

Lynne & Steve Funck  
Iceland, Faroes, Norway,  
September 15 to October 5, 2023

Greetings from Days Dream, Reykjavik, Iceland!  
(12:30 p.m. Baltimore)

4:30 p.m.

And so our adventure begins!

Yesterday (9/15) we packed, then waited and waited for the taxi which never came. After a couple of more calls, a taxi showed up but the card reader didn't work in the cab, so Steve went back into the house to get some cash. Then we went to Baltimore Washington International Airport.

Even though we were an hour later than I expected, we had no problems with checking in, getting through security. Finding a place to get food was a problem - there are only an Auntie Ann's Pretzels, a Smoothie place, a market (pre-wrapped sandwiches), Starbucks, and 2 bars to get food. I got the sandwiches and we ate them.

The plane (Icelandic Air) was mostly full. I was in seat 5B and Steve was in 18B - not sure why we weren't seated together. My seat was right behind first class and it had extra leg room. So I asked the stewardess if Steve could move into the empty seat across the aisle. Since you have to pay extra for the extra leg room (which I don't think I did), she had to get permission from her superior for him to move. He did move up.

We had an okay flight, a couple of times of mild turbulence, only free beverages served. We arrived in rain at Reykjavik at 5:35 a.m. (1:35 a.m. Baltimore time) with no sleep. We've now been awake for over 29 hours! We can understand how our daughter Stephanie can work 24 hour shifts at Reagan Airport in Washington D.C., though it's not easy!

We had to walk down the stairs in the rain and walk to the terminal from the plane. We went through Passport Control - Iceland is the gate to Europe so we had to tell how long we will be in Europe (3 weeks). We got some pancakes with bacon (they didn't have the berry syrup which we had the last time) for breakfast. We claimed his checked suitcase (the handle

wouldn't lie flat so it didn't qualify as carry-on), then found the car rental place.

We have a Toyota Yaris, a hybrid. We walked through the rain to find it, then started driving. A couple of rules in Iceland: Don't speed! On roundabouts the vehicle on the inside (closest to the inner circle) has the right of way over the car on the outside lane which is challenging to allow since we're used to the outside lane going out of the roundabout.

He drove to Thingvellir National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. During the Old Commonwealth era (930-1262) the Law Council was responsible for law making and resolution of legal disputes. Laws were recited from memory every year to the assembly meeting here. It functioned as a court of law until 1798. Many crucial events in Iceland's history took place here, such as the adoption of Christianity around 1000 AD and the foundation of the modern Icelandic Republic in 1944.

Almannagja is a gorge that defines the North American tectonic plate. A rift valley is here. The rift widens about 2-3 mm per year. The junction of the plates is more clearly visible here than anywhere else in the world. The two plates are constantly diverging, causing fissures and gullies throughout the zone. We climbed up and walked next to the gorge to Oxarafoss (a foss is a waterfall in the Icelandic language). The waterfall falls over the edge of the cliff into the rift valley. It was very pretty.

We continued driving in the park to Lake Thingvallavatn, Iceland's largest lake and a host to a unique ecosystem. Brown trout and four endemic varieties of Arctic char live here. We saw swans swimming on the lake. We climbed up the cliff to look down on the lake. There was an excellent display at the Visitors Center at the top.

From there we drove to Geysir where we ate lunch (lamb sandwich for me, fish and chips for him). We walked across the street to the geyser field. We saw Strokkur erupt - it's not as wonderful as Old Faithful in Yellowstone but it is fairly regular in erupting.

We drove on to Gullfoss, which reminded me of a small Niagara Falls. It however is actually 2 waterfalls, with an upper step of about 45' and a lower

one of about 60'. We could not see the bottom of the gorge into which it falls. It is an impressive waterfall.

We then turned back to Reykjavik and found Days Dream, a self service hotel. We needed a code to get into the building and a different code to get into our room. We are on the second floor. He had to find a place to park along the street. We are about a block from the harbor so we will walk there soon to get some supper - it's a bit like Fells Point in Baltimore.

Now 9 p.m. We have been awake for 31 hours, except I napped for maybe 10 minutes in the car, Steve napped for less than a half hour before supper.

We just came back from supper. We walked around the area, looking for a restaurant. I chose to have Icelandic tapas. The restaurant was very busy, maybe 120 or more being served. First we received 4 half slices of bread with 2 toppings - I think one was made with olives, Steve thought the other was a cheese mixture. We ordered bacon wrapped scallops with dates, and also lamb with a sauce, both served on skewers, all very good. It finally stopped raining - it was misting a bit when we went out, didn't notice any moisture when we came back.

It has rained all day until now, fortunately Steve waterproofed our coats before we came. It's about 9 degrees Celsius, 53 Fahrenheit.

Sorry, no photos yet - I guess the wifi isn't strong enough to send them from my phone to the laptop.

Have a good Lord's Day! God bless you.  
Lynne and Steve

Selfoss 9/17b

Greetings from Bella Apartments and Rooms in Selfoss!

Oh, the area around the airport looked so bleak and barren. Later there was some green in the fields. We walked over 5 miles yesterday, only 2 today.

We slept fairly well last night. We set the alarm so we could get up and packed. Shock: the sun was out and there was a beautiful blue sky!

At 9:30 we were at Flyover Iceland. We shared a small breakfast at their cafeteria while we waited for our show. There were 9 of us (seats 40). We sat in seats like on a Ferris wheel with our feet dangling. The seats moved forward, sideways (like you were swooping like a bird) over the screen - at times I wanted to pull my feet up so I didn't scrape my feet on a rocky mountain or an iceberg or a boat or the water, etc. - it was really a realistic movie and my stomach felt unsettled by the time it was over. When we "went through" a cloud, we could feel the mist! It was really excellent!

We then drove to Hallgrims Kirkja, the church of Hallgrimur. It is both a national monument, dedicated to the most renowned sacred poet of Iceland, Hallgrimur Petursson, and a midtown parish church with a vibrant parochial life. It is the largest church in Iceland and towers over the center of Reykjavik. It also houses the largest organ in the country. The church with its wings which represent the rocks, mountains, and glaciers of Iceland's landscape, is part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Iceland. The inside is stark, all grey, no decorations or colors of any sort.

We were given a folder which explained the service, translating the Bible readings and telling what was going on, in English. I recognized one hymn tune. Everything was in the Icelandic language, so we couldn't understand what the sermon was about. Afterwards there was coffee and cookies and baked goods.



We drove around the countryside. There was a colorful rainbow next to us for a while. We found the parking lot for Borufoss. There were several waterfalls high on the mountain. I walked down toward a stream which was going over rocks. Then Steve walked further to the left and could see the waterfall which was beautiful. We got back in the car and within 2 minutes it was pouring! It rained most of the afternoon, sometimes lightly, sometimes heavy rain. We drove north and east, then turned around and headed for Selfoss, founded 100 years ago. Shock: there is no waterfall in Selfoss even though waterfall is in the name! There is a Selfoss in northern Iceland but this is southern Iceland. After a while the rain stopped and there was sun and blue sky again. We found this place.

We rested for a while. Then we drove to the reconstructed buildings in Selfoss (brought from different locations in Iceland) which are now shops and restaurants. They are making a center for the city. We ate in the Food Hall, sharing a ribeye steak with small potatoes - delicious! Now we're back in our room. This is a nicer room than last night's. Steve thinks he lost his medicines on the plane, thinking they fell out when he put his hearing aids in.

More driving rules: you must drive with your lights on 24 hours a day. There is NO right turn on red. The red light adds a yellow light just before it turns green.

We've seen pastures with sheep and pastures with horses, lots of both. We haven't seen any crops growing. There are bales of hay in the fields.

Have a good week!

God bless you.  
Lynne and Steve



Lynne and Steve at Oxafoss





Along the path





More colors





See the people on the top of the cliff?



Our view from the top of the cliff. The previous photo was taken from near the red building right of center of this photo. It was quite a climb!



The top of Gullfoss





Towards the bottom of Gullfoss



A rocky stream we passed on a one lane bridge (on a major highway)





A street scene near our room in Reykjavik on our way to eat supper



The end of our tapas, crowded restaurant!





The troll who introduced our film at Flyover Iceland



Halgrimskirkja - the sides are supposed to represent the rocks and mountains of Iceland







Hallgrímskirkja. The dome at the far right is supposed to represent a Viking helmet - it is the chancel



The nave of the church. The scaffolding should come down tomorrow. The brown on the left is the organ console. The choir stands on the risers on the right.



The pulpit



A whole rainbow as we drove





The colors were so bright!



waterfalls on the mountainside







Borufoss

Vik 9/18c

Greetings from Hotel Burfell!

This morning it was sunny! We walked to the bakery next to our hotel - we shared 2 sweet pastries. Then we packed and got on the road.

We drove east from Selfoss along the south coast on Ring Road Route 1 which goes all of the way around Iceland. We saw a waterfall, so headed to it. You were supposed to pay for parking, but the machine wouldn't take our credit cards, so we didn't. The large parking lot was almost full, so many people came to this waterfall. This is Seljalandsfoss, which you can walk behind. We chose not to walk behind it (our daughter Katherine and husband Donny walked behind it last October when they were here), didn't want to wait in line or get wet. It comes from the top of an ancient sea cliff, dropping 200'. I can't believe my photo of it disappeared from my camera! There were about 4 more smaller waterfalls on the same wall further down the sea cliff which we looked at. We turned the corner back onto Route 1 and continued a short distance where there were several more small waterfalls coming down the sea cliff.

We continued driving to Skogafoss which also falls 200', but it is wider than Seljalandsfoss. There was a beautiful rainbow in front of the waterfall. We walked up to it and got wet from the mist. Skogafoss is formed by the run off from 2 glaciers which form the Skoga River. You could climb to a viewing platform at the top of the waterfall but we chose to use the "old people card" and not climb up. (Besides, I liked viewing Gullfoss much better from the bottom than from the top.)

We ate at the Skoda Restaurant - we were given a table by the window so could see the waterfall as we ate. I had a local lamb burger (which included salad, red onion, tomato, pickled cucumber, cheese and hamburger sauce on the bun), he had fish brunedade (I

think that is how it was spelled), a traditional Icelandic dish which is haddock, cheese, rye breadcrumbs. We chatted with the couple at the next table - they were honeymooners from Hong Kong.

We stopped at a glacier which we saw from the road. It was a long, windy road to the glacier. We hiked the half mile to the viewpoint. We could see icebergs in the run off lake from the glacier. 6 kayaks were paddling around the icebergs. The glacier has receded over a mile in the last hundred years.

We continued driving, occasionally seeing rainbows, occasionally going through showers, past lots of pastures of horses and sheep (sometimes they were in the same pasture), past a very few pastures with cows. We could see glaciers, occasional small waterfalls, interesting rock formations.

We came to Vik. Steve stopped to ask directions to our hotel. We had passed it, so turned around and went back about 10 miles, around a hairpin curve with a 12% grade, and found the hotel (a herd of cattle was in the pasture across the street from the gravel road to our hotel) and checked in. We left our suitcases, then headed back to Vik and continued east on Route 1.

The landscape was varied and interesting. In one section the hillocks looked smooth. Another section had rocks covered with lichen which made the rocks look all smooth and rounded and like lumps. In other places the rocks were bare and jagged. There were no trees at all. Occasionally we saw sheep beside the road, not inside fences.

We drove more than an hour to Kirkjubæjarklaustur (so glad I didn't have to write that as my address when I was a child!). We stopped at a gas station for Steve to get a cup of coffee and to rest and to get gas. We weren't even half way to our destination then and it was 5 p.m., so we gave up and headed back to Vik. As we traveled west, the line of clouds appeared to be on an invisible straight line which

their bottoms were touching. To the north it was dark clouds and appeared to be pouring.

When we got to Vik, I wanted to take a photo of the sea stacks. We drove on several roads but couldn't see them. Then Steve chose to drive to the church on the hill. There was a parking lot overlooking the town, the sea stacks, and the Atlantic Ocean, so I got my photo.

We drove down the hill and decided to eat in Loudon (I think that is how it's spelled) Pub. We split the lamb chops dinner (which included a small salad and the ever present French fries), all was delicious. Obviously we like lamb. We sat by the window, could see the sea stacks. There were paths leading toward the beach, we saw many people on the paths, and even 13 people on horseback on a trail. So after we were finished, we followed a trail to the black sand beach (very fine sand) and walked next to the Atlantic, the tide was coming in. There were no shells on the beach but there were many feathers.

We drove back here at sunset - very pretty sunset. It was about 53 today.

