

Mount Carmel Norwegian Christian Heritage Tour

August 14-28, 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 many 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.

Thursday, August 14, 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 in worship every Sunday. 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. Flight to Trondheim, Norway.

Friday, August 15, 2025

Arrival in Trondheim. Depending on our arrival time, we may have the chance to have a walk around the city.

Saturday, August 16

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 are hoping to attend a contemporary Norwegian worship service at Salem Norkirken in Trondheim.

Sunday, August 17

We will attend Sunday morning worship at Norway's National Cathedral, Nidaros.



In the afternoon we will visit the Thampspaviljongen in Orkanger. This was the Norwegian pavilion for the 1893 World Fair in Chicago. It was then moved to a tourist site called Little Norway in Horicon, Wisconsin. When Little Norway was closed, the building was moved to Orkanger. It is designed to look like a Norwegian stave church.



We will then visit the Rennebu Church and go to a prayer house (bedehus) for a meal together with local members of the Mission Society (Normisjon).

That evening we will stay at a Mission Society retreat center called Mjuklia.

Monday, August 18

On Monday we will drive to the western coast of Norway and start our tour through “Fjord Country.” This will include a drive on Trollstigen, a road that twists through eleven hairpin bends as it rises from the Romsdalen Valley to a mountain pass.



From Trollstigen we will continue on to the town of Geiranger. A dizzying view of steep mountainsides, towering waterfalls, deep fjords and lush valleys makes this stretch of road one of Norway's most dramatic and often-visited attractions. We will stay at the 4-star Union Hotel in Geiranger for two nights. This is the hotel where Norway’s Princess Märtha Louise will be married to Shaman Durek (from the USA) in September 2024.



Tuesday, August 19

After breakfast, we will go on a fjord cruise on the famous Geirangerfjord. This is one of two fjords in Norway that is on the UN World Heritage List. The rest of the day can be spent in a variety of ways: walking around in Geiranger with its small shops and cozy restaurants, hiking in the mountains, or even renting a kayak to paddle in the fjord!



Wednesday, August 20

We will continue our drive alongside fjords, across mountains, through tunnels and by glaciers. In the evening we will arrive in Balestrand, a town on the Sognefjord, Norway's longest and deepest fjord. We will stay at the historic 4-star Kviknes Hotel in Balestrand.



Thursday, August 21

We will leave Balestrand and 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.



We will then drive to Flåm where we will take the Flåm train (Flåmbana) for a trip up the side of the mountain to Myrdal. The Flåm train is one of the most popular tourist attractions in Norway. On the way the train stops at a popular waterfall, Kjosfossen.



From Myrdal we travel on to Bergen, where we will stay two nights.

Friday, August 22

We will 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 will take the train that goes across Norway from west to east, from Bergen to Oslo. We will enjoy the spectacular view as the train travels along the fjord, climbs the mountain to the Hardanger plateau, and then comes down on the other side of the mountain traveling through the Hallingdal valley.



Sunday, August 24

10AM – We hope to arrange a visit to see Frogner Church.

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



Afternoon – We will visit Frogner Park, which is the site of the Vigeland Sculpture Park.



Monday, August 25

Morning – We will 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 – We will hike in the woods on Frognerseteren. 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. Frognerseteren is on a hill overlooking Oslo and has a beautiful coffee shop/restaurant.



Tuesday, August 26

We will take a tour bus to the city of Fredrikstad.

In the morning we will 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.



In the afternoon we will visit Old Fredrikstad, a medieval city surrounded by a moat.



Wednesday, August 27

In the morning we will have a guided tour of downtown Oslo.

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



The afternoon will be flexible. Spend some time shopping. Visit one or more museums. Take a ferry across the Oslo harbor to an island called Hovedøye which has the ruins of an ancient monastery.

In the evening we will have a farewell banquet.

Thursday, August 28

We will 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.

Thursday, August 28

Arrive in Iceland. Walking tour of downtown Reykjavik.

Friday, August 29

We will 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.



Saturday, August 30

The schedule is to be determined, but we expect to have some time at the Blue Lagoon, a famous spa fed by hot geothermal water.



In the evening we will have a second farewell dinner.

Sunday, August 31

Hopefully we will have time to attend worship at the Reykjavik Cathedral – a towering church that dominates the Reykjavik skyline, before we go to the airport for our trip home.

