

# Global Conservative Strategy Q1 2024

# **Strategy Objective**

The Global Conservative strategy primarily seeks capital preservation through asset class exposure and diversification, but also maintains an objective of capital appreciation through active allocations. The multi-asset class strategy combines high-conviction active management with the diversification of low-cost, passive ETFs.



Source: Archer IMS, IDC, WestEnd Advisors. Returns for periods greater than one year are annualized. The blended benchmark for the Global Conservative strategy is 35% MSCI ACWI (Net) and 65% Bloomberg Barclays U.S. Government/Credit Bond Index.

WestEnd Advisors claims compliance with the Global Investment Performance Standards (GIPS®)

#### **RISK AND RETURN SUMMARY\***

	Trailing 3 Years			Since Inception		
	Global Conservative		Blended Global C	Global Co	nservative	Blended
	Gross	Net	Benchmark	Gross	Net	Benchmark
Return	-0.22%	-3.17%	0.98%	4.10%	1.03%	4.26%
Standard Deviation	9.92%	9.87%	9.84%	7.60%	7.56%	7.68%
Alpha	-1.20%	-4.17%	n/a	-0.07%	-3.13%	n/a
Beta	1.00	0.99	1.00	0.97	0.96	1.00
Sharpe Ratio	-0.31	-0.61	-0.19	0.34	-0.07	0.35
R-Squared	98.2%	98.2%	n/a	96.0%	96.0%	n/a
Tracking Error	1.32%	1.31%	n/a	1.54%	1.54%	n/a
Upside Capture	91.3%	71.2%	100.0%	93.9%	70.9%	100.0%
Downside Capture	105.1%	118.9%	100.0%	92.9%	114.7%	100.0%

Source: Archer IMS, IDC, WestEnd Advisors



**Inception Date:** January 2015 Top-down approach since 1996

Focus: Global multi-asset

**Investments:** Long-only, fixed-income and equity ETFs from leading U.S. providers; no leverage or derivatives

**Risk Mitigation:** Manage downside protection through fixed-income allocation, regional equity allocation, and U.S. sector avoidance

Tax efficiency: Low average annual turnover/long-term holding periods

#### PORTFOLIO COMPOSITION

Number of Holdings	8 to 17 on average
Fixed-Income Exposure	50% to 80%
Non-Investment Grade	0% to 15%
Equity Exposure	20% to 50%
U.S. Large-Cap	8% to 35%
U.S. Small/Mid-Cap	0% to 8%
International Equity	3% to 30%
Target Cash Position	2% to 5%
Annual Turnover Range	20% to 69%**

### MODEL PORTFOLIO WEIGHTS

U.S. Large-Cap Equity	21.1%
Health Care	6.3%
Information Technology	5.3%
Communication Services	3.2%
Consumer Discretionary	2.1%
Financials	1.6%
Consumer Staples	1.6%
Utilities	1.1%
Europe	3.3%
Asia & Other Int'l	8.1%

Inv. Grade Corp. Bonds	8.4%
Short-Term Corp. Bonds	7.9%
Treasury Bonds	51.2%

Source: Bloomberg, WestEnd Advisors

\* Based on Global Conservative Composite as of 3/31/2024. Net performance reflects the deduction of an assumed 3.00% annual fee rate. See Footnotes and Disclosures on page 4 for additional information.

\*\*Based on 5 years ended 12/31/23

Source: Bloomberg, WestEnd Advisors



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### PORTFOLIO POSITIONING as of 3/31/2024

- In our view, this evolving economic environment warrants a balance of exposures to defensive areas of the market as well as areas that should benefit if economic growth persists.
- In the U.S., we are emphasizing mid- and late-phase sectors that we expect will see less
  deceleration in earnings as economic growth slows, such as Communication Services and
  Health Care, while largely avoiding early-phase cyclical U.S. sectors, though we have added
  opportunistic exposure to Financials, which we be believe could benefit from easing financial
  conditions and a rebound in capital markets activity.
- We remain underweight to international equities, as a whole, including Europe and emerging markets, but we maintain an overweight of developed Asia, where we see the greatest potential for economic resilience abroad.
- We maintain an overweight of fixed income with an emphasis on intermediate and longer-term Treasury securities that we believe will benefit if interest rates decline, and we have shortened the duration of corporate exposure to reduce risk from a potential widening of credit spreads.

