

MIÐGARÐAKIRKJA

Miðgarðar eru nyrsti kirkjustaður á Íslandi. Jón biskup Ögmundsson vígði þar kirkju snemma á 11. öld og var hún helguð Ólafi, þjóðardýrliingi Norðmanna. Við hana skyldu þjóna tveir prestar og syngja messu á hverjum degi en tvær messur á dag á sérstökum helgidögum. Þekkt eru nöfn rúmlega 50 presta sem hafa þjónað Miðgarðakirkju í gegnum tíðina en henni er nú þjónað af prestum Dalvíkurprestakalls.

Talið er að fyrsta kirkjan í Grímsey hafi staðið á hól er Kirkjuhóll hét, rétt vestan við vitann, en hún hafi fokið á haf út og hafi timbur úr henni rekið á land þar sem heitir Viðarvík eða Stertuvík. Núverandi kirkjustæði er upp af þeirri vík.

Í Grímsey munu hafa verið torfkirkjur til ársins 1867 þegar reist var kirkja úr rekaviði. Kirkjunni var breytt umtalsvert árið 1932, hún stóð upphaflega nær Miðgarðabænum en var færð um lengd sína vegna eldhættu og bætt við hana forkirkju með háum turni og kór.



Miðgarðakirkja
Prestssetur og kirkja á Miðgördum árið 1902. Kirkjan er kennd við bæinn Miðgarða. Þar stóð áður torfkirkja sem var rífin þegar þessi kirkja var reist á sama stað úr rekaviði árið 1867. Þá byggð með skarsúð, tjörguð og með hvítmáluðum trékrossi yfir vesturstafni auk þriggja glugga á hlöð og einn á kórstafni.

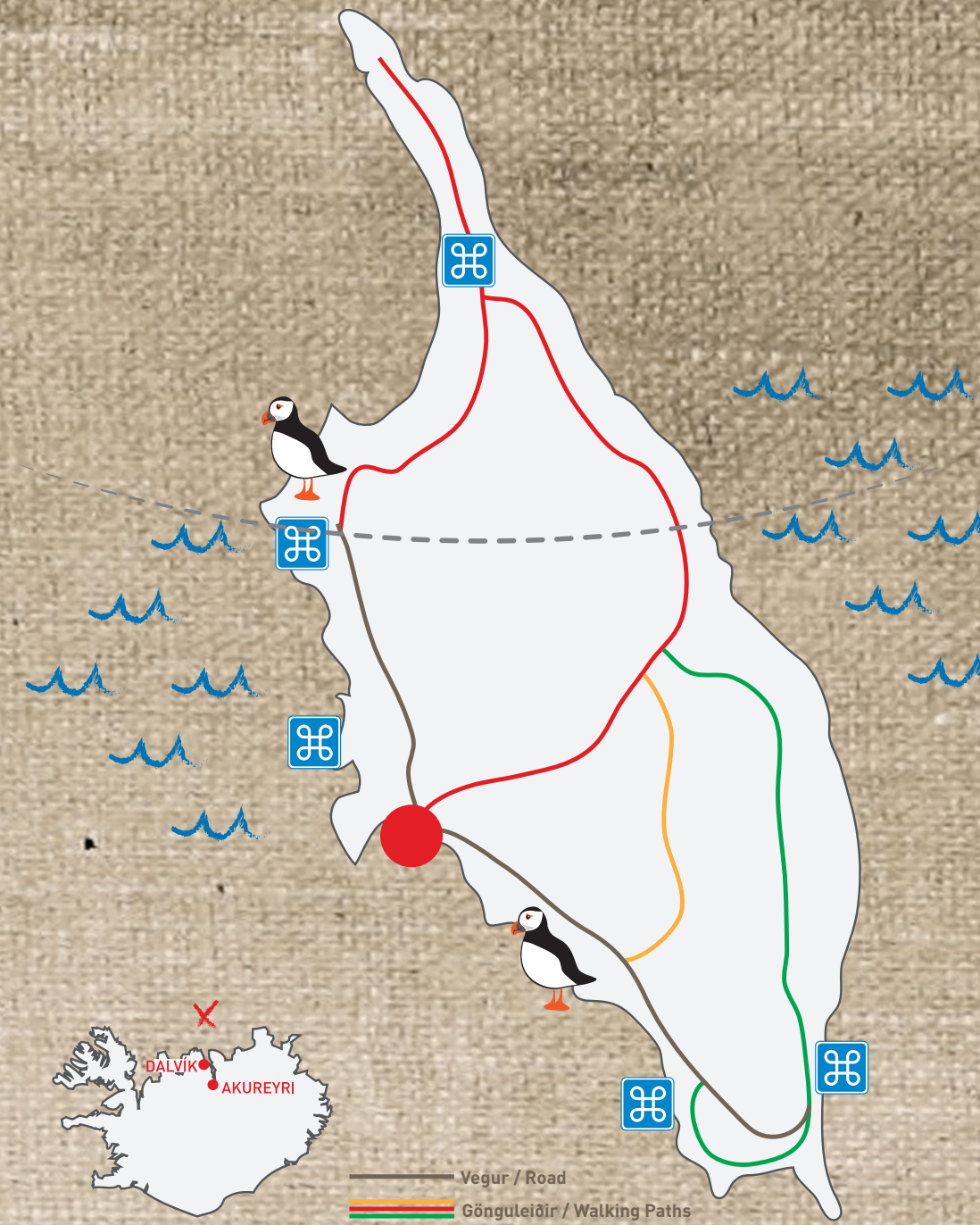
Mynd: Eiríkur Þorbergsson. Upprunalega myndin er varðveitt í safni Fiske í Cornell háskóla

