

Truth AMONG CONTRADICTIONS



THE ICELAND PROJECT

Just a five hour direct flight from Washington, D.C., sits an island of misconceptions and seeming contradictions. Iceland is a land of mystery and beauty, but the spiritual darkness runs deep. What has been dubbed the most godless country in Europe is *supposedly* 85 percent Christian.

Gunnar Gunnarsson, pastor of Loftstofan Baptistakirkja, the only Baptist church in the capital city of Reykjavik and one of only two Baptist churches in Iceland, says that these spiritual contradictions are numerous.

We're a nominally Christian country often overlooked by the outside world because of very positive sounding statistics on paper, while in reality regularly

topping the charts for leading the world in anti-depressant consumption per capita, out-of-wedlock births per capita and atheistic beliefs per capita. Meanwhile, the nation is tanking in church attendance, and has less than five healthy churches in the entire country.

With no IMB missionaries in Iceland, the need for a Gospel presence was great. In 2006, a small group of churches began to meet that need, forming the "Iceland Project" — a coalition of churches committed to church planting. This coalition of churches has prayed, visited, lived in Iceland and committed themselves to this long-term endeavor.

Now, a church has been planted, with plans for a second church in the works. In early 2019, Logan

and Carla Douglas left their home church, **Pillar Church** in Dumfries, Virginia, to partner with Gunnarsson to ultimately plant a second church within the region — Redeemer City Church.

The road ahead is difficult. Gunnarsson said, "Ministry is hard here, and little groundwork has been done or passed down to current generation of Christians doing work on the ground."

This is why it is the right time for SBC of Virginia churches to get involved. Already, a dozen SBC of Virginia churches are supporting the Iceland Project. ■

“

There is a lot to be done, and the work ahead is tough. If you want to be a part of God's work in Iceland, you have a unique opportunity in front of you — not only to start a church or a couple of churches, but hopefully and prayerfully, by the grace of God, impact a nation," Gunnarsson said.

”