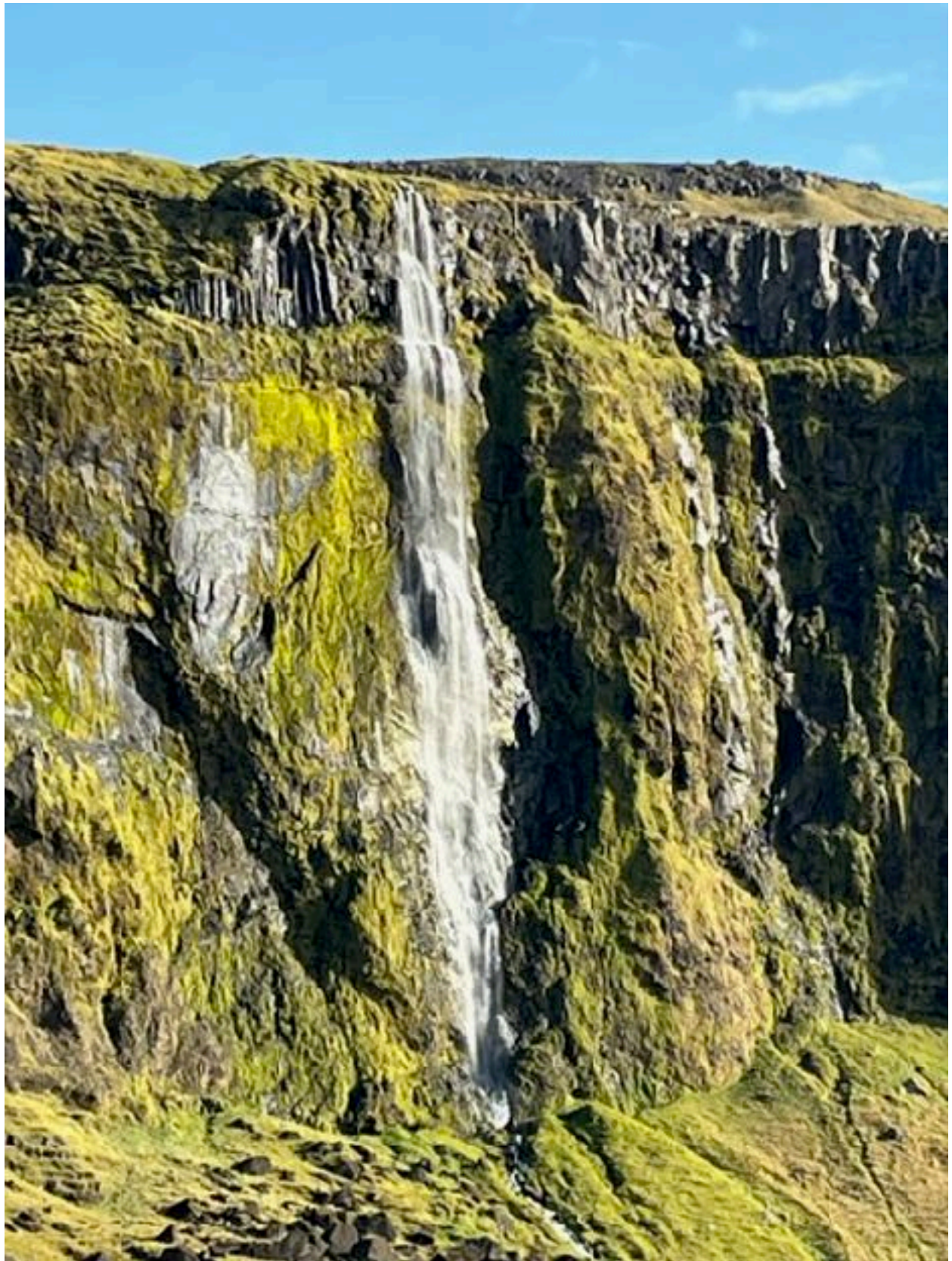
It's wonderful to hear from some of you. Please ask questions or send your observations.

God bless you.  
Lynne and Steve



Waterfall near Seljalandsfoss on the same sea cliff





Waterfall on same sea cliff around the corner from Seljalandsfoss



Glacier





Skogafoss



The sun was bright!





Icebergs below the glacier



The end of the glacier - it used to be a mile longer but is shrinking



Doesn't it look like the clouds are lined up on a straight line?





A glacier



Twin waterfalls



c  
Church in Vik





Sea stacks from church parking lot



Black sand beach at Vik with sea stacks behind jetty



Road view (for my brother-in-law Wayne)





Sunset 7:32 p.m.

Reykjavik 9/19b

Greetings from ABC Hotel!

This morning we overslept - the alarm didn't go off - not that it mattered since we weren't in a rush. I hadn't slept well - they have only duvets on the beds which are too hot for me to sleep under. I usually pull the duvet cover off and sleep under that - sometimes I'm cold then. The heat isn't on in the buildings, so you can't turn the heat up to be warmer in the room. Oops, I just went past our radiator and it's hot! But it will be behind the curtains when we close them to sleep.

We walked over to the reception which was also the breakfast room (fortunately breakfast went for 2 hours) and had the typical English

breakfast: bread, luncheon meats, Swiss cheese, slices of oranges, grapefruit, melon, and kiwi fruit, cereal, scrambled eggs, bacon, beans. We had plenty to eat. We relaxed in the room for a while, then packed and left just before checkout time (11 a.m.). Our room faced the mountain behind the hotel so it was dark overnight.

It was overcast, misty. We aborted our plans for today, didn't drive further east, since it's a long way to Diamond Beach and a glacier we had thought of seeing. Instead we headed west, back toward Reykjavik. We stopped at Seljalandsfoss so I could take photos, since mine had disappeared. We found a Bakery Cafe to get lunch - I had a piece of bread (maybe 2" x 12") with cream cheese in it, folded in half so it was 2" x 6" and then twisted so the sesame seeds on top were on the bottom in the center. Steve had a pastry.

We then drove south and west, along the ocean for a while, saw a flock of swans resting in a field. We went to Selton, a colorful geothermal area. We walked the path between hot springs and boiling mud pools and fumaroles. The smell of sulfur was in the air. You could hear the mud pots boiling. It reminded me of Yellowstone though it's much smaller. From there we continued through volcanic fields to the airport.

We found where to return our rental car tomorrow morning when we fly to the Faroe Islands. Then we tried to follow the directions to this hotel from what they e-mailed us. They said the hotel was west of the airport - it is southeast. The directions said it was on a certain street - we drove the street from one end to the other and didn't see it. After we turned around and started back, I happened to see it across a wide parking lot - the sign for it was on the side street by the hotel about 0.2 mile from where we were. We are on the third floor (no elevator), the last room. Someone was volunteered to carry my suitcase up to the room - that was a help!

I worked on cross stitch for a while, Steve looked at the internet. Then we drove into town by the airport to find a gas station and a

restaurant. We must have been in the wrong section of town - actually we are 45 minutes from Reykjavik, this is a suburb - because there were few restaurants. We found a hamburger place - we shared a bacon hamburger and a pulled pork sandwich. As we left, Steve talked with the cashier - she had flown in from Baltimore today! She started as a stewardess with Icelandic Air this summer! Asked about why all the horses. They are everywhere. "People like them. Eat very few."

There are very few trees in Iceland. Most are less than 20' tall. I think that most of the trees here have been planted by people - they are usually in straight rows or in groups. Most shrubs are less than 4' tall. I haven't seen any flowers.

Oh, we've only had a room key once in 4 nights - the hotel e-mails us the room number and code and we use that to get in.

We have no Icelandic currency, all our purchases are on our VISA card.

It was overcast all day, a bit of heavy drizzle occasionally, then strong winds since noon (through tomorrow), 51 degrees.

Please pray for continued safe travel and good health as we fly to the Faroe Islands for 2 days tomorrow.

We pray for you.

God bless you.

Lynne and Steve





Seljalandsfoss - you can walk behind the falls.



Interesting clouds



Interesting terrain from volcanic tuff





The result of a volcano



Sultan



Sultan





Mud pots were bubbling



View from the top





This is what the countryside looks like in many places





Interesting vegetation!



Volcanic rocks covered with lichens



Countryside near the airport

Torshavn, Faroe Islands 9/20b

Greetings from Hotel Feroyar! 5 p.m.

Back to last night's hotel - the bed was in an alcove with about a foot of room on one side (big enough for a small table with a light switch on it) and about 8" on the other side with a wall mounted tv sticking out about 4" from the wall, so no room to walk to get to the end of the bed. Since we change hotels most nights (though we will be here for 2 nights), remembering what hazards are in the room to get to the bathroom during the night is a challenge.

This morning both of our phone alarms went off, so we got up, dressed, packed, carried our suitcases down 6 flights of steps, and



headed back to the airport - it took 10 minutes, not the six minutes the hotel info said. We returned the Europcar, then dragged our suitcases to the terminal. We had no problem with checking in or going through security. (Steve had to take his shoes off, I didn't. I got a random check - she brushed a paper over my fingers and one hand.)

We headed for the restaurant where we've eaten breakfast 3 times now and had the pancakes with berries (very good). We waited there for the gate to be posted, then walked to it (one of the closest ones!). There were 26 flights on the board for 24 different destinations in 5 hours, even a flight to Raleigh NC! Steve thought the plane would be full, but everyone was seated close to the emergency exits over the wings - I guess there were about 80 on the flight with seats for close to 200. It was an uneventful flight of one hour and 15 minutes. We could have coffee, tea, or water for free or purchase soda, liquor, or sandwiches.

We landed in Vagar. The runway ends just before going into a large lake. We didn't have to show our passports. We walked to the next building to get our rented car from Budget. The car was parked at the other end of the parking lots, so we walked through a roofed walkway with glass (plastic?) sides to get to it. I've heard that sometimes planes can't land or take off because the wind is so bad. We are now 5 hours ahead of Baltimore time.

We got the name of an apothecary from the woman at the car rental place. We drove through a long tunnel (through a mountain and under the ocean) to the next island. The mountains are not cliffs like we saw in Iceland, so the waterfalls come down the mountains in short hops, hitting rocks, falling over those rocks, to the next rocks, etc., so the waterfalls look more like braided falls.

We found the apothecary - there were 12 stations - you take a number when you walk in, then go to the correct station when your number is on the board (reminded me of the DMV). The lady was very nice, but Steve needed a prescription from a local doctor to get his medicines

filled. It was 3 o'clock so we had a club sandwich in the mall where the pharmacy was.

So we drove to where we thought the doctors' office would be, but there were no signs. He saw a physical therapist sign, stopped there and asked for directions - it was the next building which had absolutely no signs on it. They required cash to pay for getting the prescriptions, so he climbed a high hill through the brush and over rocks to the bank in a round building at the top to go to an ATM. I was glad he followed the road down instead of falling down the hill. (I sat in the car and watched him climb the hill.) He paid for the prescriptions and we headed back to the pharmacy. He has been coughing, so bought cough medicine (he's still coughing - hope we can sleep tonight!

There was a wait for the prescriptions to be hand entered into the computer system so we wandered the mall. There was an area with video games (over a dozen) for the children to play - and there were many children playing them. We also went in the stationary store. The prescriptions were ready when we went back. We asked for directions to our hotel from the clerk.

We followed her directions but there was no sign that told the hotel's name - the sign said, "Hotel, restaurant, conference, spa" but nowhere was the hotel's name! We pulled our suitcases against the heavy wind (it took Steve's hat off) - it was tough to walk against the wind and our car was at the other end of the parking lot. We checked in, only to find out that our room is in a different building (with grass growing on the roof), just past where our car is parked. So this time the wind pushed us along.

It was sunny this morning until after we landed in the Faroe Islands. Then it got cloudy and overcast. Now the fog is so thick that we can't see more than 100'. It's about 50 and very windy.

It's now 9:30 and we're back from supper. Steve had napped (he didn't sleep well last night) and I had started this letter. The photos

from my phone haven't come to the laptop, but I'll send Steve's photos which did come.

We faced the stiff wind and went to the main hotel for dinner in the area off the lobby - the restaurant was totally booked. He had salmon and sweet potato fries. I had focaccia and 3 kinds of cheese (blue cheese, cambaert (misspelled), and a hard Danish cheese). The focaccia was more like a loaf of bread with salt and a spice on the top - we're used to it being a flat piece of bread with toppings.

God bless you.

Lynne and Steve



The image shows two adjacent flight information display screens at an airport. The left screen displays a list of flights with their destinations, times, and gates. The right screen displays a similar list of flights. The screens are blue with white text and feature airline logos.

Flight	Destination	Time	Gate
AY992	Helsinki	09:25	A14
FI613	New York JFK	09:40	D25
AC915	Toronto Pearson	10:00	D15
FI636	Boston	10:00	D24
RC402	Vagar	10:15	A13
SK596	Copenhagen	10:30	C35
W48266	Rome	10:55	
SK4788	Oslo	11:05	
DL247	New York JFK	11:15	
UA913	Chicago	12:00	
BT170	Riga	12:25	
FI1003	Constable Point	13:00	

Flight	Destination	Time	Gate
OG141	Washington Dulles	15:00	
OG634	Palma	15:00	
OG101	Baltimore Washington	15:05	
OG201	Toronto Hamilton	15:10	
OG614	Barcelona	15:10	
OG111	Boston	15:20	
FI212	Copenhagen	16:30	
OG121	New York Stewart	16:40	
W65064	Krakow	15:55	
FI454	London Heathrow	16:10	
FI584	Alicante	16:25	
FI657	Minneapolis St Paul	16:45	
FI821	Raleigh	16:45	

The sign board at the Icelandic airport - 26 planes going to 24 different destinations in 5 hours!





