



## Frequently Asked Questions about the Bridge of Hope, Retirement Responsibility

*During World Conference, the Presiding Bishopric answered questions about the updated Bridge of Hope Project and plans for the church to meet its retirement responsibility.*

### **1. What's the new goal for the retirement responsibility?**

The new goal is to raise \$120 million (USD) by 1 January 2024. The goal announced in 2017 was to raise \$115 million (USD) by 1 January 2022. As of 30 June 2018, we had raised \$53 million (USD).

### **2. Why are we changing the goal, and how will the church benefit from the change?**

World Church leaders decided it was worth the additional expense to provide a two-year extension to meet the retirement responsibility. The desire is to minimize the amount that must be borrowed from the church's investments to fully fund the retirement responsibility. Extending the date, allows more time to receive Bridge of Hope Tithes, complete program-property sales, and arrange potential sales of historic assets.

### **3. How are funds expected to be raised?**

Through four sources:

- Bridge of Hope Tithes including undesignated bequests
- Historic-asset sales
- Program-property sales
- Worldwide Mission Budget support

### **4. What is a program property?**

A program property is a property that originally was bought to support the mission of the church through various programs. This includes most congregational buildings and campgrounds.

### **5. Will my congregation or campground be offered for sale without my knowledge?**

No. We are inviting the church to explore how we faithfully respond to mission. As the church continues conversation about mission and what matters most, program properties that are used less for mission will be sold.



**6. Will all the net proceeds from program-property sales go to the Bridge of Hope project?**

Not necessarily. The Use of Net Proceed Policy (1 July 2017), available at [www.CofChrist.org/common/cms/resources/Documents/Use-of-Net-Proceeds-Policy-052418.pdf](http://www.CofChrist.org/common/cms/resources/Documents/Use-of-Net-Proceeds-Policy-052418.pdf), describes the process. The final distribution of funds is based on conversations between the Presiding Bishopric, director of Field Ministries, field apostle, and jurisdictional leaders.

**7. What is the minimum balance established for the church's investment accounts?**

As trustees of the retirement responsibility, the Presiding Bishopric must ensure that sufficient funds are available to pay retirement benefits. Even, as the church continues to raise funds to meet the \$120 million (USD) goal by 1 January 2024, the Presiding Bishopric has established an initial minimum balance of 65 percent as of April 2019 that is required to be retained in church investment accounts. This is to protect the necessary funds to fully meet the goal. Minimum balances will be refined by the end of 2019, reviewed annually, and decreased as progress is made toward the \$120 million (USD) goal.

**8. How does applying a minimum-balance percentage of 65 percent to church investment accounts affect account stewards?**

Account stewards cannot make withdrawals that would result in the balance going below the minimum balance. Account stewards can make withdrawals from the available balance. Account stewards will continue to earn interest on the total balance in their account.

For account stewards who are withdrawing only interest earned or are following the church's recommended 4-percent spending rate on investment accounts, the minimum-balance requirement should not affect account usage.

**9. What if our congregation, mission center, or campground has a major project planned, requiring funds that would put our investment account below the minimum balance?**

Contact your mission center officer(s). They will work with the field support minister or field bishop and field apostle to consider the circumstances and appropriate next steps. The field apostle also will consult with the director of Field Ministries and Presiding Bishopric.

**10. What if the church does not meet the \$120 million (USD) goal by 1 January 2024?**



# Community of Christ

The remaining balance required to meet the goal would be borrowed from the church's investment accounts as a 0-percent interest rate loan.

The use of the words *borrow* and *loan* in this document is for the sole purpose of expressing the Presiding Bishopric's intent to temporarily reallocate church assets, held in investment accounts established by jurisdictions throughout the church, to address the church's retirement responsibility. As trustees over all church assets, including those in investment accounts established by jurisdictions throughout the church, the Presiding Bishopric has the legal authority and responsibility to use all assets to meet all financial obligations of the church, including the retirement responsibility. The use of the words *borrow* and *loan* does not create any legal obligation regarding the future use and control of the funds.

## **11. How much will the church need to borrow on 1 January 2024 to fully fund the retirement responsibility?**

That depends on how successful the church is at raising the \$120 million (USD). As of 30 June 2018, the church had raised \$53 million (USD) toward the goal. If no more funds were raised, the church would need to borrow \$67 million (USD) on 1 January 2024.

## **12. How will the church pay back the loan from investments if one is required, and how long will it take?**

The church currently has \$30 million (USD) in pledges to Bridge of Hope Tithes. These funds with undesignated bequests, historic-asset sales, and program-property sales will be used to repay the loan.

Because we do not now know the size of the loan, and we cannot predict the speed of receiving funds for repayment, it is difficult to predict how long it will take to repay the loan. Once the loan is paid off, any remaining funds received will be used to grow the endowments.