

RETIREMENT PLANNING

Give Your Investments a Regular Check-up

Experts say that how you choose to invest your money among asset classes is the most important factor in how much your retirement investments grow over time. Your first priority should be determining what percentage of your account is invested in equities (stocks), fixed income instruments (bonds) and other types of investments—your asset allocation.



You may not earn enough to meet your goal if you don't include enough risk in your investment choices. Conversely, the money may not be there when you need it if you take too much risk. The goal of a properly allocated account is to prudently manage overall risk without sacrificing opportunities for the investment gains and returns you will need to meet your goals. The key is to make sure the investments you've chosen for your retirement account are appropriately diversified—based on your age, risk tolerance, investment time

horizon and objectives (e.g., saving for home purchase in 20 years). Once you achieve the right balance, you should evaluate your investments periodically, and consider whether your asset allocation needs to be adjusted.

REVIEWING YOUR INVESTMENTS

Your investment strategy should be reviewed at least annually and when your situation changes (e.g., risk tolerance or intended retirement date). When evaluating your investments, consider:

- How your retirement account should be invested to provide the level of diversification and risk appropriate for you
- The timeframe over which you will be investing
- Whether it is time to change your investment election, rebalance your account and/or start using the LifeStage Investment Management Service

These financial topics are discussed in detail in the April 2012 issue of *Hark* at www.gbophb.org/assets/1/7/2012_04.pdf.

INVESTING RESOURCES

Evaluating investments can be complicated—even for experienced investors. That is why your responsible choice, the General Board, offers the following resources:

- **LifeStage Investment Management Service**—this no-charge service offers *manage.ability*. It creates a customized investment portfolio for you, allocates retirement plan investments among five of the funds offered by the General Board and automatically rebalances the account to maintain your target investment mix.
- **EY Financial Planning Services***—this no-charge service provides *advise.ability*. Receive confidential, objective assistance analyzing your asset allocation, deciding if you need to change the allocation or rebalance

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*Available to active participants and surviving spouses with an account balance, and retired and terminated participants with an account balance of at least \$10,000.



PLANNING SERVICES

Ernst & Young is Now EY

The General Board has offered financial planning services to eligible* participants for several years. The company that provides these valuable services recently changed its name—Ernst & Young is now known as EY.

Although EY's name has changed, the services available to participants have not. You can still expect to receive confidential, objective guidance from professional financial advisors at no charge for a wide range of needs, including:

- Saving for retirement
- Making investment decisions

- Managing debt
- Understanding tax issues
- Buying a home
- And more

The General Board will begin incorporating the new company name and logo in our materials. However, in the interest of stewardship, any materials that have already been printed will be exhausted before reprinting. Therefore, you may continue to see the old corporate name and logo for some time.

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To learn more about the services available from EY, visit www.gbophb.org/retirement/services/ey-financial-planning-services/.



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your account, and determining if LifeStage is appropriate for your situation.

The goal of a properly allocated account is to prudently manage overall risk without sacrificing opportunities for the investment gains and returns you will need to meet your goals.

Visit www.benefitsaccess.org and select “Take Action” under **MANAGE INVESTMENTS**:

- Select “Change investment of future contributions” to change your investment elections for future contributions
- Select “Change investment of current balance” to rebalance your account (i.e., reallocate account balance among investment funds),

- Select “Change LifeStage Personal Investment Profile” to sign up for or discontinue the LifeStage Investment Management Service

Instead of using Benefits Access, you can complete and return an *Investment Election Form* (online at www.gbophb.org/assets/1/7/3265.pdf) or call the General Board at **1-800-851-2201** on business days from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Central time.

CHANGING INVESTMENTS

If you determine that it is time to make changes, you can do so easily via Benefits Access—the online account management website for participants in General Board-administered retirement plans.

Think outside the bowl...



An energizing event for young clergy ages 25-39
September 15-17, 2014
 Find out more at www.gbophb.org



Visit the [revitup!](#) Facebook page and “Like” us!

ACCOUNT SECURITY

Protect Your Passwords

Managing your accounts once meant visiting banks and other financial institutions, and stopping by the post office to put payments in the mail. Online account access has simplified things and reduced the risk of mail fraud. However, just as you wouldn't leave your bank statement lying around, you have to keep your online information secure.



INTERNET SECURITY

Internet security specialists agree there are simple steps you can take to protect your information.