First view of Faroe Islands



Video games for the youth in the mall



b

Stairway in the mall - Lynne is in the blue jacket going down the stairs. There is a plant shop at the bottom of the stairs.

Torshavn 9/21c

Hello!

5 p.m.

A little information about the Faroe Islands (from the Official Tourist Guide 2023): The Faroe Islands are surrounded by the temperate waters of the Gulf Stream in the North Atlantic, northwest of Scotland and halfway between Iceland and Norway. The archipelago is composed of 18 islands with a land area of 539 square miles, The chain is 70 miles long and 47 miles wide, shaped roughly in the shape of an arrowhead. There are 684 miles of coastline and no point in the islands is more than 3 miles from the sea. The capital is Torshavn where we are staying.



The Faroese climate is classed as maritime, and weather conditions are quite changeable, ranging from bursts of brilliant sunshine to dense banks of fog and showers and wind. The Gulf Stream tempers the climate. Harbors never freeze over, snowfall does occur but is shortlived.

The population of the Faroe Islands numbers 54,111 (Nov. '22). Since 1948 the Faroe Islands have been a self-governing region of Denmark. They have their own government, parliament and national flag. Faroese is the national language and its roots can be traced back to Old Norse. English is also spoken. Religion plays an important part in Faroese culture and over 80% of people belong to the state church, Folkakirkjan, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Faroe Islands. The fishing industry is the most important source of income, tourism is the second largest industry. Recent DNA testing shows that the men came from Norway, the women from Scotland and Ireland.

We slept until after 8. We went over to the restaurant in the main hotel. There was plenty of food with much variety, mainly an English breakfast with many more choices than at the last hotel breakfast. It's on the second floor with large windows so we could look down on the town and its harbor. It was windy (that seems to be all we've found here!) but the wind wasn't as stiff as last night. It was drizzling.

We returned to our room. Steve is coming down with a cold - he slept better last night, but not real well. I looked out the door of our room and there were 4 sheep grazing within 6' of our room! Two had very shaggy wool, the other two had smoother hair - they are bred so that the different fibers can be used in different clothing.

After resting a bit, we started driving. There are several tunnels here which connect the islands. We took the longest one (more than 11 km) which has a round-about under the ocean floor. We drove from the island of Streymoy to the island of Evsturoy. You could drive to

two different sections of Evsturoy (separated by a fjord) from the round-about. We drove up the east side of Skalafjordur, through towns and next to mountains. Many small waterfalls flowed down the mountains. We somehow missed the turn to drive down the west side of the fjord, so continued across the island.

The wind pushed the car sideways after we came out of a tunnel. We stopped at a gas station which had a small store. The wind was so strong that Steve could almost not open the car door. We shared a hot dog - 14" long - they force the hot dog into a bun about 8" long (the bun has a round hole in it), so about 6" of the hot dog sticks out. We then drove across a bridge over the Atlantic Ocean to head back south. We drove on the west side of Sundini which ended in Tangafjordur (which is the fiord the tunnel with the round -about is in).

We returned to the hotel. The sun finally broke through the clouds for about an hour. It is no longer drizzling but is still very windy. Steve took a nap. I read about the islands. I worked on cross stitch Christmas ornaments.

Hello again!

9:30 p.m.

We decided to try the hotel restaurant for dinner, but it only has 3 or 7 course meals, much more than we can eat. So we tried to find a restaurant in Torshavn. We drove around and around, trying to use the map the hotel gave us, but we couldn't find any of the listed restaurants. We finally parked near the Parliament building and walked around. One restaurant required reservations even though it looked like there were plenty of empty tables. The next one was a burger place and he doesn't like burgers. The next one was 3 course meals. We finally found a tiny take out shop that made pizzas and other food. We ordered something from the menu, not sure what it was, but it was huge! The rolls were about 4 times the size of hamburger rolls and filled with roast beef and salad. We sat in the tiny shop (one table to sit at as you waited for your meal) and ate just over half of the rolls plus all the meat.

Then we had to figure out how to get back to the hotel. I remembered seeing the lighthouse called Skansin on top of what looked like an old fort a couple of blocks away. We had seen it in our travels earlier in the day, so we headed for that and then drove the ring road around Torshavn and back to the hotel. It has been misting every once in a while, about 50 today, and windy.

Oh, my phone and the laptop are not speaking to each other, so I don't have any photos to send you yet.

Please pray for Steve to feel more energetic and get over his cold and for me to not get sick. Also we fly to Bergen Norway tomorrow evening. Please continue to pray for safe travel for us. Thank you!

God bless you.  
Lynne and Steve

Faroe Islands to Bergen 9/22c

Faroe Islands to Bergen 9/22cGreetings from Vágur Airport! 5 p.m.

We dropped off our car and came into the airport. We were the only ones checking in and only ones going through security so it was really quick!

Again this morning we slept late (after 8:30!), dressed, and walked to the main hotel to eat their breakfast. Today I saw lox and a different kind of cereal, but otherwise mostly the same. There are no pastries. No herring here - unknown. When we got there it was almost empty, but a bus (college students?) came in and it became crowded. It was sunny and windy.

We relaxed for a while, then finished packing and headed out. First we drove west and south to Kirkjubour. The last few km were on a



one lane road, although it was 2 ways, so you had to stop in a pullout and let the other car go - it only happened once as we drove.

From the brochure: The village of Kirkjubour is the only site in the Faroe Islands where you find historical remains that are of an imposing monumental character. Here you find buildings and ruins with walls erected of stones laid in a local mortar and plastered - the remains of the bishops' seat from early in the 12th century until its abolishment in 1557. During this period the site was the ecclesiastical and cultural center of the islands. The Faroese diocese was established early in the 12th century. It included 5 Bishoprics in Norway and others in Greenland, Iceland, Orkney and Shetland, the Hebrides with the Isle of Man plus the Faroe Islands.

The whitewashed church, St. Olavs Church, apparently was erected in the 13th century as the cathedral of the Faroe Islands. It became a parish church by the Reformation and is the only Medieval church still in use in the islands. The St. Magnus Cathedral was erected ca. 1300. The walls are preserved in full height. Since the Reformation the old Roykstova, the living room, and the other timbered rooms have been the home of the farmers' families in Kirjubour. They stand on a wide stone basement which was part of the medieval bishop's place.

We went in St. Olavs Church which has been restored its appearance before 1874. The modern painting over the altar is of Jesus walking on the water. At one point a painting of Jesus and Martha and Mary was over the altar, now it's on a side wall. Otherwise the church is bare with simple wooden pews. We walked around the outside of the wide stone basement (the Roykstova) but didn't pay to go in. We walked in the walls of St. Magnus Cathedral - they are built of stone. You can see out the windows and the first 3 steps to the tower (which is not there anymore). It was interesting.

We drove back to Torshavn and went to the mall where we were on Wed. to have a bite to eat. Then we found route 50 (our hotel was on that route but we hadn't noticed the very small sign stating that it was

route 50) and drove over the scenic route. It rained most of the way. There were only 2 buildings after our hotel on that road until we reached the other end of it miles away. We could look down the mountains at the ocean at different points.

We then drove north on route 21 to the end of the road to Vestmanna, a town with a hydro-electric plant. It is a port on the ocean. Many waterfalls come down the mountains. We drove back and took the tunnel under the ocean to Vagar. We continued past the airport and drove to the end of the road to Gasadalur, a village of maybe 20 houses. The country built a one km tunnel through the mountain so the villagers didn't need to take a boat to go to another part of the islands. The tunnel is one lane wide with pullouts - glad we didn't meet anyone in the tunnel, especially not the public bus!

Last notes about the Faroe Islands. There are almost no trees - did see some in one suburb. There is lots of rain so turf can grow well on the roof without having to be watered. I saw very few flowers blooming - I saw astilbe once, small yellow flowers a couple of times, and daisies, both miniature and full size once. There were fish farms in the ocean. In both Iceland and the islands, there is a sign for a rest area along the road with a picnic table and an evergreen tree on it - but there are no trees near the picnic tables - they should have a corrected one made for those countries with just a picnic table! In both countries there were many traffic calming devices.

We drove back past the airport to get gas in the car, then returned it to the airport. We drove 337 km. It's sunny now, 47.

Greetings from the Moxy Bergen Hotel!

10:45 p.m.

We are now 6 hours ahead of Baltimore time.

Our flight was uneventful. They only serve (Starbucks) coffee and tea for free, not even water for free! There were about 20 on the flight, in order to balance the plane we all had to sit in the back. It was a Dash

8 plane, made in Canada by Bombardier. It is very low to the ground, only 6 steps to go up. We had bought a pasta salad at the airport and ate it as we flew.

We arrived at the Bergen airport, deplaned, got on a bus to take us to the terminal. We made a quick restroom stop, and went out of the airport, didn't go through customs or anything. We took a taxi, through 4 tunnels (one was very long), to the hotel. After we checked in we were offered a welcome drink - I think it is ice tea with gin, it's pink in color. Our room is huge as is the bathroom. This is the 38th country we have been to.

I'm frustrated that my photos aren't coming from the camera to the laptop!

Have a good weekend!

God bless you.  
Lynne





Flower shop at bottom of steps in the mall



Streymoy - the Atlantic Ocean between the Faroe Islands





Waterfall coming down the mountain at Streymoy





Skansin (lighthouse) on top of old fort, Torshavn



St. Olav's Church, Kirkjubour, is the only Medieval church still in use in the Faroe Islands



Painting over the altar





The basement of the Bishop's house



The walls of St. Manus Cathedral are all that is left





The entrance to St. Olavs Church





Falls in Westmanna



A row of buildings in Westmanna, typical buildings with valleys between each house. It seems to me to be a waste of space that could be built to there was more attic room. Also, doesn't rain get caught in the valleys between buildings?



Mykines Island





Waterfalls along the way



Village of Gasadalur. The Faroe Islands built a tunnel through the mountain for this village so they didn't have to take a boat to the rest of the islands.





Another view of Mykines Island





Waterfalls on the road to Gasadalur. Can you tell I like waterfalls?

Flam 9/23b

Hello!

This morning we woke to rain/fog. We walked to the train station. We bought tickets to Voss and took the train. We went through more than 30 tunnels. Steve thought there was a bus to Gudvangen from Voss, but there wasn't one until hours later, so we took a taxi. We ate at the coffee shop, then took the Lady Elisabeth ferry down the Aurlandsfjord to Flam. There was a rainbow while we waited for it to start. We had sun, fog, rain, wind in the fjord. We saw small villages on the edge of the fjord, waterfalls coming down the mountains, vegetation, yes, they have trees here, millions of them, mostly evergreen and birch!

When we got to Flam we bought tickets for the Flam Railway. Nowhere in the world is there a train on normal tracks that is not a cog railway with a steeper climb. It was a major challenge for railroad engineers to build a railway from the Myrdal Plateau down the precipitous mountain sides to the Flam Valley. Almost 80% of the line has a gradient of 5.5%. It took 20 years to build and includes 20 tunnels. Eighteen of those tunnels were excavated by hand! At one point the train makes a 180 degree turn in a tunnel in the mountain! The train journey provides a panoramic view of Norwegian mountain landscape. There was a photo stop at Kjosfossen, a large waterfall. When the tracks were built, a road with 21 hairpin turns was used to bring materials and workers to the sites. Now that is a bikeway. It was an interesting ride!

We then took the train back to Bergen. At one point the train was stopped in a tunnel for a few minutes. The ride is over 2 hours, partly along the Atlantic Ocean. We then looked for a place to eat - found a small shop and shared a calzone there. It started raining as we

crossed the street to the shop and rained while we walked back to the hotel. We're tired! It was about 45.

I sent my photos from yesterday as an e-mail to my laptop. Now, I hope, I can send them to you. Our daughter Stephanie suggested using airdrop. I'll try that tomorrow.

Traffic calming devices include raised humps, pylons on the road, narrowing the road to one lane, devices to slow traffic. We've seen them all in our travels.

We are wondering how the weather is in Baltimore and along the east coast with the hurricane/tropical storm Ophilia. We're praying for you.

Have a good Lord's Day.

God bless you.  
Lynne and Steve





Riding on the Flam Train through the mountains. The grade is 5.5%, the train makes a 180 degree turn inside a mountain tunnel.



