

Beginning a Conversation about Socially Responsible Investing at South Church

Our Purpose:

To love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength and our neighbor as ourselves.
(Matthew 22)

As members of South Church, all of us try to live our lives as Christians, and to extend Christian principles into our daily lives as we feel appropriate.

Here at South Church, the Church Council recently authorized a group of members, with people from the Social Justice Coalition, The Board of World Service, The Green Team, and two career financial advisors, to initiate a conversation about Socially Responsible Investing (SRI).

SRI has been present in the investment world for 30+ years and has gained considerable momentum in recent years. SRI involves the selection of investments which, as fully as possible, reflect the individual's or organization's religious and/or social values. Not only the UCC, but also many other churches, corporations, universities and other organizations have adopted to varying degrees an SRI perspective as part of their investment policies. At South Church, our current investment committee has done a great job to date managing our church Trust Funds by traditional means, and we are grateful for their efforts.

However, to the extent we decide to implement it (if at all), SRI would seek to align our Christian principles with our investment choices. This is not a simple discussion as there are a growing number of options available. It might mean that we invest in stock or bond funds which engage in shareholder advocacy or that we invest in funds that restrict the companies in which they invest, such as guns, tobacco or gambling.

Do you think we should adopt an SRI policy for all or part of our church Trust Fund investments? If not, why not? If so, what should that SRI policy look like?

Your opinions, thoughts, and questions are important to all of us. Let's discuss. We all hope to learn and grow through this discussion.

South Church SRI Committee

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