



Community of Christ

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated 15 March 2024

TRANSPARENCY AND COLLABORATION

Why was input in making this decision not discussed at a World Conference?

The summary of why leaders decided to proceed without consulting the church is as follows:

- A church-wide dialogue would have weakened the church's negotiating position resulting in a lower price and level of funds to invest in the church's future.
- The cost by way of time, financial resources, staff time would also distract the church from its missional priorities.
- World Church leaders believed a church-wide discernment process would have likely resulted in the same conclusion reached by World Church Leadership Council.

Community of Christ seeks to provide a high level of transparency and collaboration. Making decisions through Common Consent is part of who we are. This is why we get approval of annual budgets and audits from the World Church Finance Board on behalf of the World Conference and then post them along with financial updates on the public website.

However, in some situations, this level of transparency and collaboration is not possible. In these cases, World Church leaders have to do the job that the World Conference sustained them to do which is to act in the overall best interest of the church and its mission.

As stated in the Doctrine and Covenants 128:2 and 129:8, the Presiding Bishopric is the “custodian” of the properties and the “temporalities of the church” are to be under their charge and care. According to our World Church By-laws (5.c.) members of the Presiding Bishopric are the chief financial officers and trustees of the church and are responsible for the administration of the temporal affairs of the church. And, according to World Conference Resolution 866 the members of the Presiding Bishopric are trustees of the church and shall have the authority and right to accept, take, hold, mortgage, and convey title to property...

Additionally, the World Church By-Laws state that no legislative body can rightfully take to itself administrative or judicial functions (Section 6. B.) which reside elsewhere. So, a World Conference resolution to sell or not sell historic properties would be out of order.

Many have acknowledged the authority of leaders to make the sale, but why didn't leaders talk with the church before the decision was finalized?

Through the unfolding World Church Leadership Council discernment process that ultimately contributed to this decision, World Church leaders talked about surveying the church or having conversations at a World Conference specifically about people's level of support in selling historic sites.

In the case of exploring the details of making a sale of historic assets with the church, there were several reasons World Church leaders determined that talking about the potential sale with the church was not in the best interest of the church.

World Church leaders knew the spectrum of responses about a sale would be broad and this has been witnessed over the past week since the announcement was made.

To lead the church or the World Conference in a discernment process and common consent building process, would have taken multiple international gatherings with a wealth of information being translated and presented.

World Church leaders felt the church would come to the same decision to sell as leaders did if all the pertinent information could be presented. World Church leaders would have had to present significant information about financial projections and other business details in at least three languages.

This would have consumed a lot of the missional capacity and focus of the church. It would have also made even more financial details publicly available and thus accessible by the buyer than are currently available through financial and audit reports.

All this public conversation and information sharing would have had negative ramifications on the church's position in any negotiations. It would have given the buyer more power.

One of the church's "strengths" in negotiating in this period of time was having a publicly announced plan on how to fund the retirement responsibility. Another strength was that the church could walk away from the conversation and not complete a sale agreement. If conference support had been provided to World Church leaders, this would have made walking away an empty threat during the negotiations because the buyer could have said that "your conference told you to make a sale."

Because of the negative ramifications on negotiations of too much public conversation and the need to proceed while we had a defensible plan to meet the retirement responsibility goal, World Church leaders felt we had to bear the burden of making the decision without seeking input from the church.

World Church leaders decided to proceed with the conversations exploring a sale and to agree to the confidentiality agreement.

Why would we sell these precious assets to an organization that does not represent the values of Community of Christ?

Several of the important factors in proceeding to a sale included continued public accessibility, proper care of the facilities and items into the future, and a fair price for what was included.

World Church leaders explored multiple individual buyers and the possibility of setting up a consortium of multiple buyers. None of these options were viable. In the end, there was only one available buyer.

Although the buyer has different theological perspectives than Community of Christ, we have a shared value for the properties and items that were part of the sale.

We completed the sale knowing that the sites and other items would be well maintained and remain publicly available as stated in our contractual agreement.

Why was the church not told about the possibility of selling historic assets?

Leaders have shared through the years information about the financial challenges facing the church and the exploration of all assets of the church in responding to the challenges. This information was provided in various ways including verbal and written statements from the Presidency and regular financial updates from the Bishopric. Leaders always have the challenge of how to balance the potential of a hopeful future while also expressing the possibilities of a more difficult future depending on what happens.

For instance, in the inspired counsel shared by President Veazey at the end of the 2019 World Conference, he said, “Financial constraints are hindering the church from moving into the future at a pivotal and opportune time in history. These obstacles can be overcome through generosity, cooperation, and discernment about how the assets of the church can be directed to serve budget necessities and mission priorities. Members, congregations, and church jurisdictions are called to live the stewardship principles and practices already given to you.”