Looking down at a village from the train





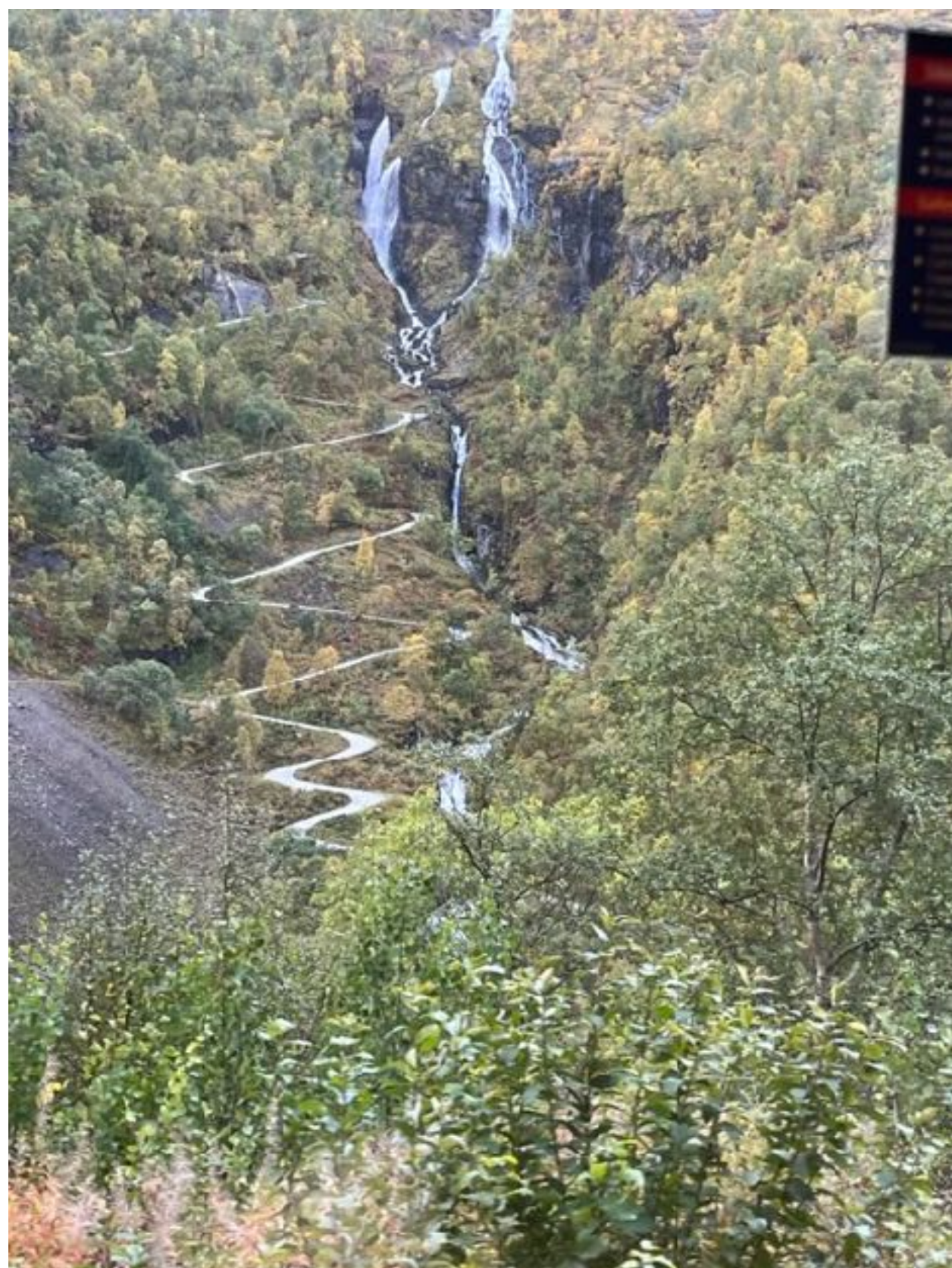


Waterfall



Another village







The road with 21 hairpin curves was built to bring supplies to the workers as they built the railroad. Now it's a bike path.



The train went through both train sheds as it climbed the mountain



This was a 10 mute photo shoot stop

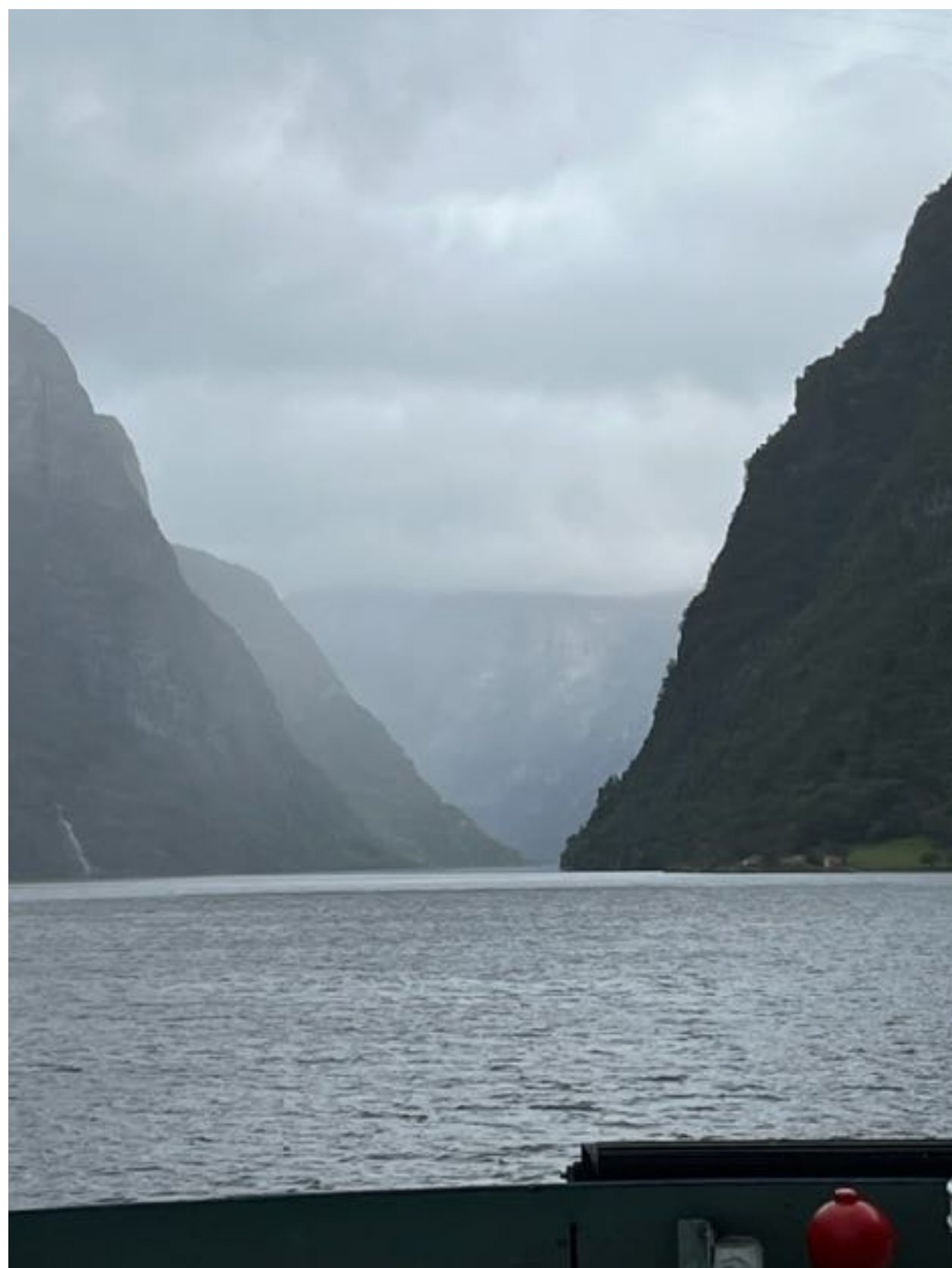


Along the fjord





A waterfall along the fjord





It was foggy at times



Looking back, the boat kicked up the water





Trees are starting to change





Looking up a side valley

Bergen to Stavanger 9/24b

Greetings from the Ferry from Bergen to Stavanger!

3 p.m.

This morning we packed up, then left our suitcases at the hotel storage room. We walked toward the train station, stopped at a bakery and bought pastries and ate them there. Then we continued walking, past a park with a gazebo with many flowers hanging from it. We continued to Bergen Cathedral. It has stood, fallen and been rebuilt for almost 900 years. It was dedicated to Saint Olav in around 1150. The church has been ravaged by five fires since then, and it was hit by a cannon ball in 1665. The cannon ball is still lodged in the church spire as a memento of the Battle of Vagen. We attended the service, about 100 in attendance. The choir and organ were excellent. Of course we don't understand Norwegian, but we could follow much of the liturgy. The Nicene Creed was sung between the pastor and the congregation, very lovely.. The pastor preached from the pulpit, high above the congregation. They had small chalices for communion, poured by one of the pastors and her assistant.

We then took a taxi to the hotel, picked up our suitcases, and continued to the ferry dock. It has been a very smooth sailing so far. We have lounge tickets, so have free coffee, tea, orange, apple, elderflower juices. The band has just started in the next lounge. I have worked on some cross stitch. I've chatted with 3 women who are knitting (a sock, 2 knitting tops). I wandered around, trying to stay awake. The trip is 5 hours. We are getting closer to the Atlantic Ocean so it is choppier out there. We just went past a mobile oil drill platform at Haugesand.

Just for information: A fjord is a deep narrow, long stretched sea channel with steep land on three sides. The mouth of the fjord towards the sea is often shallow. Fjords were created by gigantic tongues of glaciers through several ice ages that formed the landscape. In western Norway the fjords are often surrounded by dramatic mountain landscapes, and they often have more calm waters than the open sea and act as natural harbors.



Fjord, descending from the Old Norse fjordr, is one of the few Norwegian words used internationally. Lakes can also be fjords, as an extension of a fjords where they have been separated from the sea.

Greetings from Comfort Hotel, Stavanger!

9 p.m.

When we got off the ferry, we had to show our ticket in order to leave the terminal. The machine worked erratically so it took a while to get outside. I noticed a phone on the stand there - I hope it wasn't owned by the man who we chatted with from Manchester UK - it looked like the one he had. He had gotten off more quickly by taking the stairs while we waited for the elevator.

The internet map showed the bus stop about a third of a mile down the street, so we dragged our suitcases there. 3 students from China also came there. We waited in the heavy drizzle. A bus came, it stopped just past the bus stop, allowed us to get on. It required cash to pay for the bus, we haven't used any cash since we left the U.S. So he let us get on for free. Then he drove to the ferry terminal - we could have just waited there instead of walking so far. I watched people get on the bus as we drove into town - none of them bought tickets or validated their tickets, so guess the bus operates on the honor system. Anyway, it was a 47 minute ride to the train station.

After we got off, Steve looked at his phone gps to tell us how to go. We climbed up 4 sets of steps (he's my "donkey", he carried my suitcase up) and walked further up the hill, then along the street to the hotel. It's hot in our room, or else we are hot from walking! None of the other rooms have felt this warm. It's misting lightly and 60, the warmest it has been on our trip.

Steve is feeling better, coughing less. So far I am ok. Thank you for your prayers. Please continue to pray for safe travel and good health. Have a good week!

