

Which church is it?

1. True or False: Urnes is the oldest surviving stave church.

Answer TRUE: Urnes Stave Church was built around 1130 A.D. The distinctive carvings on the north portal are from an even older church. It was declared an UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1979.

2. True or False: Heddal Stave Church is the smallest surviving stave church.

Answer FALSE: Heddal Stave Church is the largest! It is 20 meters long and 16 meters wide, with 3 turrets standing 26 meters tall.

3. True or False: Gol stave church has always been located in Oslo.

Answer False: Gol Stave Church was disassembled from its original location in Gol in 1881, and in 1885 was reconstructed on Bygdøy peninsula in Oslo. It is now part of the Museum of Cultural History.

Past & Present

1. What was the name of the troll who, legend says, helped build the Heddal Stave Church?

Olaf Sigurd Grendel Finn

Answer Finn Finehair

He is said to have completed the Heddal Stave Church in just three days! According to legend, Finn Finehair (Finn Fagerlokk) also played a part in building Nidaros Cathedral in Trondheim and Lund Cathedral in Sweden.

2. The Society for the Preservation of Ancient Norwegian Monuments (*Fortidsminneforeningen*) manages how many of the 28 remaining stave churches?

2, 8, 19 or All of Them

Answer 8—they include the churches of Borgund, Urnes, Hopperstad, and Uvdal.

3. The heyday for stave churches was between the 12th and 14th centuries. How many churches were thought to have been built during this time period?

200-300 552 880 Over 1,000

Answer Over 1,000—it is estimated that 1-2 thousand stave churches were built during this era all across Europe. Only 28 remain today and all are located in Norway.

How they are built

1. True or False: Stone, metal and wood were all common structural materials used in the building of stave churches.

Answer FALSE: Stave churches have a post and lintel building structure composed primarily of wood. Metal was only used on decorative door panels and locks.

2. Late Viking-era carvings are featured on which part of the Urnes Stave Church?

Entry Doors, Altar, Between the Pews or Interior Walls

Answer Entry Doors—the wooden door panels are the original example of the Urnes Style of carving, which depicts sinuous animals interlacing and looping, with long eyes pointed forward. This style dates from 1050 A.D. into the 12th century.

3. Ore-pine is the English translation for the cured heartwood of mountain fir trees that were used for the central supports of stave churches across Scandinavia. Each region had its own pronunciation for ore-pine. Which of these is Norwegian?

malmfura malmfuru malmfyr málmfura

Answer Malmfuru is the Norwegian diction and it stems from Old Norse root words that each region shared during the Viking era.

Malmfura = Swedish, Malmfyr = Danish, Málmfura = Icelandic

Church & State

1. What denomination were the majority of stave churches built to service?

Lutheran, Catholic, Anglican or Baptist

Answer Catholic—stave churches were built before the Protestant Reformation that swept Norway in 1537 A.D.

2. True or False: Borgund Stave Church is dedicated to Saint Andrew.

Answer TRUE: Borgund Stave Church was built around 1180 A.D. and dedicated to Saint Andrew, the patron saint of singers and fishermen.

3. Canonized in 1031 A.D., who is the patron saint of Norway?
Harald Hardrada, Ragnar Lodbrok, Olaf Harraldson, Magnus V

Answer Olaf Harraldson—also known as St. Olaf, he is known to be buried within Nidaros Cathedral, located in Trondheim.

Sognefjord in a Nutshell

1. How many stave churches are in Sogn og Fjordane?
10, 5, 4, or 2

Answer 5—Borgund, Hopperstad, Kaupanger, Undredal & Urnes

2. True or False: The surviving stave churches in Sogn og Fjordane were all built at the end of the 14th century.

Answer FALSE: They all date back to the 12th century, which was the beginning of the era in which the style and construction of stave churches was popular.

3. Considered the largest of the stave churches in the Sognefjord region, Kaupanger Stave Church has how many stave supports?
18, 22, 24, 28

Answer 22—Kaupanger Stave Church contains 22 stave supports and has a capacity of 125 people. It is still being used as the local parish church every Sunday.

Stave Church Replicas

1. How many replicas of Borgund Stave Church are there in the United States?

None, 5 or 3

Answer 3—they are located in: Rapid City, South Dakota
Lyme, Connecticut and Washington Island, Wisconsin

2. True or False: Gol Stave Church is featured as a full-size replica in Minot, North Dakota, at the Scandinavian Heritage Park.

Answer TRUE: The original Gol Stave Church is at the Museum of Cultural History in Norway.

3. To which country did Norway gift a replica of its Haltdalen Stave Church to honor the country's 1000-year anniversary of Christian conversion?

Denmark, Finland, Sweden or Iceland

Answer Iceland—the replica was constructed on the island of Heimaey in the year 2000. Heimaey is only a 30-minute ferry ride from the town of Landeyjarhöf on Iceland's southern coast.