



**A greeting
from
the President of Iceland
Guðni Th. Jóhannesson
to
Fjalla Lutheran Church
on its 125th anniversary
4 August 2019**

On the occasion of its 125th anniversary, I send the Fjalla Lutheran Church my heartfelt congratulations and good wishes. We Icelanders will forever be grateful for the respect and homage that North Americans of Icelandic descent hold for their old mother country. Those Icelanders who emigrated a few generations ago had their valid reasons, they wanted to create a new life for themselves and their families. They wanted a new opportunity. They faced new challenges, many hardships. But most of them persevered and many found strength in their religious beliefs, in their church. That is why the Fjalla Lutheran Church was founded and that is why we should honor its establishment and history.

Dear friends! Allow me also to thank Kristine Koehmstedt for reminding me of the church's anniversary. I wish you all a bright future, thank you again for honoring the strong bond between the "Vestur-Íslendingar" and Iceland. In conclusion, I quote the opening lines of Stephan G. Stephanson's epic poem about new lands and old memories:

To the uttermost outlands
Of the earth you may roam,
In the mind every moment
Are the memories of home.

Guðni Th. Jóhannesson