This was an invitation for all of us to discern how the assets of the church should be used for budget and mission priorities for congregations, mission centers, and the world church. The World Church leaders’ ongoing discernment about the church’s future and how to financially support it was in response to this invitation. Several ideas on how to financially support the future mission were considered and are included in the December 2023 Financial Update available at <https://cofchrist.org/financial-updates/december-2023-financial-update/>.

Another example was in the June 2022 Financial Update. By this time, exploratory conversations were occurring with the LDS Church. However, to even start the conversations back in June 2021, all participants in both churches agreed to strict confidentiality. This level of protection is a regular factor in transactions like this. This limited what was appropriate to say and in no case, did leaders want to violate confidentiality or put the exploratory conversations at risk. However, even with those limitations, on page 7 in the financial update, the statement was made that “several strategies are being implemented in anticipation of declining Mission Tithes.” As part of that section one of the strategies detailed was that

“future undesignated bequests as well as the possible sale of historic assets will be used to grow the endowments.”

In addition to written information, many leaders have responded to questions in various gatherings around the church upholding the idea that “everything was on the table.” In some instances, groups asked specifically if the Kirtland Temple could be sold and the response was that all historic assets were being considered as part of the discernment process.

Why was this information shared on social media?

The news was shared on social media as the last step of a comprehensive communication plan created to share this announcement with the church. The news was shared with staff and mission center leaders verbally and in email. Information was posted to CofChrist.org and sent via email to all of our eSubscribers. We felt it was important to post on our social media platforms as another way to engage with members and friends and failure to post may have been seen as trying to hide or downplay the news. You can subscribe to eNews at <https://CofChrist.org/news/>.

What is the process for making requests to have a Community of Christ gathering at Kirtland or Nauvoo?

The First Presidency is finalizing the process for submitting requests to host gatherings at Kirtland and Nauvoo. In the meantime, please send your requests to FP@CofChrist.org.

BRIDGE OF HOPE

Were proceeds from the historic assets sale used to meet the Bridge of Hope Retirement Responsibility goal?

No proceeds from this historic assets sale were required to meet the Bridge of Hope Retirement Responsibility.

If a congregation approved a LOAN to meet their congregational Bridge of Hope target is that loan required?

No loans are needed to support the Retirement Responsibility. If a congregation approved providing a loan, the loan will be cancelled because the goal was met through other contributions to the Bridge of Hope Retirement Responsibility.

If a congregation made a gift to Bridge of Hope from their Affiliate Investment Pool in late January 2024 or earlier, is that gift still needed?

All Affiliate Investment Pool (AIP) gifts made by congregations including those gifts approved in January 2024 were included in reaching the Bridge of Hope Retirement Responsibility goal. These gifts need to be completed so the funds can be transferred from the AIP account to the Bridge of Hope fund.

How does the completion of Bridge of Hope Retirement Responsibility and the sale affect the Net Proceeds Policy for the sale of buildings and properties?

The completion of Bridge of Hope Retirement Responsibility and the historic sites sale does not change the Net Proceeds Policy. We will continue to engage in collaborative conversations about how to best use our assets when sold to support local mission and build our endowments over time to support our global mission.

FINANCES

Does the Presiding Bishopric use professional services and advisory groups when making financial decisions on behalf of the church?