God bless you.  
Lynne and Steve



Sailing ship leaving Oslo Harbor

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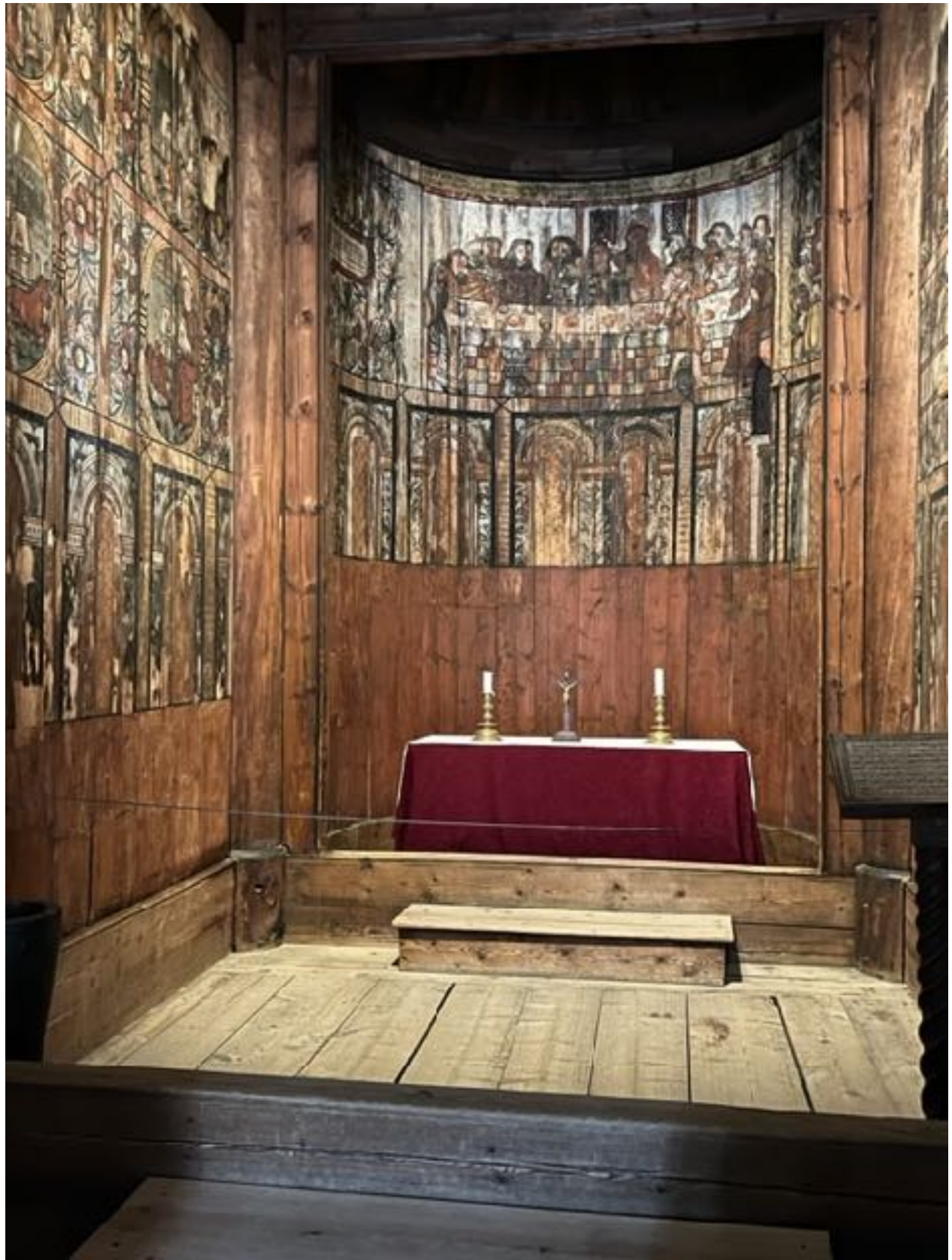




Looking down at cabins in Norse Folkemuseum. First they put boards down, then birch bark on top of the boards, and then the turf goes on top. It lasts about 25 years.

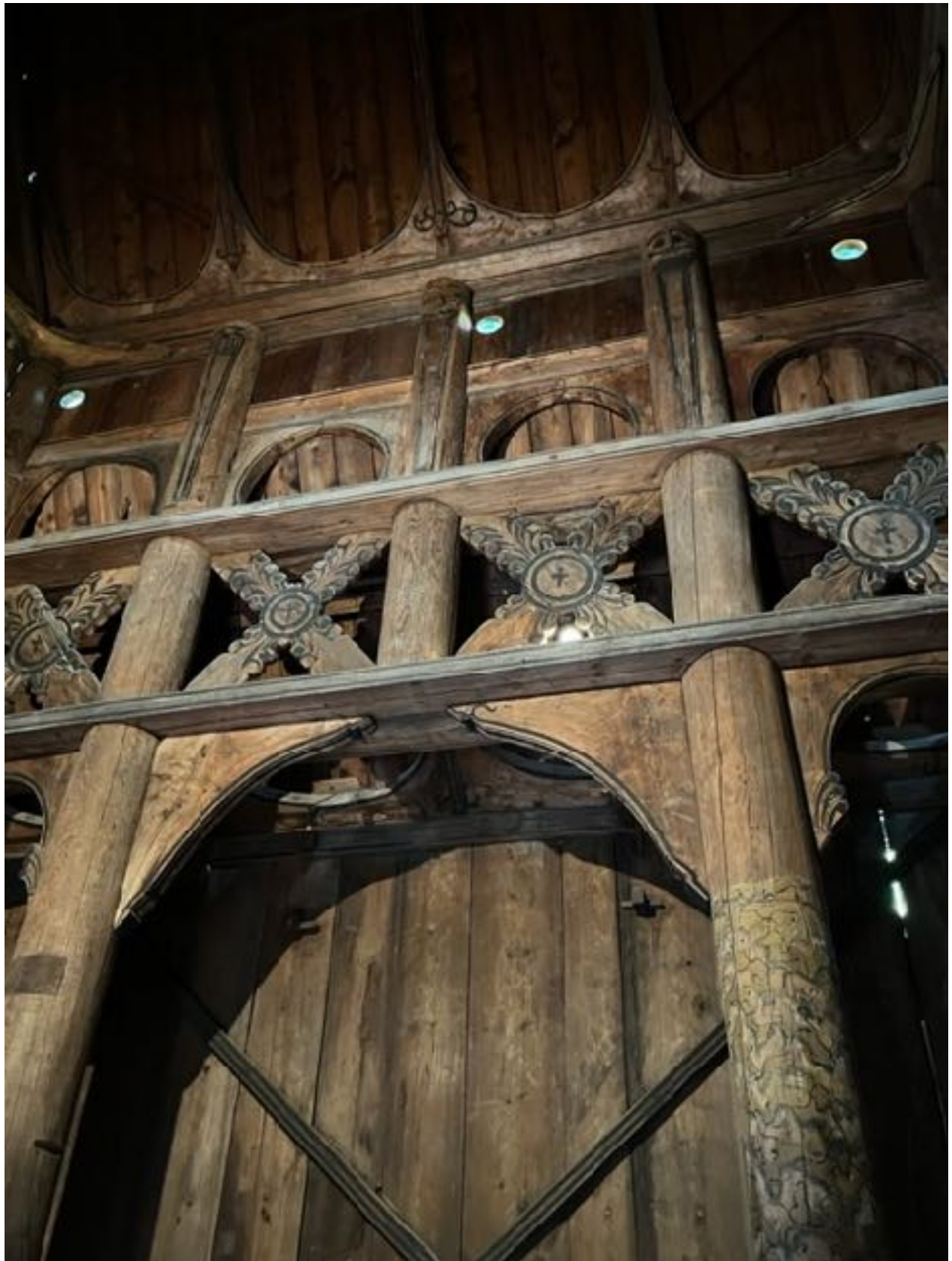


Stave Church





Inside the Stave Church



Looking up in the Stave Church



Wedding Cottage - the wedding was held here, then it became the Guest House





Docent in Wedding Cottage





A storage barn. Guests could stay upstairs. Notice it is not on the ground or the wood would rot



Trees are turning color





I liked the painted ceiling . This is the children's room in one of the apartments.



This apartment had the bed in an alcove in the kitchen, a one room apartment.



Viking ship in the Maritime Museum





Reindeer minced meatball with veggies - my dinner

Oslo 9/26d

Hello!

I'm weary! I didn't sleep well last night. We've walked over 6 miles today.

This morning we ate the hotel breakfast — they had peppered mackerel and standard herring and chocolate chip cookies! I got the cookies (brought them back to the room for a snack), Steve got the mackerel.

Then we walked towards the harbor, a few blocks away. We passed the Akershus Fortress Complex with the Akershus Castle overlooking the harbor. We found a ferry to Bygdøy Neighborhood with fancy houses, at least 2 embassies are located here, walked past the Indonesian and the Guyana ones.

We walked several blocks to the the Norse Folkemuseum, an outdoor museum. About 160 buildings have been reassembled here, started in 1881 as the king's private collection. We first saw the Norwegian Folk Art, including Folk Dress, Knitting History, Weapons in the rural community, and church art. We ate in the cafe, then wandered around the houses, barns, storage buildings, guest houses (rich farmers had guest houses), up to the Stave Church. A few of the buildings were open so we went in them. We went in the Stave Church which is very dark with few windows. Across the way was a Wedding House - it was built for a wedding and then used as a guest house. Some of the guest houses were lofts over a storage area. There were several buildings close together from different areas of the country, so you could see a farm from each area. We went in the Apartment Building - it had 8 apartments, each set up for a different era, the most recent being 1979. Another building was a bank with information about how a woman would go to the bank in different time

periods, up to 1979. We shared a piece of pecan pie (not as sweet as our U.S. one) to get energy to go on.

We walked about a mile to the Norwegian Maritime Museum. I was too tired, so I sat in the cafe with my feet up on a chair while Steve went through the museum - he said it was ok for a fourth grade class trip, but not great for those older than 9. I could see the sailboats and ferryboats going ups and down the Oslofjord from my seat. I watched a cruise ship slowly go along the fjord - we had seen it earlier tied up in the harbor.

We took the ferry back to Oslo, then walked past the City Hall, Parliament Building, Oslo Cathedral, and back to our hotel. We looked for a Norwegian restaurant to eat supper but didn't see one.

We asked our hotel clerk for recommendations, then walked about 4 blocks to the restaurant he recommended. We had reindeer minced meatballs, potatoes, and veggies (carrots, peas, cauliflower) with gravy and cranberry sauce. All was good.

Tomorrow we take a train to Bergen and then an overnight ferry to Ausland - we have a cabin on the ferry.

God bless you.  
Lynne and Steve

Re: Oslo to Bergen and beyond 9/27c

Greetings from Nordkapp!

This morning we were up very early, packed, ate the hotel breakfast, and headed to the train station in the light rain - glad the train station is only about 4 blocks away! Steve bought tickets at the machine, we waited for the train to come in. Our tickets were for an aisle seat and the one



directly behind, not for 2 adjacent seats! When a guy from Australia said we were in his seat, I asked him to trade with me, so he was happy.

We traveled over bridges, through tunnels - at one end it was sunny, at the other end it was raining, through snow sheds, past many large lakes, streams, mountains, valleys, towns. We stopped at Hotel Finse, the highest point on the railroad, 1222 km, almost a mile above sea level. We got on the train at 8:20 a.m. and arrived in Bergen at 3 p.m.. - it's a long way!

I still didn't feel well, so decided I probably wouldn't take any photos, but took close to 100 photos instead! Steve was talking with the conductor, had his hand on the w.c. door (water closet, i.e., rest room), when the door slammed shut on his thumb. The conductor taped it - they didn't have any bandages on board.

It was sunny in Bergen, 59 degrees. We walked slowly through a park where we saw swans, sea gulls, and pigeons preening within less than 2' from our feet. We continued walking until we got to the ferry. After registering and getting our room key (looks like a credit card), we took the escalator to the lounge where we were treated to soda, sweet pastries, and fish soup. We were required to watch the safety film (in Norwegian, English, German) before we could board the ferry.

We wandered about the ferry, stopped at our room which wasn't supposed to be ready until 6, it was 5, and our key worked. However our luggage wasn't delivered until after 7. (One of the safety rules is to not leave your luggage unattended but they leave the luggage in the corridor by your door.) We ate supper at the bistro, we shared 4 sausages, a moose, a lamb, a grilled, and a regular sausage with potatoes, onion marmalade, mustard, and ketchup. All was good.

After 3 tries to reach the nurse, the guy at reception took us down to the "hospital" where the nurse removed the tape and put antiseptic and a bandage on Steve's thumb - the cut is across his thumb knuckle. We're sitting in the forward lounge on the seventh deck, we should be sailing in about 15 minutes, so maybe you'll receive this when we are sailing down

the fjord. We make 2 stops during the night, one around 1 a.m., the other around 3 a.m.

Nordkapp means “north cape”, the furthest north place in Norway.

Nordkapp ferry ride 9/28b

Greetings from the Noreg hotel in Alesund!

Last night we were cramped in our tiny cabin on the Nordkapp ferry. The ladder to Steve’s bed reached from the edge of my bed up to his and it was challenging for him to climb the very narrow rungs barefoot and crawl into bed without hitting his head. I had to inch down my bed to get up. We managed, even got some sleep!

This morning we had the ferry buffet breakfast including most of what we’ve had before plus four kinds of fish which he enjoyed. I don’t care for fish. Then we sat on the foreword lounge on the seventh level so we could enjoy the ferry ride up a couple of fjords. It was sunny when we got up, then rain came as we sailed further.

The ferry stopped twice to let people off to go on excursions. I’m assuming that the excursions ended up at the same place because we only picked up people from the local tender (which made several trips) at the end of the fjord. The ferry just anchored there until the people returned an hour or so later.

Meanwhile 3 crew members took down one of the lifeboats and sailed around the ferry and the end of the fjord. They need to stay in practice in using the boats and making sure they work. We were told they hold 150 people but they looked very small to me - I would have guessed only held 50 people, but with over 500 passengers, they need to each hold 150 in order to evacuate the ferry. The lifeboat they used was the one right outside our cabin window, so we did not have a view of the fjord when we were in our cabin.