Miðgarðar Church
Vicarage and church at the farm of Miðgarðar in 1902. The church is named after the farm. Originally the church was made of turf which was removed when the church was reconstructed of driftwood in the same location in 1867. The church had a clincher roof, tarred and with a white-painted wooden crucifix over its west gable. The side wall had three windows, with one window at the chancel gable.

Photograph: Eiríkur Þorbergsson. The original is preserved in the Fiske museum at Cornell University.

Helgi Ólafsson smiður og bóndi á Borgum í Grímsey sá um endurbæturnar og fórst afar vel úr hendi að fella saman gamla kirkjuhúsið og nýbyggingarnar. Frekari endurbætur fóru fram á kirkjunni árið 1956 og var hún endurvígð 12. ágúst 1956.

Að kvöldi 21. september árið 2021 brann Miðgarðakirkja til grunna en hún varð alelda á örskömmum tíma í stífri norðanátt. Allir gripir kirkjunnar eyðilögðust í brunanum. Orsök brunans má rekja til bilunar í rafmagni. Grímseyingar voru strax staðráðnir í að byggja nýja kirkju og var lagt í viðamikla söfnun til að ná því marki. Hjörleifur Stefánsson arkitekt hannaði kirkjuna og skruðhúsið sem eru timburhús klædd lerki og með stuðlabergsskífum á þaki. Framkvæmdir við nýju kirkjuna hófust vorið 2022. Kirkjan þjónar víðtæku hlutverki í Grímsey og er notuð fyrir trúarlegar athafnir og viðburði af ýmsu tagi.



Hurðin

Fyrir Miðgarðakirkju var tvöföld vængjahurð. Einar Einarsson formaður sóknarnefndar smíðaði og skar út texta og myndir í hurðina sem sýnir frelsarann kyrra vind og öldur á Genesaretvatni og vers eftir Hallgrím Pétursson:

Þá þú gengur í Guðs hús inn
Gæt þess vel, sál mín frána
Hæð þú þar ekki herra þinn
Með hegðun líkamans tóma,
Beygðu holdsins og hjartans kné,
Heit bæni þín ástarkveðja sé,
Hræsnin mun síst þér sóma.
– Hallgr. Péturss.