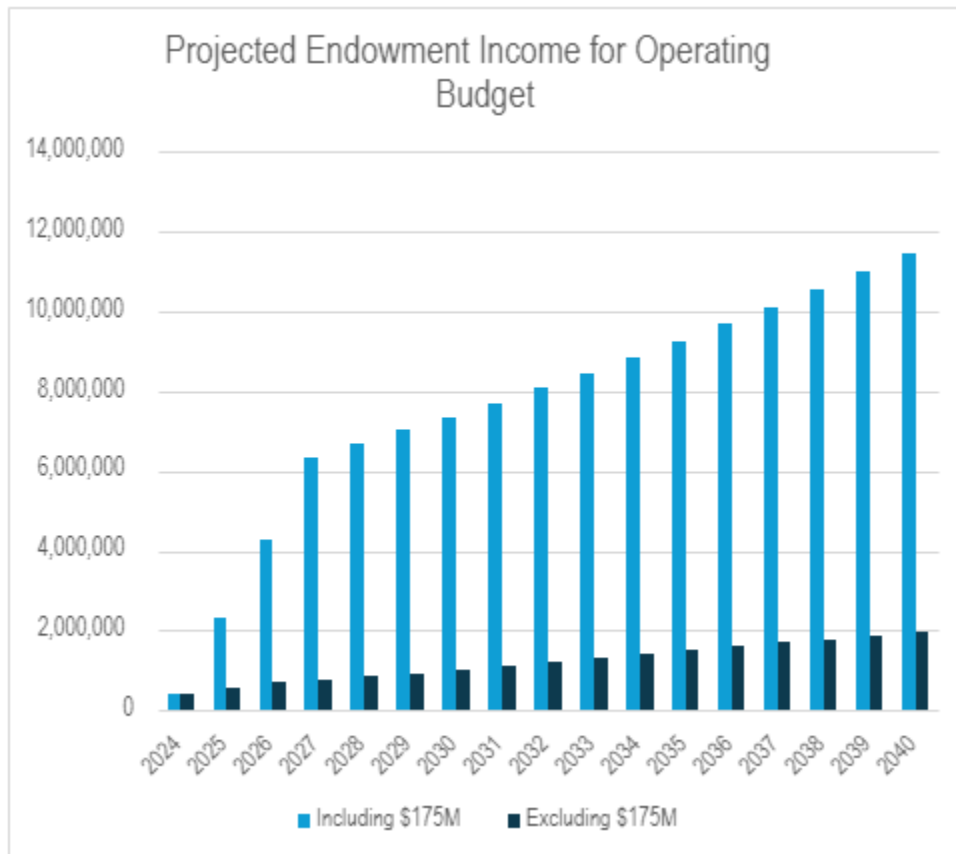
Yes. The Presiding Bishopric routinely uses advisory groups, external consultants, and individual church members with specific professional experience in financial and operational decision making. The World Church Finance Board approves annual budgets and audits on behalf of the World Conference and includes individuals with a broad spectrum of operational and financial backgrounds. The Investment Committee is comprised of 9 members who draw significant experience as small business owners, personal and corporate finance professionals, economists, and investment real estate managers. In addition, both the Investment Committee and the Presiding Bishopric partner with CAPTRUST, our investment manager with over 25 years of experience managing assets for over 30,000 institutional and private clients.

How much income do you anticipate the endowment will generate annually over the next 10 years?

Based on our projections of placing \$175 million in endowments, the total endowment income generated between 2025 and 2034 would be just over \$57 million USD. For a more detailed analysis of sources of endowment income and projections read the additional information below.

Income from the endowments was projected using a 3% spending rate and a 3-year rolling average. There are several sources that will increase the endowment balances: sale proceeds (initial projections include \$175 million), land sales under contract in Eastern Jackson County, bequest income, and ongoing market returns. All these increases are included in the Bishopric's projections of endowment income. The total endowment income projected annually from these sources grows each year from \$2.3 million in 2025 to 9.2 million in 2035.

Without the \$175 million of sale proceeds in the endowments, the total endowment income projected annually only grows each year from \$583,000 in 2025 to just over \$1.5 million in 2034. The chart below illustrates endowment growth with and without the addition of \$175 million from the sale.



During this same time period and without new contributors, Worldwide Mission Tithes is projected to decline by 4% per year from \$9.8 million in 2025 to \$6.5 million in 2035.

The annual income available from the endowments will be added to the Worldwide Mission Budget for consideration by the World Church Finance Board. This income will offset expenses in the budget for defined ministries and services of the World Church in accordance with the purposes of the endowment documents.

How long will the proceeds from the sale last?

Sale proceeds invested in endowments will generate annual income in perpetuity. Income from other sources like Worldwide Mission Tithes does not continue in perpetuity. As stated in the Presiding Bishopric Report, Worldwide Mission Tithes has been declining as the number of contributors declines.

Current income and expense projections indicate the church has approximately five years to develop additional contributors and other sources of income. If the church is not collectively successful in developing additional contributors and new sources of income, then a projected budget reduction of approximately \$1.3 million will be required in 2030.

Were historic sites sold because church leaders mismanaged money that resulted in the significant budget reduction in 2016?

In all cases, past and present, financial decisions are made with the best information at the time and always with one goal in mind – how to best support the mission of the church. When it becomes clear that circumstances have changed, and projections no longer match reality adjustments have to be made. This is what occurred when a significant budget reduction was made in 2016.

What were the lessons learned from the 2016 budget reduction and the two factors causing it?

Since the early 2000s, investment real estate (i.e., land) held directly by World Church has made up a significant amount of the church's balances in our endowments. In response to lessons learned from the 2016 budget reduction, a spending rate policy for the endowments was implemented in 2017 by the World Church Finance Board. Under this spending rate policy on endowments, real estate value held directly by the church is not included in the balances used to calculate spending rates that generate annual income to the budget. Spending rate is calculated on more liquid assets only. These are assets that can be invested in marketable securities and earn a rate of return.