1. Password protect all devices (e.g., smartphones, tablets and computers).
2. Make sure passwords are complex—containing an uppercase letter, lowercase letter, number and symbol—and regularly change them.
3. Never leave a list of your user IDs and passwords near your computer. Keep them in a locked file cabinet or drawer or hidden in case of a break-in.
4. Don't save a list of your user IDs and passwords on a file in your computer.
5. Use antivirus/antispyware software (e.g., Bitdefender Antivirus), and keep your system updated. Free versions are available.
6. Never open e-mails or download software from unknown or unverifiable sources or click strange links in instant messages.
7. Don't use your work e-mail account for personal communications.
8. Always sign out of online accounts and log off of public computers. This prevents unauthorized access to your accounts and prevents websites from keeping a record of other sites you visit.
9. Clear your browser history and cookies regularly, or do it automatically. If you use Internet Explorer, go to the **Control Panel**. Under **Browsing history**, check "**Delete browsing history on exit.**" If you use another browser, the process may differ.
10. Never provide your full Social Security number to any unknown source or use it for website login when other options are available.
11. When selecting security questions, do not choose answers that are commonly known or easy to determine (e.g., your child's name or birth date would be easy to find in public records).
12. Make sure websites (such as banks) that handle sensitive information are secure ("https" in the address).
13. Review your financial accounts regularly (e.g., bank, credit cards, retirement accounts). If you see unfamiliar charges or activity, contact your financial institution or creditor immediately.
14. Don't provide your e-mail address, phone number or ZIP code unless it's necessary to complete a transaction. Say "no" when cashiers ask for marketing purposes.
15. Don't share personal information, such as your birthday or home address, on Facebook or other social networking sites, and only allow "friends" to access your page.

Beware of Scams

Most people have received at least one shady solicitation via the Internet, in the mail or by phone, and these scams are growing—and becoming increasingly complex. The following are five top scams identified by the Better Business Bureau and the National Council on Aging.

1. **Overpayment and fake check scams**—Victims receive an unexpected check or one that is for a larger sum than they expect and are asked to refund the difference. The check later bounces, and victims have also lost the money they refunded to the check issuer.
2. **"Grandparent" or "emergency" scams**—Victims receive a call from someone who claims to be a family member or friend who is in trouble. They ask for help and instruct victims to send money via a wire service. Victims later find out that someone was posing as a loved one and that they cannot get the wired money back. Wiring money is like sending cash because it's nearly impossible to reverse the transaction or trace the money.
3. **Employment scams**—Victims apply for a job that allows them to work from home and find out that they must purchase equipment or supplies, paid for via a wire service, before starting work. Sometimes these scammers also trick victims out of private information, such as Social Security numbers or banking information.

continued

INVESTING

BSVPF to Be Replaced by ESVPF

On December 31, 2014, the General Board is terminating the Balanced Social Values Plus Fund (BSVPF), and replacing it with a new fund option, the Equity Social Values Plus Fund (ESVPF).

The new fund will be available to individuals and United Methodist-affiliated institutions. It will invest in U.S. and non-U.S. publicly traded equity securities and will include companies that must pass multiple, broad-based social screens, including both exclusionary screens—aligned with the *Social Principles* of The United Methodist Church—and positive screens. The positive screens seek to identify companies with sustainable policies and practices related to the environment, diversity, employee relations, human rights, product quality and safety.

The General Board—through its investment advisor Northern Trust Investments—has engaged MSCI ESG Research, which is a widely recognized authority on environmental, social, and governance research, to rate companies based on environmental and human rights policies and practices.

In the fall, the General Board will communicate with participants who currently invest in BSVPF to notify them about this change and inform them of the actions, if any, they will need to take.

For additional information, visit www.gbophb.org/news/release/pr20140331 to view our press release.



BSVPF AND ESVPF—A COMPARISON

BSVPF	ESVPF
Only equities in U.S. companies	U.S. and international equities
Holds Positive Social Purpose Lending Program (PSPLP) loans	Does not hold PSPLP loans
10% allocation to short-term investments	Less than 1% allocation to short-term investments
Exclusionary investment screens <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alcohol 2. For-profit prison facilities 3. Gambling 4. Pornography 5. Tobacco 6. Weapons 	Exclusionary investment screens <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alcohol 2. For-profit prison facilities 3. Gambling 4. Pornography 5. Tobacco 6. Weapons
	Positive investment screens <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Diversity 2. Employee relations 3. Environment 4. Human rights 5. Product quality 6. Safety



BEWARE OF SCAMS (continued)

4. Counterfeit prescription drugs— Victims purchase prescription drugs online at a much lower price than at U.S. pharmacies and receive fake, expired or mislabeled medications. Buy prescription drugs only from licensed U.S. pharmacies to ensure you don't purchase items that could be hazardous to your health.

5. Sweepstakes and lottery scams— Victims are notified that they have won a sweepstakes or lottery that they don't remember entering. However, they must pay upfront for fees or taxes. After the money is sent, the prize never arrives.

RECOURSE FOR SCAM VICTIMS

If you may have been a victim, file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission at <https://www.ftc>

complaintassistant.gov and report it to your state Attorney General. If you are e-mailed spam, send it to spam@uce.gov.

The best protection against fraud is good judgment. Don't provide sensitive information to anyone you don't know, and if a situation makes you uncomfortable, trust your instincts. Remember, if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is!