# Q1 2024 ATTRIBUTION

Positive Contributors		
Overweight	Japanese Equities	
Underweight	U.S. Real Estate Equities Western European Equities	

#### Negative Contributors

Overweight	Long-Term Fixed Income Securities
Underweight	Equity Asset Class U.S. Information Technology Equities

Source: Bloomberg, WestEnd Advisors

# **HISTORICAL RETURNS\***

	Global Conserv		
	Gross	Net	Benchmark
2024 YTD	1.34%	0.58%	2.36%
2023	9.57%	6.35%	11.34%
2022	-15.09%	-17.64%	-15.05%
2021	6.57%	3.43%	5.06%
2020	13.61%	10.28%	12.18%
2019	14.76%	11.40%	15.63%
2018	-1.49%	-4.41%	-3.44%
2017	10.18%	6.94%	10.64%
2016	1.74%	-1.26%	4.87%
2015	0.24%	-2.72%	-0.51%

Source: Archer IMS, IDC, WestEnd Advisors

## GLOBAL CONSERVATIVE INVESTMENT PROCESS

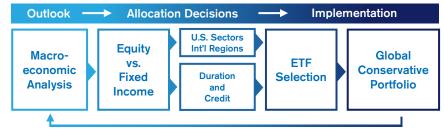
We begin the investment process by aggregating more than 200 domestic and international economic measures into a proprietary database. Then we evaluate the data to identify areas of economic strength and weakness in the U.S. fixed-income and global equity markets, and invest in typically 8 to 17 ETFs from leading providers.

#### **U.S. Equities**

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Communication Services Select Sector SPDR Fund	XLC
Consumer Discretionary Select Sector SPDR Fund	XLY
Consumer Staples Select Sector SPDR Fund	XLP
Financials Select Sector SPDR Fund	XLF
Health Care Select Sector SPDR Fund	XLV
Technology Select Sector SPDR Fund	XLK
Utilities Select Sector SPDR Fund	XLU
International Equities	
iShares Core MSCI Europe ETF	IEUR
Vanguard FTSE All-World Ex-US Index Fund ETF Shares	VEU
Vanguard FTSE Pacific Index Fund ETF Shares	VPL
Fixed Income	
iShares 3-7 Year Treasury Bond ETF	IEI
iShares 7-10 Year Treasury Bond ETF	IEF
iShares 20+ Year Treasury Bond ETF	TLT
Vanguard Short-Term Corporate Bond Index Fund ETF	VCSH
Vanguard Interm. Term Corp. Bond ETF	VCIT

### INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT TEAM

Fritz Porter, CFA	CIO, Portfolio Manager 25 years of experience 16 years at WestEnd Advisors
Ned Durden	CIS, Portfolio Manager 27 years of experience 17 years at WestEnd Advisors
Ty Peebles, CFA, CPA	Portfolio Manager 14 years of experience 10 years at WestEnd Advisors
Jacob Buchanan, CFA	Portfolio Manager 8 years of experience 6 years at WestEnd Advisors



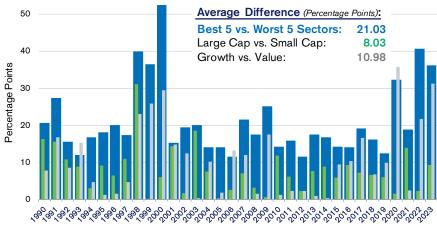
For illustrative purposes only.