This is why converting real estate to cash has been a priority for the Presiding Bishopric. As real estate is sold, this increases the more liquid assets increasing the balance that can generate annual income through a spending rate.

What kind of progress had been made in selling the church's investment real estate?

Significant progress toward real estate sales has been made with the North Point Development deal in October 2021 that included approximately 1100 acres purchased in installments through 2032 in Eastern Jackson County. This will result in just under \$40 million in cash from the sale of land over this period of time that can be invested and generate annual income to the budget.

What is the expertise of the people managing the church's investments?

The investment committee is a nine-member committee comprised of a cross-section of church members who draw significant experience as small business owners, personal and corporate finance professionals, economists, and investment real estate managers. Most members have served in congregational and mission center leadership throughout the North American Church.

The committee chair is part of executive management for an asset management trade association and is well-versed in understanding both economic and regulatory factors facing institutional investors today.

More importantly, both the Investment Committee and the Presiding Bishopric partner with CAPTRUST, our investment manager with over 25 years of experience managing assets for over 30,000 institutional and private clients. Community of Christ benefits from CAPTRUST's Religious Organizations practice that incorporates the church's socially-responsible investing and environmental consciousness into our investment portfolio, to align our Enduring Principles with our investment strategies.

More information is available at *OurMinistryTools.org*.

How will putting the majority of the sale proceeds in an endowment help us fund mission?

Placing the majority of sale proceeds in our endowments will generate annual income from the earnings that will directly fund the Worldwide Mission Budget for years to come. We will not be spending down the sale proceeds until they are gone. They will continue to generate income from the earnings and are governed by our spending rate policy on endowments approved by the World Church Finance Board.

Is there more specific information available on the decline in contributors and contributions?

Yes, this information is contained in the Presiding Bishopric Report related to the historic sites sale. The charts below show the decline in our contributor base and giving by age. These two charts tell the story of a faithful but aging contributor base that has been declining over time.

Worldwide Mission Tithes Contributors (Canada and USA only) CY2013 - CY2023

Calendar Year	# of Contributors	% Difference
2013	11,630	
2014	10,832	-6.9%
2015	10,608	-2.1%
2016	10,705	0.9%
2017	9,775	-8.7%
2018	9,088	-7.0%
2019	8,458	-6.9%
2020	7,578	-10.4%
2021	6,577	-13.2%
2022	6,334	-3.7%
2023	5,921	-6.5%

A contributor is defined as a household unless individuals in the household give through separate envelopes or eTithing accounts

Worldwide Mission Tithes Contributors By Age (Canada and USA only) CY2019 - CY2023

Age Group	2019	\$ amount	2020	\$ amount	2021	\$ amount	2022	\$ amount	2023	\$ amount
0-17	304	\$ 83,974	127	\$ 23,784	153	\$ 114,038	147	\$ 125,345	41	\$ 89,321
18-23	36	\$ 23,486	14	\$ 1,846	12	\$ 1,376	11	\$ 890	9	\$ 824
24-29	90	\$ 27,156	62	\$ 25,637	45	\$ 11,777	34	\$ 10,638	24	\$ 7,243
30-34	128	\$ 66,228	120	\$ 52,550	84	\$ 45,323	70	\$ 30,905	66	\$ 29,293
35-39	207	\$ 116,223	167	\$ 100,464	134	\$ 102,902	124	\$ 72,050	120	\$ 79,567
40-44	254	\$ 246,595	228	\$ 283,923	177	\$ 169,616	166	\$ 170,769	162	\$ 137,707
45-49	244	\$ 267,431	230	\$ 196,561	186	\$ 293,862	186	\$ 268,829	201	\$ 274,256
50-54	375	\$ 355,193	306	\$ 338,523	250	\$ 273,171	238	\$ 252,928	209	\$ 249,025
55-59	611	\$ 710,514	516	\$ 556,891	388	\$ 523,358	364	\$ 587,070	327	\$ 480,003
60-64	885	\$ 1,641,424	797	\$ 1,589,035	666	\$ 891,009	605	\$ 807,526	553	\$ 780,570
65-69	1050	\$ 1,347,929	914	\$ 1,299,775	803	\$ 1,846,314	765	\$ 1,799,448	730	\$ 1,527,103
70-74	1138	\$ 1,807,938	1160	\$ 1,938,213	988	\$ 1,817,297	921	\$ 1,720,775	891	\$ 1,605,276
75-79	1006	\$ 1,635,878	944	\$ 1,700,396	912	\$ 1,769,951	860	\$ 1,698,712	852	\$ 1,766,359
80-84	924	\$ 1,671,034	842	\$ 1,929,683	789	\$ 1,832,115	768	\$ 1,963,416	716	\$ 1,329,989
85-89	672	\$ 1,143,275	632	\$ 1,116,008	620	\$ 1,267,860	584	\$ 1,255,945	570	\$ 1,169,300
90-94	336	\$ 448,973	344	\$ 539,522	322	\$ 794,013	321	\$ 579,852	292	\$ 503,868
95+	105	\$ 165,231	98	\$ 130,651	96	\$ 175,087	112	\$ 174,266	98	\$ 162,906
No age listed	93	\$ 76,909	77	\$ 303,155	78	\$ 265,564	58	\$ 321,757	60	\$ 143,365
TOTAL	8,458	\$ 11,835,392	7,578	\$ 12,126,617	6,703	\$ 12,194,633	6,334	\$ 11,841,118	5,921	\$ 10,335,975