The ferry had stopped at 3 a.m. and at 5 a.m. at 2 villages and then in Alesund at 10 a.m. We rode the ferry to the end of the fjord and then it returned to Alesund at 5:50 p.m. and we disembarked then - it was 10 minutes early. The ride up the fjord was free. It rained much of the time we were on the ferry. It was raining lightly when we got off. We walked the 2 blocks to our hotel.

A couple of comments: at the hotels, on the ferry, food is kept at room temperature, so the beans and scrabbled eggs, etc., is at room temperature when you serve yourself, not kept warm, as in America. Today they had 2 tanks with eggs in them - one was hard boiled eggs, one was soft boiled eggs. I'm guessing to keep them soft boiled you need a different temperature than hard boiled eggs - though I don't remember that the hard boiled ones were very warm. Also most hotels have very little lighting in the rooms (this one being the exception). I guess they figure tourists watch tv and don't need lights. We rarely watch tv, even at home, and never on vacation.

I looked at the ice creams in the bakery on board the ferry. I know I will NEVER eat the "vanilla ice cream with dried fish"!!!

Only a few of today's photos have come to the laptop but yesterday's are here, so will send them today.

We just came back from supper - we wandered a bit, found a restaurant/bar and agreed on a Philly cheesesteak sandwich. You order at the bar and they bring the food to your table - we've seen this before. We wondered why it took so long to make - after all, it's thin pieces of beef that are cooked. Not here! It was a large piece of rare steak - it was delicious. It came with the ever present French fries and béarnaise sauce. We had also found an apotek and bought some antihistamine for me, hopefully that will help, since I forgot to pack some. It's raining with gusts of wind, glad they had an umbrella in our room.

It's about 59 and raining - what else is new?



God bless you.  
Lynne and Steve



Along the way from Oslo to Bergen on the train



The landscape is so many different colors!



Waterfalls!





Glaciers



Glaciers



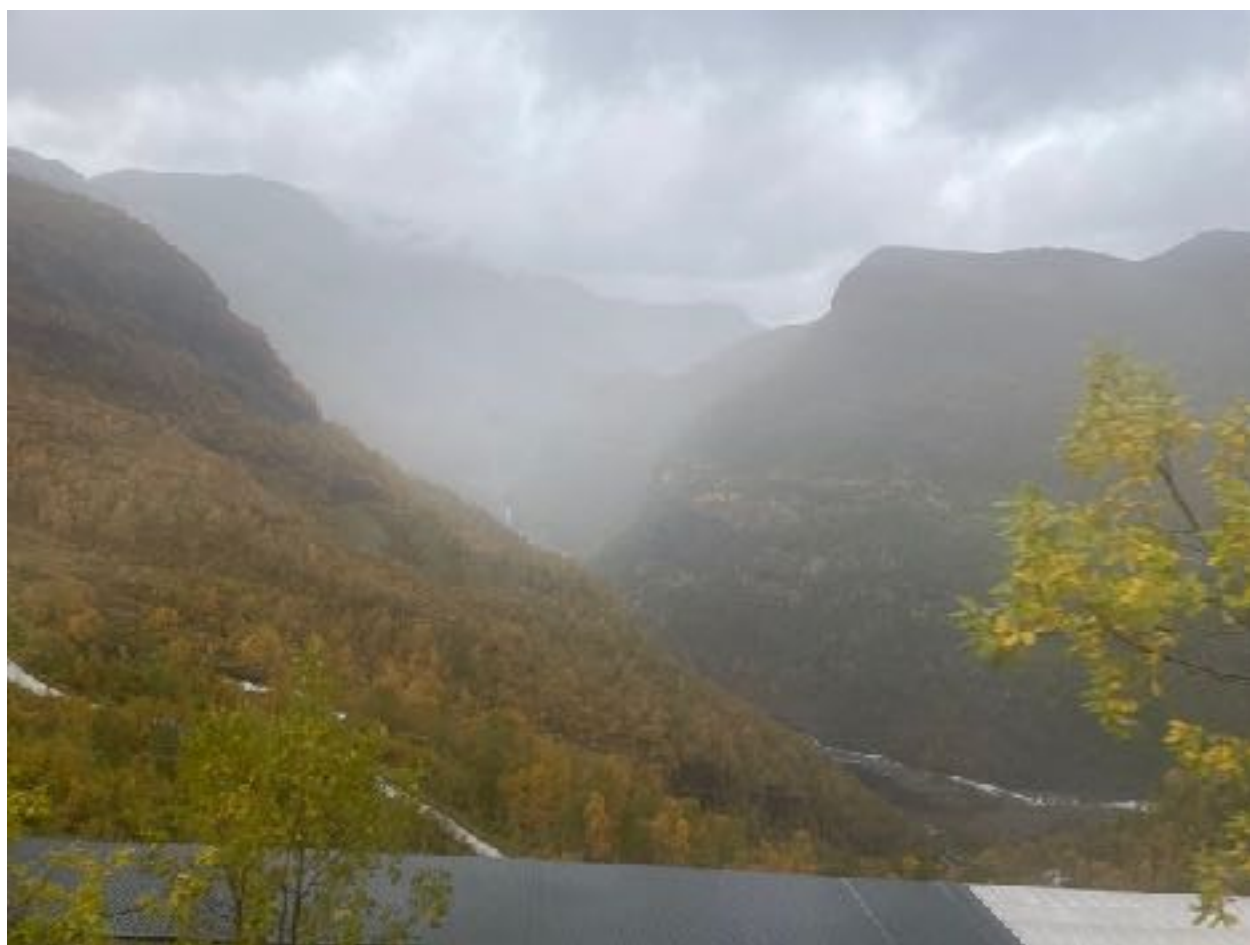
The top of the mountain, about one mile - rain spots from rain on the train window







Water, rocks, trees changing color



Mountains and fog





Glacial river



A farm



A long lake along the railroad tracks





Pigeons preening near our feet in park in Bergen



Our very tiny room on the Nordkapp ferry!







Our dinner on the ferry: 4 sausages: pork, grilled, moose, and lamb

Road trip 9/29b

Greetings from Liabygda!

6 p.m.

We are in the ferry lane. The captain must take from 6 - 6:30 as his dinner break since it seems that the ferry runs every half hour except at 6 p.m. We arrived at 5:45, so we get to sit for a long while!

This morning we ate the hotel breakfast - not as fancy as the ferry one, but many fewer people here. It was certainly adequate and good. And for the first time, the scrambled eggs, beans, etc., were kept hot!

We packed, walked to the bus station. The first Flybuss which arrived was not headed to the airport, so we waited for the second one, a few minutes later. We went into a tunnel, down an 8% grade to go under the fjord to the next island - we were on that island for less than 100' when we went down the 8% grade into the second tunnel (which was 2.3 miles long, I think the first one was longer) - both tunnels were 2 lanes going uphill and 1 lane going downhill - they went to one lane each way in the center, then changed the lanes. We were soon on the island Vigra where there was enough flat ground to build an airport.

We went into the terminal and found Sixt, the rental car company we had a reservation with. But no one was there. We talked with the Avis guys who also tried to call the gal, eventually she came back in from washing cars (maybe cleaning the insides, she wasn't dressed for washing cars!) and we did the paperwork. We walked out to the farthest end of the parking lot and found our car, a Toyota.

We drove back, the first tunnel from the airport requires a circle within the tunnel to get deep enough to go under the fjord, also 8% grades to go down. There were on and off ramps within the tunnel. We followed

the gps directions that Steve had programmed in, seeing spectacular scenery, mountains, fjords. We eventually came to the Atlantic Road, which is 7 bridges connecting tiny islets over the ocean. The first bridge is terrifying from a distance - you need to see the photo to understand what I mean. When we reached the other end, we turned around and headed back the way we came for most of the day. Then we turned off and went past other fjords and towns and mountains. There was even a small waterfall coming down one mountain. We eventually reached the ferry.

Greetings from Hotel Stranda in Stranda!

We took the ferry across the Arctic Ocean (according to one map - I suspect it's a fjord) to Stranda and the hotel was 2 blocks away. We can stay, but their check-in machine isn't working, so he gave us a master key (that's what he said it was) and a room, we'll pay in the morning. He said there was only one restaurant open (in a town this size that seems unreal, but maybe he meant close by), so we walked the block to it. I had marinated beef, salad, fries, and garlic dressing (on the meat which also included fried onions), a couple of pieces of bread that appeared to be pita. He had grilled halibut, vegetables, sour cream, boiled potatoes. All was very good. Now we're in our room. Finally the huge full moon has come from behind the clouds!

A few unrelated comments:

- \*the car has automatic windshield wipers - we had sprinkles several times and they came on - guess they are useful in Norway!

- \*there are so many boats in the many marinas - motor boats and sailboats

- \*there are very few speed limit signs except when in a town. At the far edge of town there is a grey speed limit sign with a line through it, signifying the end of that speed, but no speed limit forward

- \*we've seen 7 Eleven, Burger King, McDonalds, Subway; Esso, Circle K, and Shell gas stations

- \*there are steep drop-offs at the edge of the roads, no guard rails, no shoulders

\*many towns have many individual houses along with apartment houses. In much of Europe you only see apartment houses in towns and cities

\*the gps voice is annoying - it says "in 7.1 miles exit ferry" (as if you are going to stay on the ferry when it is docked) and also it says "return to route" several times when you're on the ferry and therefore on the route already known

\*we drove under 2 animal bridges - they have many trees growing on them so you know they aren't car or pedestrian bridges - not sure how the animals know where to cross the highway but it is supposed to be keeping them safe

\*we've seen a fire engine, an "ambulance", no police cars (though 2 policemen came in to get their order at the restaurant as we were eating)

\*the ferry ramps are brought up to form walls at the ends of the ferry - we're used to the ramps coming down from the shore rather than carried on the ferry - you can't see ahead because the ramps are at least 8' tall on the ferry

We had some clouds, some light rain, some sun today, about 57.

Have a great weekend!

God bless you.

Lynne and Steve





The port of Alesand from the ferry Nordkapp



A town along the fjord



A scene from the ferry





Another town by the fjord

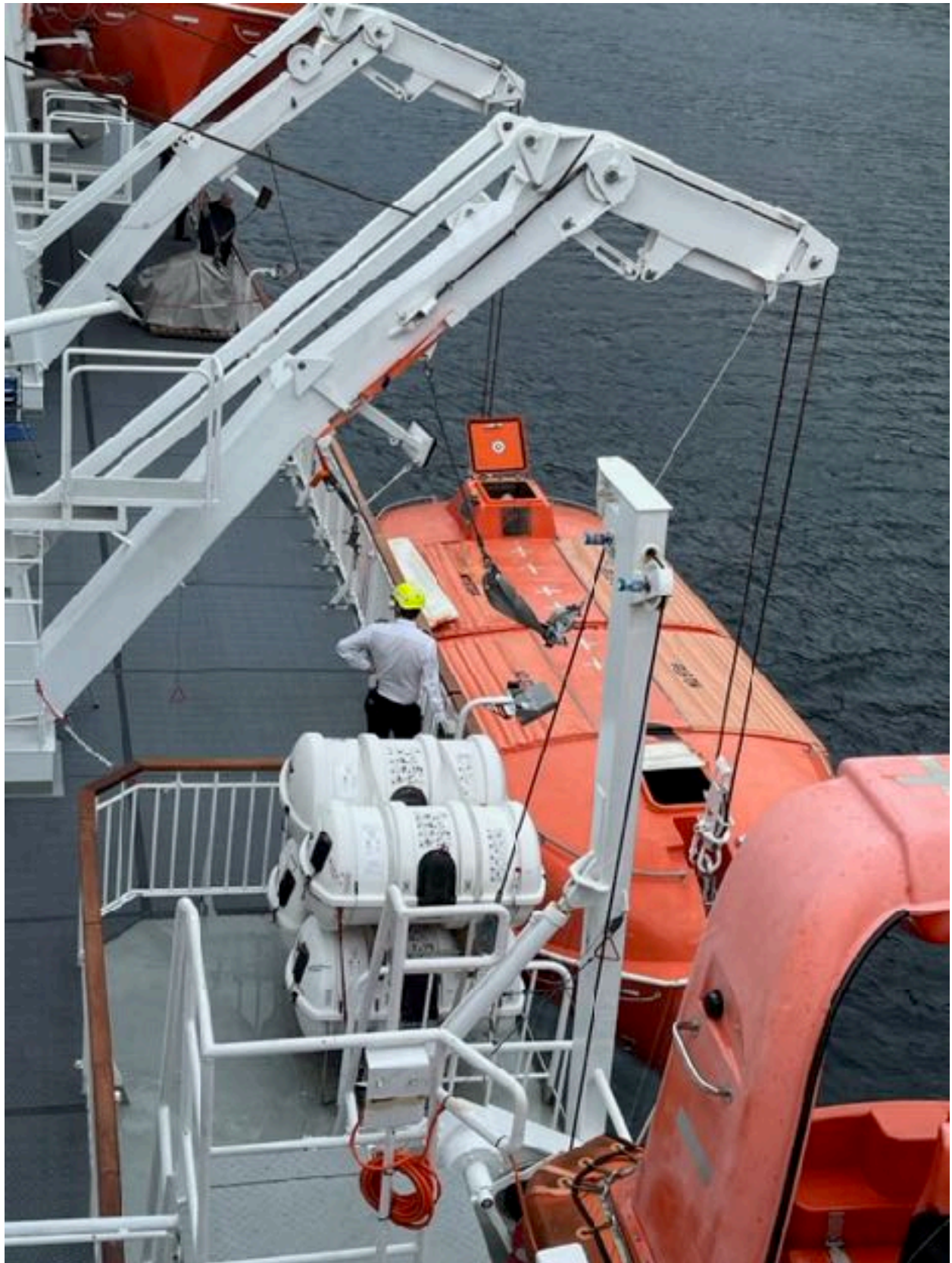


Glaciers seen from the fjord



Yes, it rained. The mountains were so varied in shape





The lifeboat being raised after it was used for practice. It holds 150 people



Glaciers



View down the fjord





Another view



Alesand through the rainy window - we stayed here overnight



Dinner - a Philly cheesesteak. The steak was almost an inch thick!