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## THE IMPORTANCE OF SECTOR ALLOCATION

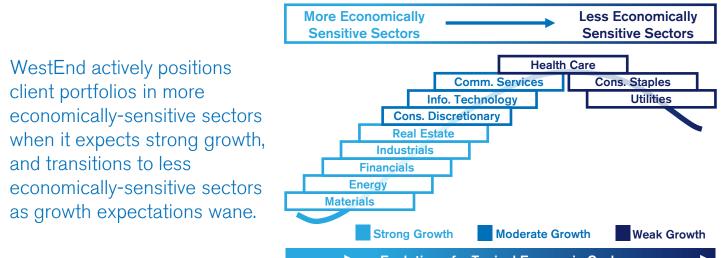
The path of economic growth is a key driver of U.S. equity sector performance. The investment team analyzes recurring cyclical trends and identifies the characteristics particular to the current economic cycle. Portfolios are typically invested in four to six large-cap U.S. sectors at any one time based on our macroeconomic outlook, but may be invested in more or fewer sectors as conditions warrant.



### RANGE OF RETURNS BY SECTOR, CAPITALIZATION, AND STYLE\*

Owning the right sectors at the right time and avoiding those not in their ideal economic environment offers significantly more opportunity for outperformance, in our view, than allocating to the right equity style or market capitalization range.

Sectors: Best 5 vs. Worst 5 Capitalization: Large vs. Small Style: Growth vs. Value Source: Bloomberg, WestEnd Advisors



Evolution of a Typical Economic Cycle

For illustrative purposes only.

\* Sector performance is represented by sectors of the S&P 500<sup>®</sup> Index. "Large Cap" is represented by the S&P 500<sup>®</sup> Index. "Small Cap" is represented by the Russell 2000<sup>®</sup> Index. "Growth" is represented by the Russell 1000<sup>®</sup> Growth Index. "Value" is represented by the Russell 1000<sup>®</sup> Value Index. Data for 2016 excludes Real Estate as a stand-alone sector, which was included in Financials until September 16, 2016. Data for 2018 replaces the Telecommunication Services Sector with the new Communication Services Sector after September 21, 2018, using geometrically-linked total returns to produce a single full-year return, and treats the linked returns as a single sector, due to changes in GICS sector classifications and index rebalancing that occurred as of market close on September 21, 2018.



# Global Conservative Strategy 01 2024

## FOOTNOTES AND DISCLOSURES

WestEnd Advisors, LLC ("WestEnd"), an SEC-registered investment adviser, operates as an autonomous Victory Capital® Investment Franchise. WestEnd's active principals are responsible for managing the firm and its day-to-day operations. Registration of an investment adviser does not imply any level of skill or training. WestEnd manages equity securities for individual, institutional and wrap clients.

WestEnd Advisors' Global Conservative Composite includes all discretionary accounts invested in the Global Conservative model except for portfolios that participate in a wrap-fee program. The Global Conservative Composite creation and inception date is December 31, 2014, and the investment strategy has been consistent since creation. WestEnd Advisors' Global Conservative Composite is invested in large, mid, and small-cap U.S. equities, international equities, U.S. fixed-income, and other assets, all through the use of exchange-traded funds, and/or high-grade money market instruments. Returns were achieved without the use of options, derivatives, or leverage of any kind. Results are calculated daily using the aggregate method, use trade date valuations, and include cash as well as the reinvestment of dividends, interest income, and other earnings, if applicable. Portfolio returns are weighted using beginning of period values plus weighted cash flows. Portfolios and composites are valued daily and are denominated in U.S. dollars only.

The performance shown is based on WestEnd Advisors' Global Conservative Composite which includes all fully discretionary accounts invested in the Global Conservative model except for Wrap-Fee (Wrap) and Unified Managed Account (UMA) accounts. While the accounts in the Global Conservative Composite are invested according to the same model as Wrap and UMA accounts, performance may differ between the Global Conservative Composite and Wrap and UMA accounts due to a variety of factors, including but not limited to: fees assessed by Wrap and UMA sponsors (e.g. wrap fees), Wrap and UMA sponsorand client-imposed investment restrictions, and WestEnd Advisors' lack of trading discretion over UMA accounts.