A contributor is defined as a household unless individuals in the household give through separate envelopes or eTithing accounts

Age is based on head of household

Totals do not include contributions from jurisdictions, corporations or estates.

All dollars reported as USD

GENERAL

Can the details about the purchase agreement be released?

Many of the key points from the purchase agreement have already been shared in various forms in the information released about the sale. However, here is a list of items that the church will continue to track as we move into the future:

- Maintenance, Renovation, & Restoration obligations of Buyer;
- Public Access requirements;
- Special Access rights to Sites for Community of Christ groups;
- Historical Acknowledgement Display obligations;
- Loan arrangement of Dresser, Mirror, & Clock;
- Joseph Smith III Addition obligations;
- Smith Family Cemetery retention;
- Joseph Smith III Desk retention and removal;
- Continued Occupancy by Site volunteers for up to 1 year; and
- Intellectual Property Assets & Rights

How have we supported the needs of our volunteers living in church provided housing?

Apostle Lachlan Mackay was present in Kirtland on the day of the announcement and personally met with the volunteers living in church owned homes next to the Kirtland Temple. Volunteers have been given the option to live in their current homes for up to one year rent-free. In addition, volunteers have been offered financial assistance to help with the costs of transition to a new living space.

The Presiding Bishopric has budgeted financial support to assist in their transition and will stay in close contact with Apostle Mackay to determine any additional support that may be needed.

Is there an agreement about ensuring the sites will be maintained in an adequate fashion and that modification of the sites will be reasonable?

Yes. The LDS Church will be excellent stewards of the sites and artifacts. They will maintain them to continue to represent the original presentation.

Were the Visitor Centers included in the agreement?

Yes, both the Nauvoo and Kirtland Visitor Centers were included in the agreement.

Who owns the Smith Family Cemetery in Nauvoo?

Community of Christ currently owns the Smith Family Cemetery. Community of Christ is exploring gifting the cemetery to the Smith Family Foundation.

Who owns the cemetery near the Kirtland Temple?

The cemetery located north of the Kirtland Temple is owned and operated by the city of Kirtland. It was not part of the sale and remains open to the public.

Do we still have copyright for the Inspired Version? Does Herald House still print and sell the Inspired Version?

Yes. Herald House is printing and selling the Inspired Version of the bible. You can purchase it here:

<https://www.heraldhouse.org/collections/scripture-study-bible/products/holy-scriptures-inspired-version>.

The three-in-one has not been available for a while. Herald House stopped producing this combination of scriptures due to very low annual sales resulting in a cost prohibitive price to print.

Will World Church leaders sell the Auditorium and Temple in Independence?

At this time, World Church leaders are not considering a sale of the Auditorium and Temple in Independence. There are explorations occurring of how to use the Auditorium, in particular, to generate additional income through various rental uses to offset a portion of the cost of operations of this large facility.

Are there any other sales currently being pursued that the church doesn't already know about?

There are no additional historic assets under consideration at this time. The Presiding Bishopric has continued to pursue real estate sales unrelated to historic properties. Some of these sales are occurring over time like the North Point Development sale of land (announced in 2021) in eastern Jackson County. These proceeds along with the historic sale proceeds will help grow the Worldwide Mission and Temple Endowments over time. The income generated from these endowments will fill the growing gap between income and expenses for approximately five years.

See below for original FAQs posted 5 March 2024

Frequently Asked Questions

5 March 2024

GENERAL

Why was this sale of historic assets necessary?

Community of Christ is part of a larger cultural reality that is impacting religious institutions and the people who have historically provided the most significant financial support. This means many religious organizations are making difficult decisions about how they can best use all their assets to support mission now and in the future. Like other church denominations and service organizations, Community of Christ is exploring creative ways to convey and live our message and mission in rapidly changing contexts.