Along the Stranda waterfront



The shapes of the mountains are interesting!



The colors on the mountain sides were interesting





Road shot. The clouds below the top of mountains



The church in Vestnes



Ferry crossing a fjord





A farm overlooking a waterway



Lungstad



Einesvagen





Vestnes



Orskog



Orskog - the landscape is so varied and interesting





Stordal



Mountains with sunshine on them



Along the Atlantic Road





DRILLING

A poster of the Atlantic Road which had 7 bridges connection the islets in the Atlantic Ocean



One of the islands along the Atlantic Road



Along the Atlantic Road





Averøya



Where does that bridge go?????



The Atlantic Road





Stordal



Liabygda



Pretty mountains by a fjord





Waiting for the ferry to take us to Stranda



Mountain peaks near Standa



Stranda





Church in Standa



I had marinated beef, salad, fries, and garlic dressing (on the meat which also included fried onions), a couple of pieces of bread that appeared to be pita (on the right). He had grilled halibut, vegetables, sour cream, boiled potatoes (on the left).

To Lom 9/30d

Greetings from Fossheim Hotell in Lom!

We were 2 of the 3 staying in the hotel last night, so no fancy breakfast. The clerk offered to cook us breakfast - she made us an omelet with ham in it. She put salty thin slices of ham on the plate plus 2 cherry tomatoes cut in 6 pieces. It was alright, not as fancy as our past breakfasts! Not sure how they stay open if there are so few staying there. And our room was 432 - I guess they figured we needed the exercise of walking down the hall! At least there was an elevator - it seemed like the old fashioned kind where you pull the outside door open to go in, then 2 sets of interior doors close (it opens on both sides) before it goes up or down. It was raining (Norwegian weather!).

We drove from Stranda to Hellesylt where we sat in the car in the rain until we could drive on the ferry. This ferry took us up another fjord, which we both thought was better than the other fjords we have seen, to Geiranger, a world heritage UNESCO site. There was narration on the ferry, first in English, then in Norwegian. It was informative and interesting.

There had been several farms on the sides of the mountains in the fjords - don't know how they could farm with no flat ground! - but the farms have been abandoned over the last century. An organization was formed to take care of the farm buildings and it does that every year. One farmer raised goats and apple and pear trees. Another one had over 100 goats and other farm animals and didn't have to grow



crops. When the tax man came, he pulled up the ladder which was used to get to his farm so the taxes were never paid.

We also passed the 7 Sisters, waterfalls. Across the fjord was the frustrated wooer (the waterfall split into 2 around rocks which looked like a liquor bottle) who was refused in marriage by each of the sisters. (At least these are the stories we were told!)

We stopped at the Norwegian Fjord Center which was a museum about life around the fjords.

From there we started driving towards Dalsnibba which involved multiple hairpin turns as we went up the mountains, past glaciers, waterfalls, a lake, streams, beautiful scenery despite the rain. The hairpin turns were scary because you never knew if you meet another car taking too much space on your side of the road. We arrived safely at the bottom, then had straight or gentle curves the rest of the way to Lom. We found Fossheim, checked in, then walked across the bridge by the waterfall and then continued to the Stave Church. We walked around it since it was closed. We returned to move into our room.

From the book Historic Hotels: "There's no disputing that Fossheim is in a remote corner of the world, tucked under high peaks and steep mountainsides in Lom. The hotel started out as a posting inn and opened in 1897 by the family Th. Garmo. It is now run by the third and fourth generations of the same family. Timber houses, built in harmony with good building tradition, and the hotel's art and antiques help to create a special atmosphere you are sure to enjoy. A large courtyard with several old timber houses adds a special flavor. We are particularly proud of our very best cottage - Gaukstadstugu - which is one of Norway's best preserved 17th century timber houses."

We had a 6 course dinner, at Fossheim, split it in half and we're both stuffed! It was delicious.

1. Comfit of scallops: scallops cooked in oil for an hour, caramelized, bacon and apple

- 2 - mushroom soup with dumplings
- 3 - lingonberry and aquavit granite - to cleanse the palate
- 4 - reindeer with creamed game sauce, pickles and mushrooms  
(tasted somewhat like beef)
- 5 - a taste of Norwegian cheeses: all made from mountain goat milk, white, yellow, blue cheese, plum jelly, caramelized nuts (almonds and hazelnuts), and flat bread
- 6 - chocolate truffle cake (tasted like fudge) with sherbet and a piece of caramelized sesame seeds

We thank you for your prayers for safety (we were safe despite the wet roads and hairpin curves) and for healing - Steve's thumb is healing, I am mostly feeling better. Please continue to pray for us as we pray for you.

Have a good Lord's Day!

God bless you.  
Lynne and Steve



Model cabins outside the Norwegian Fjord Center. Note the grass growing on the roofs





Glaciers on the mountain



A waterfall





Can you see the road we took? Lots of curves and hairpins!





A glacier



Road shot



View from our balcony at Fossheim





Foss in Lom



Stave Church in Lom, well kept graveyard



Church and road trip 10/1b

Greetings from Fossheim!

We had a very good day!

This morning we ate the hotel breakfast - not as varied as others, but certainly plentiful with many choices including what we call "brown cheese" and they call "red cheese" though the color is brown - it is a sweet cheese which is made in this area of Norway. It was 39 degrees and sunny. But the sun didn't get above the mountain behind us until after noon!

We read for a few minutes before we walked to the Stave Church for the church service. Of course, it was totally in Norwegian so we didn't understand much. We did recognize the Creed. It was a special day for young children (maybe those under 6) - most of the families had at least one child of that age. First the children were herded out before the service. Then the crucifer came down the aisle with the children following. Some carried baskets of food (one was pears, one was carrots and other veggies, maybe the third one was small potatoes). They laid the food before the altar rail and the children returned to their seats. After the first reading, the children were invited to the front, sat on the floor, and heard a story and, I guess, a Bible lesson. They each received a copy of the hardback storybook. Then they returned to their seats. 3 of them, sitting in front of us, two boys were about 3 and the sister of one, maybe 18 months, wandered around the church for the rest of the service - they were distracting. At the end of the sermon we each received a pear. For communion small rolls were used for the bread and dipped in the wine (intinction).

We walked to a wooden bridge, looked at the waterfall, then went back and over the regular bridge to the bakery where we each picked a pastry. We then got our car and started driving. We drove south and west along the glacial Bovra River and into the mountains. We saw different and varied sides of mountains, glaciers, snow, waterfalls.

The landscapes were so interesting. We drove on many hairpin curves, especially dangerous when the vehicle coming the other way decides to take their half of the road out of the middle of the road and the roads are only 16' wide. We crossed Sognefjellet at 1428 meters, then went down the other side to the Lusterfjord and drove along it past where it joined Barerturnvatnet and through tunnels to the head of that waterway. We got gas, then headed back to Lom. At one point on the mountain road we had to stop - about a dozen sheep were being moved from a pasture to an enclosure and they were walking/running down the road in front of us, taking up the entire road.

We made it back to Lom before sunset which was our goal - didn't want to drive those twisty mountain roads without guardrails in the dark where there are no streetlights! We had dinner in the Fossheim restaurant - since we had the 6 course meal last night we could order from the limited menu tonight. We only had one course (the main course). Steve had halibut with cauliflower (one was purple, the other yellow), I had meatballs (made of reindeer and beef) and vegetables which were barely cooked, plus small new potatoes. It was sufficient! Our waitress was from Kiev and wanted to practice her (very good) English with us. She will be in Norway for 15 months as a waitress. Her father is a captain in the Ukrainian army.

Many of the churches we have passed are 8 sided with an entrance way and an apse for the altar area.

Today was sunny most of the day, about 43. It's cold in the mountains!

Have a good week.

God bless you.  
Lynne and Steve



Hillside with farms and houses, sheep in the pasture





Waterfall coming a long way down the mountainside



Glaciers on the mountains





Hellesylt in the rain





The waterfall at Hellesylt



Starting into the fjord from Hellesylt to Geiranger

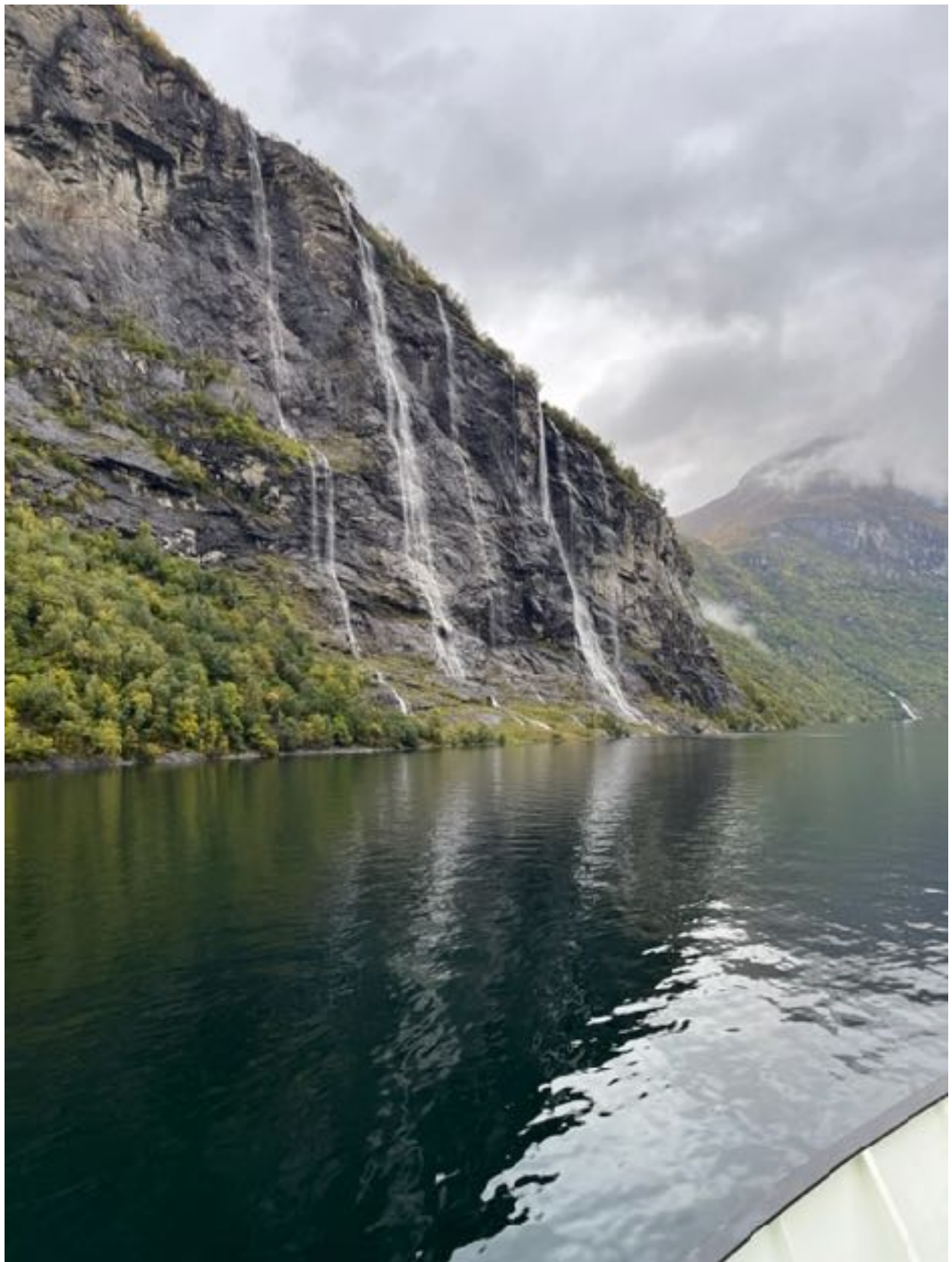


Clouds below the mountain tops





Numerous waterfalls come down the mountains!



