

THE
CHURCH
IS HERE

Reykjavík Iceland





With snow-covered Mount Esja in the background, Reykjavik, Iceland's colorful capital, bids welcome to an island nation more than 1,000 miles (1,609 km) from the European mainland. First settled by the Vikings in AD 874, Reykjavik is the heart of Iceland's cultural, economic, and governmental activity, as well as one of the cleanest, greenest, and safest cities in the world.

The first two Icelanders to join the Church were baptized in Denmark in 1851. They soon returned to Iceland, and in 1853 the first branch was organized. Today there are nearly 300 members in Iceland in three branches, in Reykjavik, Akureyri, and Selfoss. The nearest temple is in London, England, 1,177 miles (1,894 km) from Reykjavik.

Though the number of members is small, the Church continues to grow. Despite challenges of isolation, translation of Church materials, unfavorable weather, and cultural barriers, Church leaders have promised that one day Iceland will be a beacon to other countries. President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) visited Iceland and reminded members that they are “people of ‘strength and power and capacity’ to do great things” (“Wonderful to Have Sweet, Good Land,” *Church News*, Sept. 21, 2002, 10).

- The Icelandic Mission was organized in 1894, but proselyting was discontinued in 1914. Iceland became part of the Denmark Copenhagen Mission in 1975.
- In 1977, Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin (1917–2008), then a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, officially dedicated Iceland for the preaching of the gospel.
- In 1981 the Book of Mormon was published in Icelandic—a language spoken nowhere else in the world.

