



Study tour: Canada

Rose Howard, Pastoral Health Care Worker at Aberfoyle Park in South Australia, was one of three Australians who joined this year's study tour to Canada, organised by Lutheran Parish Nurses International (LPNI). The other two were Angela Uhrhane, Pastoral Care Nurse at Lutheran Aged Care Albury, and her sister Andrea.

Rose received a travel grant from LPNI, awarded in lieu of a scholarship to a first-time study tour participant. Before joining the tour, she enjoyed the beauty of God's creation on a cruise through Canada's Inside Passage. Rose (right) and Angela are pictured, making friends with some Candians!

Following is Rose's description of the study tour.

The tour began in Winnipeg, in the province of Manitoba, on Thursday 13 September. We gathered at the Clarion Hotel, for an introductory dinner with participants from Canada, USA, Palestine, and Australia. Judy Hertlein, our tour co-ordinator gave a warm welcome, and over dinner old friendships were renewed and new ones formed. Over the following week Judy became our tour guide as well as co-ordinator, together with our bus driver, Rick.

Our guest next morning was the President of Lutheran Church Canada, the Rev Tim Teuscher. He brought greetings and spoke of the history of the Lutheran church in Canada. In the early days, immigrants from many European and Nordic countries who settled in Canada had problems and divisions among the members. Today there are two strands of the Lutheran church, with membership mainly of Nordic and German background. The church works with ethnic groups and the seminary provides theological training to African pastors.

We were then bussed to the Museum of Human Rights, housed in an impressive modern building. It displays the history of Canada, where 'there have been both steps and missteps on the road to greater rights for everyone in Canada'. The two hours spent



there were two days too short! There was so much to see and take in, to appreciate all that it had to offer.

After lunch and some shopping, we were taken to the Canadian Lutheran World Relief office in the Winnipeg CBD. It is housed on the sixth floor of lovely old building. After a tour of the offices, we met the Community Relations Director, the Rev Carla Blakley, and received a presentation on all the areas of international relief that is given by Canadian Lutheran World Relief.

Saturday started out cloudy and cold as we travelled west to our next destination, Russell; but there was a sunny afternoon for our tour to the Inglis Grain elevators, where we saw a video of the elevators' history. Then it was on to St Elijah's Romanian Orthodox church, where we had afternoon tea and heard the history of their church. We also visited an older church and homestead on the grounds.

Later we travelled to Vine Chapel and watched an indigenous tribal dance, and then on to Asessippi Park for dinner. Back at the Inn, most delegates and friends spent the evening enjoying a music night with refreshments.

On a cold and wet Sunday, we crossed the Saskatchewan border, for a service, at Christ Lutheran church, Langenburg – Judy Hertlien’s home town. After the service we were served lunch downstairs in the church hall, then returned upstairs for presentations from Evelyn Swanson (History of Parish Nursing in Canada); Angela Uhrhane (Parish Nursing in Australia); Raeda Mansour (Parish Nursing in Bethlehem); Rose Howard (Parish Nursing/Pastoral Care in Australia) and Pat Braun (Role of the Parish Nurse Serving in Lutheran Schools).

Each presenter gave an insight to their work. Evelyn travels large distances with her work. Angela works in aged care and is currently acting as chaplain at a church aged-care facility. Raeda’s work is diverse and challenging. Rose helps in the church and local community. Pat works in 23 schools in the inner suburbs of Chicago. When the presentations finished, we continued travelling to Manitou Beach for our evening meal.

The next day we were taken on short tour of Watrous and Manitou Beach and visited the local dance hall ‘Danceland’. The waters and springs at Manitou Beach, according to indigenous customs, have healing powers. There was an in-ground pool, beauty therapy treatments and shops at our motel; most folks made good use of these!

After travelling west, on Tuesday we headed south for Regina. On the way we visited the Last Mountain Bird Sanctuary, the first designated sanctuary in North America. Unfortunately there were no birds about on the day, so we continued through beautiful Qu’Apelle Valley and arrived in Regina after lunch. Here we had a guided tour of the Legislative Building, which is similar to parliament buildings in Australian capital cities, very grand, beautiful marble and paintings depicting early and Canadian life.

After dinner at our hotel, a presentation from guest speaker, Pastor D Kim, the Regina Police Service chaplain, was an emotional insight to the work that he has undertaken.

After breakfast on our last day, we heard from Joanne Petersen, President of the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses Association, and a public representative, elected to council to ensure the best for the patients. Her interesting after-hours hobby is raising a flock of sheep.

Faye Brekelmans from Ontario then spoke about the Canadian Association of Parish Nursing. ‘Parish Nursing is the health ministry of southern communities, which emphasises the wholeness of body mind and spirit, rooted in the vision that Christ is the healer’.



Following this presentation, we were taken to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) Heritage Centre, where our guide told of the RCMP’s history, watched a video, looked through the museum, then boarded trolleys and were taken on a tour of the RCMP training grounds and facilities, stopping to watch the daily Sergeant Major’s parade (pictured) and a visit in their chapel with many lovely stained-glass windows. Our final dinner (supper, as Cana-

dians call it) spilled over to farewell drinks in the sunken lounge. A wonderful time of learning and connecting was sadly coming to an end.

Next morning all participants said final farewells over breakfast, some earlier than others and headed for the airport, most to fly home, but I flew to Banff for a little touring and then taking the train back to Vancouver to round off my fantastic journey.