Ensuring the church is able to pursue its transforming mission for years to come is the responsibility of the World Church Leadership Council. The trajectory of decreasing Worldwide Mission Tithes and increasing expenses meant that in 2025 the church was looking at drastic reductions in ministries and services. This included the possibility of losing 1/3 of current employees and eliminating major services and ministries that support the global mission of the church. The sale was a choice to invest in the church's future story trusting the Holy Spirit to lead us into fulfilling God's purposes for the church if we faithfully respond.

What was the sale price and how did the parties come to this amount?

The sale price of \$192.5 million USD reflects an agreement between Community of Christ and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints after an extended period of conversation and negotiation. The agreement does not detail prices for specific items but rather a price for the entire agreed-upon set of items, documents, and properties.

Community of Christ is confident the sale price will have a significant impact on mission based on information from established experts in the sale of items of historic interest. A spirit of collegiality, mutuality, and shared interest in the stewardship of the sites and items for future generations was present during the negotiations.

Which historic assets were included in the \$192.5 USD million sale?

Properties included in the sale are the Kirtland Temple, the Smith Family Homestead, the Mansion House, the Nauvoo House and the Red Brick Store. Also included are nineteenth-century manuscripts and materials related to the development of church scriptures, including the Joseph Smith Translation manuscripts and the Phinney bible, the Book of Mormon "Caractors" document, Joseph and Emma Smith portraits and letters, the 1869 Emma Smith interview notes, the John Whitmer History, a Liberty Jail door, various artifacts currently exhibited in the Kirtland and Nauvoo historic properties, and other miscellaneous items. The Smith Family Cemetery is not included in the sale.

A list of items of historic interest included in the agreement can be found at CofChrist.org/faithfully-funding-our-future-FAQs.

Do the Presiding Bishopric and World Church Leaders have the authority to sell historic assets?

Yes, based on scripture, practice, policy, and legal structure. The bylaws of Community of Christ establish the responsibility and authority of the Presiding Bishopric to make financial decisions about all assets of the church: “They are the chief financial officers and trustees of the church, and are responsible for the administration of the temporal affairs of the whole church.”

In 1972, the First Presidency and Presiding Bishopric developed responsibilities for the Presiding Bishopric that included definition of what it means to preside over the temporal affairs of the church as found in multiple sections of the Doctrine and Covenants. The Presiding Bishopric holds title to church properties and is responsible to the World Church or other jurisdictions of the church for whose use and benefit the property is held. It is recognized that the Presiding Bishopric will use discretionary judgment in managing the temporal resources of the church with fiduciary responsibility to act in the best interests of the church and its mission under the direction of the First Presidency.

Building on the foundation established in the Doctrine and Covenants related to oversight of the temporal affairs of the church, the Presiding Bishopric relies on two primary documents for use in property transactions that establish the Presiding Bishopric’s authority. They are the World Church Bylaws and World Conference Resolution 866. The specific language:

World Church Bylaws. Article III, Section 5(c)

“The Presiding Bishopric is composed of the presiding bishop and two counselors. They are the chief financial officers and trustees of the church, and are responsible for the administration of the temporal affairs of the whole church.”

World Church Resolution 866, Third Resolved

“Resolved, That the Presiding Bishop and/or counselors, or either of them, as trustee or trustees, shall have the authority and right to accept, take, hold, mortgage, and convey title to property, either real or personal or mixed, and wheresoever situated, which the church as an unincorporated association may lawfully take and hold, and to which it may assert title and ownership, and from any source whatsoever, either by deed of conveyance or by last will and testament...”

The Presiding Bishopric moved forward with the sale in consultation with the First Presidency and after receiving unanimous support from the World Church Leadership Council. The World Church Leadership Council established by the First Presidency advises the First Presidency on matters related to the well-being of the church and its global mission.

Will we still have access to the Kirtland and Nauvoo historic sites in the future?

Yes. Beginning March 25, 2024, public access will remain for the Kirtland Temple, the Joseph Smith Family Homestead, the Mansion House, the Red Brick Store, and the Nauvoo House. We have a specific contractual agreement with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that

extends for fifteen years. Beyond the contractual agreement we have received confirmation of the intention of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that they plan to continue to make these sites available to the public at no charge.

Community of Christ and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have maintained a collaborative relationship over the years. We have received assurance that this spirit of collaboration will continue with the same hospitality into the future.

Provisions have been made for Community of Christ groups to have exclusive special meetings or gatherings in Kirtland or Nauvoo. These exclusive events must be scheduled in advance through Community of Christ. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will provide opportunity for up to six meetings or gatherings per year. These meetings or gatherings will be consistent with what is done for their own membership.

Why was the Kirtland Temple included?