The Door

Miðgarðar church was fitted with a double folding door. Einar Einarsson, foreman of the parish council, constructed the door with carvings showing the Saviour still the wind and waves of Lake Gennesaret as well as lines from a hymn by Hallgrímur Pétursson.

Photo: Simon Bunyard



Kirkjan sem brann

Gamla timburkirkjan sem var byggð 1867, var færð og endurbyggð 1932. Þá var henni breytt umtalsvert, m.a. bætt við forkirkju með háum turni og kór. Kirkjan var síðan endurvígð árið 1956 og friðuð 1. janúar 1990. Hún eyðilagðist í bruna 2021.

Mynd: Friðþjófur Helgason

The church that burned down

The old timber church, dating from 1867, was moved and rebuilt in 1932. Considerable alterations were also made to the church on this occasion, adding a vestibule with a high steeple and a gallery. The church was reconsecrated in 1956 and became a listed building on 1 January 1990. The church burned down in 2021.

Photograph: Friðþjófur Helgason

MIÐGARÐAR (MIDGARDEN'S) CHURCH ON THE ISLAND OF GRIMSEY



Miðgarðar is the the northernmost church site in Iceland. The bishop Jón Ögmundsson consecrated the local church in the early 11th century, dedicated to Ólaf, Norway's national saint. The church was to be served by two priests who sang the Mass every day and twice a day on special days of sacred observance. We know the names of over 50 priests and clergymen who have been in the service of Miðgarðar church through time. Currently the church is served by clergymen of Dalvík vicarage.

The first church in Grímsey is thought to have stood on a hillock, named Church Hill, immediately to the west of the lighthouse. The church is believed to have been blown out to sea in a storm, with some of its timbers drifting ashore in a cove variously named Viðarvík or Stertuvík. The current church stands near the cove.

Churches in Grímsey were mostly made of turf until 1867 when a church was built from driftwood. The church underwent considerable

alterations in 1932; originally it had stood near the Miðgarðar residence, but was shifted away from the farmhouse lengthwise to prevent a fire hazard. A vestibule was added, as well as a high steeple and a gallery. Helgi Ólafsson, carpenter and farmer at Borgir in Grímsey, was in charge of the renovation and demonstrated special skill in the tasteful combination of the old church building and its new additions. In 1956 further improvements were made to the church which was reconsecrated 12 August 1956.

In the evening of 21 September 2021, Miðgarðar church burned to the ground, after falling victim to a blaze fuelled by a stiff gale from the north. The entire contents of the church were destroyed in the fire, the origin of which was traced to an electrical fault. From the first, the people of Grímsey were determined to build a new church and an extensive public collection was launched for this purpose. The architect Hjörleifur Stefánsson, designed the church and the vestry, both built of timber, with an external

cladding of larch and basalt roof tiles. Work on the new church began in spring 2022. Apart from religious services, the church has a wide-ranging role in Grímsey as a venue for a variety of events and gatherings.



Tapaðir gripir

Ferming í Miðgarðakirkju (2021). Á myndinni sjást einnig kirkjugripir sem urðu eldinum að bráð 2021. Predikunarstóll frá 1867, altarisstafla frá 1878 eftir Arngrími Gíslason málara, fagurlega útskorinn skínarfontur og tvær söngtöflur eftir Einar Einarsson frá 1958.

Mynd: Gyða Henningsdóttir

Loss of precious items

Confirmation in Miðgarðar church (2021). The photograph also shows precious church items which were consumed by the fire of 2021: A pulpit from 1867, an altar-piece from 1878 by the painter Arngrímur Gíslason, an elegantly carved baptismal font and two hymn tables from 1958 by Einar Einarsson

Photograph: Gyða Henningsdóttir



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