7 sisters waterfalls







The waterfall on the opposite side of the fjord “the wooer” who was always spurned



Kayakers in the fjord



Geiranger, the end of the fjord and of our trip on the ferry boat



The troll which greeted us in Geiranger





The interior of a cabin along the fjord in the Norwegian Fjord Center



The farmer on the mountain beside the fjord would pull his ladder up so the tax man could not make him pay taxes - the only way to his farm was up the ladder



Outside the Norwegian Fjord Center





Lom

6 course meal at Fossheim restaurant:



First course: Comfit of scallops: scallops cooked in oil for an hour, caramelized, bacon and apple





Second course: mushroom soup with dumplings



Third course: lingonberry and aquavit granite - to cleanse the palate





Fourth course: reindeer with creamed game sauce, pickles and mushrooms (tasted somewhat like beef)





Fifth course: a taste of Norwegian cheeses: all made from mountain goat milk, white, yellow, blue cheese, plum jelly, caramelized nuts (almonds and hazelnuts), and flat bread



Sixth course: chocolate truffle cake (tasted like fudge) with sherbet and a piece of caramelized sesame seeds



View from our hotel balcony in Lom





Inside the Stave Church



Fossheim's very best cottage - Gaukstadstugu - which is one of Norway's best preserved 17th century timber houses.





Snow and glaciers along the Sognefjell Drive





Glaciers



Another view of the varied terrain



Another glacier





Don't the peaks look fake?



A lake on the top of the mountain





The glacier sort of looks like a sideways butterfly!





Road blockage!



Into their enclosure and we can drive on!







Pretty glacial lake - it is turquoise



Varied terrain



Trees are turning color. The yellow is birch trees. Not sure what the orangish/red is.

Road trip 10/2a

Hello from Notodden Hotel in Torvet!

You ask where we are? I have no idea! We traveled south from Lom, that's all I know!

Anyway, we ate the hotel breakfast, said goodbye to our waitress Ann (pronounced Annah like our niece's name) from Ukraine, packed, and left Lom. It was 39, sunny much of the way. We traveled through a national park, maybe Jotunheimen, over passes, past glaciers, high mountain lakes, above the tree line. We drove through a cloud at one point.

Eventually we went past a fjord and to Rjukan. Steve wanted to see the Vemork Power Station. We drove through town, stopped at a hotel - all the beds are taken by workers in this industrial site. Steve said it sounded like a fish farm they were working at. We traveled on, did find the power station. It was the second one at that point. It is now a museum. We hiked quickly up the steps to the walkway up the hill and up more steps to the entrance. It was only open for another half hour, so the guy let us in for free. We looked at the exhibit for the town of Rjukan. Steve looked at the big machinery. I rested.

Rjukan is the first planned town in Norway planned by a corporation. Sam Eyde bought the Rjukanfoss in 1903. He planned to make electricity from the waterfall. He planned and had built houses for 10,000 workers (many of them are still being lived in - they were the best planned town houses, not shabby ones built in other company towns) . In 1911 the world's largest power station opened at Vemork. The town of Rjukan, a "company" town, opened, the most modern town so far in Norway's history. Artificial fertilizer was manufactured here. This was the foundation for Norway's ascent from one of the poorest countries in the world to the richest in 100 years. All available stocks of heavy water were produced in Rjukan during World War II.



The Germans wanted the heavy water produced here. Norwegian/English men were dropped in the area in 1943 and they proceeded to sink the ferry that the heavy water container was on, so the Germans did not get the heavy water used to make an atomic bomb. There was a movie made of that.

We then drove back through town. Steve found the largest town around and we headed for it, hoping that it would have a room. This hotel originally said it was full, but we ended up with a large room, the only one left in the hotel. There is a shower in the bathtub plus another one in the corner of the bathroom, neither have any curtain around them. Then we walked a block to a Kebab place and I ordered a simple kebab, Steve ordered the one with fries. Mine came in a cone which I couldn't set down, his on a plate. Both had kernels of corn, meat, and lettuce in them, mine in a pita, his with the pita on the side. The man who took our order is from Iran but has been in Norway for 42 years.

The road we took yesterday over Norway's highest pass (at 4,600') is the highest road in Northern Europe. It is closed mid-Oct. to May.

I don't know what happened to the notes I took today for this e-mail. Oh, well, maybe I'll remember some tomorrow. We have seen many campers, both driving around and parked in campgrounds. Judging by the amount of publicity camping gets, Norwegians must love to camp. We've passed many small cottages out in the wilderness - they must be summer homes, many are boarded up now. We've seen magpies flying around - they are a black and white bird, very distinctive. We've seen few pickups, seen many cars with a small trailer. The road crews have small traffic lights they can put at worksites if the road is only one lane wide while they work.

God bless you.  
Lynne and Steve



Norway is so pretty!



The reflections in the lakes were gorgeous!





A pretty countryside



Clouds under the mountain



Now we're above the treeline. Beautiful mountain lakes





Interesting colors!



Kebobs

Notodden to Fredrikstad 10/3b

Greetings from Hotel Fredrikstad!

This morning we ate the hotel breakfast (not as much variety as some have been). We relaxed for about an hour, then packed up and started driving. We drove south and east to the ferry from Holten to Mose across the Oslo Fjord. All the ferries use something like our ez-pass, so we don't have to pay for each one as we get on - it makes it much faster without having to stop to make payments all the time. In the short distance there were 5/6 large 6 lane ferries going back and forth. We then drove further south to Fredrikstad. The landscape in the south is more flat with rolling hills.

We found the hotel, checked in. Our room is on the corner and we have the only balcony in the hotel, on the fourth floor. A man was in costume where we checked in - he was playing Tordangkjold (1690-1720) in a film they were filming here. Tordangkjold is a hero for sinking 150 Swedish ships in a war with Sweden. He died in a duel. We then moved our car to a parking lot about 5 blocks away - the hotel has no parking.

We walked about 3 blocks to a free ferry which takes you across the river to the fort - it takes about 5 minutes from shore to shore. There were 11 bicycles and a scooter (and their drivers) on board with us. On the next trip back, 2 dogs were included with the riders, though they didn't seem to be too happy to be on the same boat. The ferry formerly took cars across until a bridge was built. We walked through the gate and around the Old Town. We went in the museum - since it was closing in 20 minutes, she only charged us half price. We climbed the stairs to the second floor and looked at the exhibits about the history of Fredrikstad. This city had a fort to prevent Sweden from taking more of Norway back in the early 1700s. We chatted with the cashier, then walked around more of the town and then up on the wall. We could see the moat and the river. We took the ferry back, only one bicyclist and one other woman were with us this time. We then



walked along the river quay, past many sailboats, and back to the hotel.

Back to yesterday: I forgot to mention that we saw a pasture with llamas. I also saw 4 pigs under some trees.

More about Norway: there are few traffic lights, almost every intersection is a roundabout. There are yield signs, no stop signs at corners (and in the towns, no yield signs at many corners). You have to be careful driving! The roads are usually very smooth, no potholes, no patches. In a tunnel (2 lanes going one way), the speed was 100 k/h, the tunnel was wide. As we approached a work zone, a voice came over the gps to announce that there was a work zone in 1 km - it was not the gps voice. Most wheelchairs we have seen have been electric. Norway is very handicapped friendly. Almost every barn has a ramp to the second floor.

We walked along the river to a restaurant suggested by the hotel clerk. We had beef tenderloin, potatoes, vegetables (including mushrooms) and béarnaise sauce, all very good.

It was sunny, 49 when we left, now closer to 55.

May God bless you.  
Lynne and Steve



Our room in Notodden



Can you imagine someone driving this down your street?





Do you see me waving from our balcony at Fredrikstd Hotel?



Now you can see me better!





Dinner tonight: beef tenderloin, potatoes, vegetables (including mushrooms) and béarnaise sauce

Fredrikstad to Oslo 10/4b

Greetings from Astoria Hotel, Oslo!

This morning we ate the hotel breakfast, relaxed, then packed up, checked out. We dragged our suitcases the 4 or so blocks to our car. Then we started driving north.

We found our way to this hotel (we stayed here a few days ago when we were in Oslo), left our bags in the luggage room. Then we drove

past where we needed to return our car, finally found a gas station. We had to fill the car before dropping it off.

Then we started walking back to the hotel. After a couple of blocks on city streets, we took a pathway next to a bikeway between apartment buildings for more than a half mile - it was pleasant without traffic noises. Eventually we found our way to the hotel. It was a 2.5 mile walk. Now we are relaxing in our rooftop room - half of the room has a ceiling that slants down - hopefully Steve won't hit his head when he gets out of bed during the night. The bathroom is bigger than the one we had last time - you do not have a leg and arm under the sink when you sit on the toilet! We have a skylight not a window..

We asked at the desk for a recommendation for a Norwegian restaurant. We walked about 6 blocks to Kaffestova. We had lamb chops with Brussel sprouts and potatoes. All was very good.

Only 3 photos today! It was about 60 and sunny.

We loved Norway. Steve wants to move here and have our daughters and families also move here. You are all welcome too. Oslo is the size of Baltimore. Large numbers of people going to and fro, shopping, eating, from all over. Vibrant and comfortable. The country is beautiful, prosperous. Thought they made it hard to become a citizen. If they did, that changed.

Please pray for safe travel for us as we fly home tomorrow - we leave here at 7:50 a.m. Baltimore time, arrive in Baltimore at 7:30 - what a long trip in an airplane! We do land in Reykavik for 2 hours on the way.

God bless you.  
Lynne and Steve



Along the way, the grass was so green at this farm!





Oslo Cathedral



Lamb chops, delicious!

Journey home 10/5c

Greetings from somewhere over the Atlantic Ocean!  
hours to Baltimore!

4

We slept fairly well. We ate the hotel breakfast. We packed, then relaxed for a while before checking out and walking to the train station. It was sunny, about 45.

We took the slower (cheaper) train to the airport - it made one stop on the way. We missed the train by 1 minute, so had to wait 30 minutes for the next one.

At the airport we found a line to check-in - many people in front of us. We ended up being checked in by the Business Class person since the Business Class had already checked in. We then went through security - the machine to check luggage, etc. was extremely slow. It was checking for 2 lines, so it took one from each line in turn, then divided them again into the correct line.

We walked to our gate, waited about 15 minutes, then boarded our flight from Norway to Iceland. The flight was 2 hours 45 minutes. We ended up again in the first seats behind Business Class so we had lots of leg room. Unfortunately the luggage bins above were full of pillows, so we had to put our carry-on suitcases many rows back. It was a smooth flight until a bit of turbulence as we landed. Our plane was docked at the terminal, no going outside in the rain to get off!

I looked at the stores while Steve checked e-mail. Then we ordered dinner (lamb shank for me, broiled cod for him). It took more than 25 minutes for it to be cooked. By then we were supposed to be at our gate so we ordered it to go. Unfortunately our gate was 20 minutes away, so we rushed through the airport, then had to go through



passport control and boarding pass control. We were at the end of the line to check in. That meant we were almost the last people on the bus to our plane. We had to walk out in the light rain.

Our seats are in row 26, two rows from the back of the plane. There were stairs to go in the front and the back of the plane, so we walked up the back steps. This is the first plane that was not totally full! We actually have 6 seats, the whole row! We were assigned seats across the aisle from each other, which makes no sense, but we are sitting together. We ate our supper, good, but cold, oh, well, it was made over 45 minutes before we could eat it. The flight from Reykjavik to Baltimore is 5 hours, 41 minutes. So our flights this trip have not been too long.

I reminded Steve that breakfast tomorrow will not be as lavish as it has been the last two weeks!

Favorite Memories: Iceland: waterfalls! Sheep and horses

Faroe Islands: mountains and tunnels

sheep and horses

Norway: fjords, mountains sheep and cows

We did not have any difficulty renting cars. Steve had read before we left home that you couldn't rent a car after you turned 80. But no one said anything about that when we picked up the cars he had reserved in advance. Steve drove more than 2710 km in the 3 rented cars (1500 miles?).

We have now visited 38 countries on 5 continents (we've never been to South America). We have worshipped in about 30 languages.

Greetings from our home!

8:10 p.m.

Our last flight from Reykjavik to Baltimore was mostly smooth, some turbulence but didn't have to turn on the seat belt. We went through

passport control and customs, found a taxi and arrived home in the light rain and 79 degrees. To us it is after 2 a.m., so we are headed to bed!

We thank you for your prayers. God has answered them. God certainly made us a beautiful world! We hope you have learned a bit more about our world and have enjoyed “traveling’ with us!

God bless you.  
Lynne and Steve