Gross returns reflect the deduction of direct trading costs and the underlying expenses of investment vehicles held in the portfolio. Net performance reflects the deduction of an assumed 3.00% annual fee rate which is intended to equal or exceed the combined maximum advisory program fees and maximum investment management fees charged to advisory platform clients. This combined fee will normally include all charges for trading costs, portfolio management fees, custody and other administrative fees. Composite net returns are calculated by subtracting 1/12th of the highest applicable annual fee rate (3.00%) from the monthly gross return. Due to compounding of returns, full year net returns will typically not equal the gross return less 3%. Actual fees may vary depending on the individual sponsor's fee. Investment management fees are negotiated directly with advisory program sponsors. Fees are negotiable where circumstances warrant. Additional information on fees is provided in WestEnd Advisors' SEC Form ADV Part 2.

Past performance is not indicative of future results. It should not be assumed that recommendations made in the future will be profitable. The information contained herein is not intended to be an offer to provide investment advisory services. Such an offer may only be made if accompanied by WestEnd Advisors' SEC Form ADV Part 2.

The MSCI ACWI (Net) Index, Bloomberg Barclays U.S. Government/Credit Index, and Global Conservative benchmark are used for comparative purposes only. The MSCI ACWI (Net) Index is a free float-adjusted market capitalization

weighted index that is designed to measure the equity market performance of developed and emerging markets. The MSCI ACWI consists of 47 country indexes comprising 23 developed and 24 emerging market country indexes. The total return of the MSCI ACWI (Net) Index is calculated using net dividends. Net total return reflects the reinvestment of dividends after the deduction of withholding taxes, using (for international indices) a tax rate applicable to nonresident institutional investors who do not benefit from double taxation treaties. The Bloomberg Barclays U.S. Government/Credit Index measures performance of U.S. dollar denominated U.S. Treasuries, government-related, and investmentgrade U.S. corporate securities that have a remaining maturity of greater than or equal to 1 year. In addition, the securities have \$250 million or more of outstanding face value, must be fixed-rate, and non-convertible. The Global Conservative benchmark is composed of 35% of the MSCI ACWI (Net) Index and 65% of the Bloomberg Barclays U.S. Government/Credit Index; is shown to reflect the investments in equity and fixed-income securities; and is rebalanced monthly. Benchmark returns are not covered by the report of independent verifiers.

A complete list and description of all WestEnd Advisors' composites, as well as a GIPS<sup>®</sup> Report, may be obtained by phone (888-500-9025) or email (info@westendadvisors.com). Policies for valuing investments, calculating performance, and preparing GIPS Reports is available upon request. GIPS<sup>®</sup> is a registered trademark of CFA Institute. CFA Institute does not endorse or promote this organization, nor does it warrant the accuracy or quality of the content contained herein.

Attribution Analysis is relative to the Global Conservative benchmark and was current as of the quarter specified in this presentation. A complete attribution report is available upon request.

Any portfolio characteristics, including position sizes and sector allocations among others, are generally averages and are for illustrative purposes only and do not reflect the investments of an actual portfolio unless otherwise noted. The investment guidelines of an actual portfolio may permit or restrict investments that are materially different in size, nature and risk from those shown. The investment processes, research processes or risk processes shown herein are for informational purposes to demonstrate an overview of the process. Such processes may differ by product, client mandate or market conditions. Portfolios that are concentrated in a specific sector or industry may be subject to a higher degree of market risk than a portfolio whose investments are more diversified.

Holdings, Sector Weightings and Portfolio Characteristics were current as of the date specified in this presentation. The listing of particular securities should not be considered a recommendation to purchase or sell these securities. While these securities were among WestEnd Advisors' Global Conservative holdings at the time this material was assembled, holdings will change over time. There can be no assurance that the securities remain in the portfolio or that other securities have not been purchased. It should not be assumed that recommendations made in the future will be profitable or will equal the performance of the securities presently in the portfolio. Individual clients' portfolios may vary. Upon request, WestEnd Advisors will provide a list of all recommendations for the prior year.

As of March 31, 2024, WestEnd Advisors had \$8.4 million of assets in the Global Conservative Composite. This information is included as supplemental information only.

April 2024