The sale price without the Kirtland Temple would have been insufficient to generate the income needed through our endowments to support our mission. The Presiding Bishopric analyzed various financial scenarios and determined that inclusion of the Kirtland Temple was necessary. Although this decision was difficult, World Church Leaders were unified in their support and desire to do what was needed to help secure the church's future.

What will happen to the people who work and volunteer at Kirtland and Nauvoo?

The telling of our sacred story will continue to be an important aspect of our mission. The church has been working with historic sites employees since January 2024 to begin envisioning how to best utilize their gifts toward this end. Employees were offered the option of a position in Independence, Missouri, USA, including a relocation package, or continued employment in their current location through September 2024 with a severance package at that time. With the closing complete, the church will work with full-time volunteers in Kirtland to facilitate their transition.

HISTORY

Are we trying to forget or erase our history and heritage?

No. Our history is integral to who we are. Who we are today was shaped by our history. Our history also strengthens and informs our faith as we live into the future.

From *Sharing in Community of Christ*: “The story of the church is one of unusual faith, vision, and creativity in response to God’s call. We can clearly see God’s Spirit active in every chapter of our faith story. What began with a teenager seeking God in prayer in the early 1800s continues today. God gives each generation insights, experiences, and challenges for divine purposes.”

Doctrine and Covenants 162:2a reminds us to continue to listen to the stories of our past because they will teach and prepare us for moving forward as a faith community.

What resources are available that can help us share our sacred story?

Community of Christ has a number of resources that tell our sacred story from around the world. CofChrist.org offers a brief timeline approach to our history that is a great introduction for people who are new to Community of Christ. The HeraldHouse.org website has a History collection inside the Books menu. This includes things like the *Journey of a People* trilogy, *Illustrated History of Community of Christ* and *The Memoirs of President Joseph Smith III*. You can also find short histories of Community of Christ in places like India and the Philippines.

In addition to these options, the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation has assembled a considerable collection of resources to bring church history to life for you, your family, and your congregation. Visit <https://www.historicsitesfoundation.org/resources.html> for lectures, lessons, activities, stories, Heritage Day remembrances, and more. You can also find stories that link our Enduring Principles and Mission Initiatives to events and people in our past.

What will happen to the Historic Sites Foundation?

The Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation will not only remain in existence, it will expand its efforts in sharing church history. The First Presidency believes the Foundation has an important mission to help the church in its stewardship of our story and our remaining historic sites. The Presiding Bishopric also looks forward to working with the Foundation in the future to sponsor fundraising activities supporting various history and sacred story telling projects.

FINANCES

How will the sale proceeds be used?

The proceeds will be used primarily to fund the Temple Endowment and Worldwide Mission Endowment. These endowments will generate annual income for the Worldwide Mission Budget in addition to Worldwide Mission Tithes and other income. The proceeds will also be used to fund vital strategic priorities as outlined in [The Way Forward Messages](#) and by World Church Leadership Council.

Do we still need to support Worldwide Mission Tithes?

Yes. Worldwide Mission Tithes will be essential in the Presiding Bishopric's overall funding strategy and represents our tangible response as disciples to God's generous love. Mission Tithes will help fund vital ministries now and in the future as the church responds to diverse global-ministry contexts by innovating with new forms of ministry, responding to growth opportunities, and bringing all the dimensions of Christ's peace into the lives of individuals and communities. (See [The Way Forward: Disruptive Trends and Challenges](#).)

How will proceeds from this sale help us now?

Directing a significant portion of sale proceeds to the Temple Endowment and Worldwide Mission Endowment will provide income using a spending rate. This will allow the World Church to maintain current levels of ministries, services, and employees by providing immediate

