on the importance of Hans Nielsen Hauge in starting the Norwegian Revival, and also his importance in developing Norway's economy.



Afternoon – Visit Old Fredrikstad, a medieval city surrounded by a moat.



Wednesday, August 20

Morning – Walking tour of downtown Oslo

Noon – Attend worship at the Oslo Cathedral (Domkirken) – The main church in Oslo has a short worship service at noon on Wednesdays, followed by a light luncheon in the church basement, which we will attend.



Afternoon – Hike in the woods on Frognerstøvet – Norwegians love hiking in the woods. We are hoping to arrange a hike together with members of the American Lutheran Congregation. We will have options for those who want a longer walk or a shorter walk. Frognerstøvet is on a hill overlooking Oslo and has a beautiful coffee shop/restaurant.



Thursday, August 21

We take the train going across southern Norway from east to west, from Oslo to Bergen. Enjoy the spectacular view as the train travels through the Hallingdal valley, across the mountain and the Hardanger plateau, and down alongside the fjord towards Bergen.



Friday, August 22

We take a tour of the city of Bergen with a local guide. The tour will end at Fløibanen, the funicular (cable railway) that goes to the top of Mount Fløyen.



Saturday, August 23

We leave Bergen, traveling by bus to Voss and then by train to Myrdal. At Myrdal we get on the Flåm train (Flåmbana), a very popular train ride down the mountain to Flåm.



At Flåm our bus meets us (with our luggage) and we drive to the Borgund Stave Church (stavkirke). Old Norwegian wooden churches have a unique architecture, where the church is built around wooden pillars that are called staves. At one time Norway is thought to have had a thousand stave churches. Now there are 23 left and the one at Borgund is one of the most famous ones. There is an exact replica of the Borgund Church in the Black Hills in Rapid City, South Dakota.



After our visit to the church we drive on to Balestrand, where we will stay at the historic 4-star Kviknes Hotel.



Sunday, August 24

Today we will drive alongside fjords, across mountains, through tunnels and by glaciers, before we end up in Geiranger and the 4-star Hotel Union. We will stay there for two nights and enjoy their dinner buffet both nights. This is the hotel where Norway's Princess Märtha Louise will be married to Shaman Durek (from the USA) in September 2024.



Monday, August 25

After breakfast, we will go on a fjord cruise on the famous Geirangerfjord. This is one of two fjords in Norway on the UN World Heritage List. After the cruise, you are free to walk around in Geiranger with its small shops and cozy restaurants. It is also a very nice area for hiking, or you can rent a kayak and paddle the famous fjord!



Tuesday, August 26

We continue our tour through “Fjord Country” and will drive on the famous Trollstigen (a mountain pass that twists through eleven hairpin bends up the steep mountain sides in Romsdalen valley).



In the evening we are planning a meeting with the Rennebu Normisjon community – one of the local missionary society groups.

We will stay overnight in Oppdal.

Wednesday, August 27

We drive to Trondheim. We will have a tour of Trondheim and visit Norway's National Cathedral, Nidaros. We will be staying two nights in Trondheim.



Thursday, August 28

We take a bus tour to Stiklestad, the place where Saint Olaf was killed. The Stiklestad Church is a stone church built in 1180. We will visit the Stiklestad National Cultural Center.



In the evening we will go back to Trondheim for our farewell dinner.

Friday, August 29

We take our flight home to the United States.

POSSIBLE EXTENSION IN ICELAND

But, if there's enough interest, we will plan to stay 3 nights in Iceland, for those who would like a little extra.

Friday, August 29

Arrive in Iceland. Walking tour of downtown Reykjavik.

Saturday, August 30

We take the "Golden Circle Tour", bringing us to some of Iceland's most famous places – the Thingvellir National Park, Geysir geothermal area, and Gullfoss waterfall.



Sunday, August 31

Attend worship at the Reykjavik Cathedral – a towering church that dominates the Reykjavik skyline.



In the afternoon we will take a trip to the Blue Lagoon, a famous hot spring spa.



In the evening we will have our second farewell dinner.

Monday, September 1

Fly back to the United States