

hark!

Bringing you great tips for responsible investing

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January 2017

Resolve to Improve Your Financial Wellness



At the beginning of every year, many people make resolutions to improve their lives. A resolution can help jump start your commitment to wellness—mental, physical and financial.

Take the time to assess your financial wellness and make changes to improve your financial future. Consider these activities to begin the year.



Take a Financial Wellness Assessment

EY Financial Planning Services (a no-cost service* available to eligible participants**) offers an online assessment that can help identify and address your financial concerns. It asks questions about your financial attitudes and behaviors, and provides a score and recommendations for actions that can improve your finances.

To take the assessment visit <https://gbophb.eyfpc.com>.



Give Your Investments a Check-Up

If you are a LifeStage participant, you should periodically review your Personal Investment Profile to ensure it reflects your approach to investing. Participants who self-manage their investments or have savings in IRAs or other employers' retirement plans should review their investment strategies and rebalance their investments at least annually to ensure appropriate levels of diversification and risk. Want help? Call EY at **1-800-360-2539**.



Set Your Savings Goals

Determine how much you would like to add to your retirement nest egg, your children's education fund or a house down payment. Also decide how much to pay toward your personal loans, debts and mortgage bills. Specific goals are easier to reach, so instead of planning to "pay down debt," make a commitment to "set aside \$200 a month" for debt repayment—and write your plan down.



Review Your Credit Report

Errors are not uncommon and can affect your chances of being approved for a loan or increase the interest you pay. You're entitled to free credit reports from each of the three credit bureaus every year.

- Equifax at equifax.com
- Experian at experian.com
- TransUnion at transunion.com

* Costs for services are included in Wespath's operating expenses that are paid for by the funds.

** EY Financial Planning Services are available to active participants and surviving spouses with account balances, and to retired and terminated participants with account balances of at least \$10,000.



Wespath

BENEFITS | INVESTMENTS

Talk with Your Family About Finances

Much of what you learn about life begins with what you learn at home, and finances are no different. Yet, many families find it difficult to discuss money, according to a recent National Endowment for Financial Education survey.

It's time you have that talk. The United States ranked 14th globally for financial literacy in a 2015 survey by Standard & Poor's, behind Canada, the United Kingdom and Germany, among others. Parents have the most influence on their kids' money skills, habits and attitudes. Early financial education could mean the difference between a child who saves and spends responsibly and an irresponsible spendthrift who needs help with finances later in life.



Consider discussing your current financial situation and your short- and long-term goals with EY Financial Planning Services. Call **1-800-360-2539**.



Young children learn by example, so you should strive to improve your own financial knowledge and decision-making. Consider discussing your current financial situation and your short- and long-term goals with EY Financial Planning Services by calling **1-800-360-2539** to get your finances on track.

For older children, consider sharing information about your family's financial position and including them in your estate planning process. It's very important that you tell a trusted person (e.g., your spouse, child, attorney or executor) where important records can be found in case you are unable to communicate your wishes—such as a copy of your will; an inventory of assets, accounts and insurance policies; and contact information for financial firms with which you conduct business. Read “Communicating Your Last Wishes” in the January 2015 issue of *Hark* for more information at wespath.org/assets/1/7/4747.pdf.

Having open financial discussions could help your family learn from your success—and your challenges! So make the time for your family to share your wealth of knowledge.

EY Can Help with Financial Planning and Estate Planning!

EY's website (<https://gbophb.eyfpc.com>) contains useful financial education information that can be shared with your family. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau also offers useful resources for parents and caregivers at consumerfinance.gov/money-as-you-grow/.

Wespath Invests \$30M in Renewable Energy for Developing Countries



Wespath Investment Management invested \$30 million in companies that help provide solar energy to poor communities in developing countries that are not connected to national power grids.

Our investment with Developing World Markets (DWM) provides financing to 11 institutions operating across nine countries. These organizations help people purchase solar-powered lanterns, home solar kits and other products and services to light their homes, run their businesses and refrigerate their food.

According to the United Nations, more than one billion people globally have no access to electricity, while another billion only have occasional access. For many around the world, energy access is vital to supporting a move out of poverty.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has said: "Energy is the golden thread that connects economic growth, social equity, and environmental sustainability."

Our investment with DWM is the most recent example of our Positive Impact Investments, which demonstrate the intent that our global investment activities have a positive impact on society and the environment, while providing attractive returns for the participants we serve.



Learn more about our sustainable investment strategies at www.wespath.org/si.



Investment Solutions for United Methodist Organizations

a division of Wespath Benefits and Investments, a general agency of The United Methodist Church

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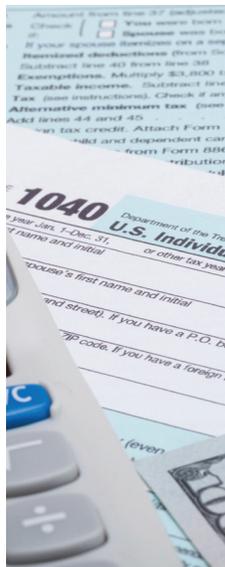
2017 Retirement Contribution Limits

UMPIP is a 403(b) plan, subject to contribution limits under the Internal Revenue Code.

For 2017, you may contribute the lesser of your compensation (not including the value of any parsonage or housing allowance excluded from taxable income) and:

- \$18,000 in combined before-tax and Roth contributions, or
- \$24,000 if you are age 50 or older by December 31, 2017, and
- Up to an additional \$3,000 if you have a total of 15+ years of service with United Methodist-related organizations (call Wespath at **1-800-851-2201** for details)

Total before-tax, Roth, after-tax and plan sponsor contributions cannot exceed the lesser of \$54,000 or 100% of your compensation (not including housing allowance or the value of parsonage excluded from taxable income).



Mark Your Calendars

Upcoming Events!

 **Clergy Benefits Academy**
February 6 – 8, 2017
Pensacola Beach, Florida

For clergy of all ages and stages of ministry—new ordinands, early-career clergy, mid-career clergy, ready-to-retain clergy, district superintendents, clergy in extension ministries—and spouses.

REGISTER AT
wespath.org/events/cba-2017-pensacola/



Visit benefitsaccess.org Today!

Benefits Access is your first step for information about your Wespath-administered retirement plans and programs.

Benefits Access allows you to:

- View account information
- Conduct transactions
- Read educational articles

And more!

Wespath is constantly updating and improving the site to better meet your needs.



SAVE THE DATE!
February 6-8, 2017
Hilton Pensacola Beach
32 Via De Luna Drive
Pensacola Beach, Florida 32561

BE | INSPIRED
Clergy Benefits Academy

Learn Much
LAUGH OFTEN
LEAP AHEAD

Required Annual Disclosure to Church Plan Participants

Retirement plans administered by Wespath are church plans that are not subject to registration, regulation or reporting under:

- The Investment Company Act of 1940
- The Securities Act of 1933
- The Securities Exchange Act of 1934
- Title 15 of the United States Code
- State securities laws

Similarly, the administrator and the trustee of the plans and the entities maintaining any investment funds under the plans are not subject to the provisions of those acts or laws. Therefore, plan participants and beneficiaries will not be afforded the protection of those provisions.