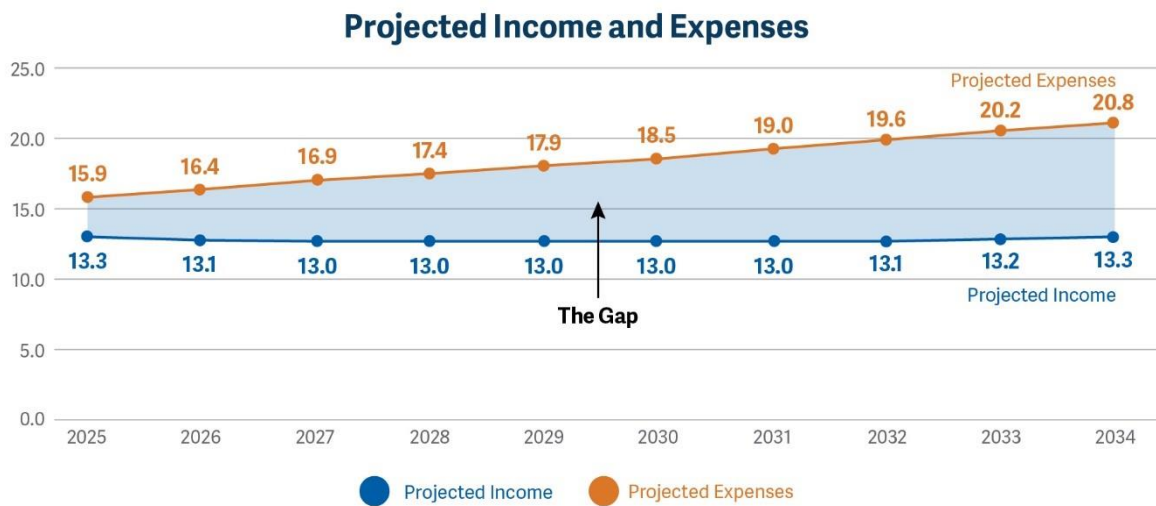
income to the Worldwide Mission Budget beginning in 2025. The Worldwide Mission Budget supports ministries, services, and employees across the global church and the operations, witness, and ministries of the Temple.

How will proceeds from the sale help us in the future?

A significant portion of sale proceeds will be directed to the Worldwide Mission Endowment and Temple Endowment. These proceeds will be invested, and income will be generated from the earnings in perpetuity. Our current [Spending Rate on World Church Endowments](#) approved by the World Church Finance Board outlines the process for setting the spending rate each year. It also establishes the conditions under which the spending rate can be applied to endowment assets to generate income. These safeguards ensure the endowment funds will generate income for the future and continue to be a vital part of our overall funding strategy for mission.

Does this solve our financial challenges?

No. The sale does not cover the projected decline in Worldwide Mission Tithes for the long term. However, it replaces income lost for the intermediate term and provides time for missional and financial strategies to generate additional income for the future. (see graph below) In addition, the sale proceeds will help sustain the operations, witness, and ministries of the Temple for future generations by increasing the annual income available from the Temple Endowment.



Why aren't the sale proceeds being used for the Bridge of Hope Retirement Responsibility?

When the Bridge of Hope project was launched it had two priorities. The first was to fully fund the Retirement Responsibility. The second, after the retirement responsibility goal was met, was

to grow the endowments to help address the increasing gap between missional and operational expenses and income.

Thanks to the generosity of so many individuals and jurisdictions across the church, the retirement responsibility goal has been met without the need for any investment pool account loans. The church can now focus on addressing its future missional and financial needs. This sale of historic assets is a major step in growing our endowments and addressing those needs, meeting the second goal of Bridge of Hope.

ENDOWMENTS

How do endowments work?

World Church endowments are funds designated for a specific purpose (i.e., designated contributions) by donors or specific contributions by World Conference or Presiding Bishopric action. Funds (i.e., contributions) designated for endowments are invested for the long term to gain an investment return. A portion of this investment return as determined by the [Spending Rates on World Church Endowments Policy](#) is available as annual income to fund expenses specifically related to the purpose of the endowment.

The [Spending Rates on World Church Endowments Policy](#) adopted by the World Church Finance Board prescribe a spending rate to ensure long term growth and account for market fluctuations and inflation.

What is the purpose of each endowment and what kind of things are funded from each endowment?

In general, the Temple Endowment supports the operations and ministries of the Temple Complex (Temple and Auditorium) as a sacred space and center for spiritual and disciple formation, training, communications, and support of our global mission to share the peace of Jesus Christ in all its dimensions.

The Worldwide Mission Endowment supports ministries that embody the mission of Community of Christ in the USA and globally (outside the USA). These ministries include expenses associated with ministerial employees, resource needs, and programs that support congregations and new expressions of Community of Christ. (See [Endowment Summary Descriptions.](#))

Do we need to continue building our endowments?

Yes. As we continue to develop and implement missional and financial strategies to support expanding mission, growing the endowments along with Worldwide Mission Tithes and other sources of income will be essential. Growing the endowments means sources of income will be more equally balanced between Worldwide Mission Tithes, endowments, and other income. Growing all sources of income will enable the church to expand its mission as led by the Holy Spirit.

What precautions are being taken to ensure the Worldwide Mission and Temple Endowment assets are there for future generations?

Our [Spending Rate on World Church Endowments](#) was updated and approved in 2017 by the World Church Finance Board. This policy outlines the process for setting the spending rate each year. It also establishes the conditions under which the spending rate can be applied to the liquid portion of endowment assets (non-real-estate assets) to generate income. These safeguards ensure the endowment funds will generate income for the future and continue to be a vital part of the overall funding strategy for mission.