

April 2024

### Objectives update - Strategic Value Dividend SMA

- **Dividend yield:** The portfolio's holdings had a weighted average dividend yield at 4/30/24 of more than three times that of the S&P 500®.
- **Dividend growth:** 32 companies in the portfolio have raised dividends over the last 12 months, providing strong organic dividend growth. None have cut. In April, Southern Company raised.
- **Long-term total return:** Our income-first approach seeks to generate competitive long-term total return driven by dividends and dividend growth. Since inception, the portfolio has delivered this return objective. Over the last 12 months, our style of investing in stocks with the potential for high and rising dividends has significantly underperformed the broad market, with high-yielding S&P 500® stocks underperforming no/low-yielding stocks by 31.37%. Over the last three months, this performance differential has narrowed to 0.32%. In April, the backdrop for a higher-for-longer monetary policy and declining consumer sentiment brought volatility back into the market, highlighting the benefit of defensive low-volatility investments.

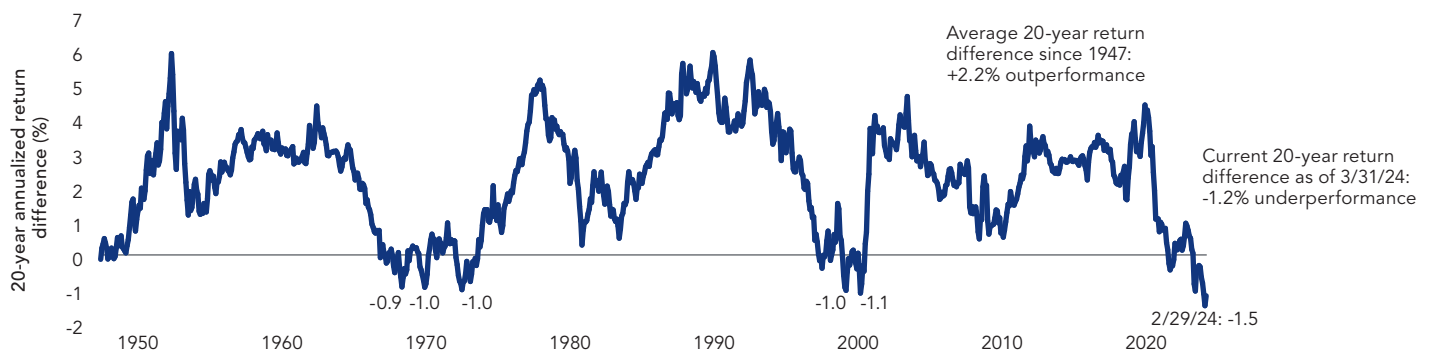
### Insights from the team

- **Big Tech companies initiating dividends:** The recent initiation of dividends by Big Tech companies is good news to be welcomed by people seeking to make business-like investments through the stock market. Decades of declining cash rates of return appear to have bottomed, if not reversed. But it is worth pointing out that the news does not change the calculus for dividend investors seeking income now, as these yields have gone from zero to still very low levels.

Including the new initiators, the S&P 500® features about 76 companies with dividend yields below 1%. In dollars, the dividend payments of this cohort may represent a significant sum (about \$84 billion). However, remember why dividend yield matters: it represents a potential cash return on investment over the next 12 months. From the present value perspective and from the perspective of a client needing income now, 1% is not enough. Still, the dividend initiations from Big Tech are a positive sign, even if it is too early to include these securities in income-focused portfolios.

### High dividend stocks have never been more out of favor... time for a reversal?

20-year annualized return difference: highest quintile dividend yield stocks minus lowest quintile dividend yield stocks



As of 3/31/24. Graph shows the 20-year annualized return of the highest 20% of stocks by dividend yield minus that of the lowest 20% of stocks by dividend yield. This is for illustrative purposes only and is not indicative of any investment. Sources: Federated Hermes analysis of monthly return data from July 1927 to March 2024, Ken French Data Library, [https://mba.tuck.dartmouth.edu/pages/faculty/ken.french/Data\\_Library/det\\_port\\_form\\_dp.html](https://mba.tuck.dartmouth.edu/pages/faculty/ken.french/Data_Library/det_port_form_dp.html), accessed May 2024. **Past performance is not indicative of future results.** Investments cannot be made in the Fama French portfolios.

### Investment view

- For most of its history, the U.S. stock market was largely driven by a cash relationship between companies and their owners, better known as paying dividends to its shareholders. Declining rates, the rise of share buyback and the emergence of Silicon Valley drove a transition to dividend-light/free. We believe that investors should prepare for a move back to a fundamental approach. Typically, the best time to embrace a particular investment style is when it is out of favor. As seen above, low-dividend stocks have beaten high-dividend stocks by the widest margin on record over the last 20 years. It is now a matter of when, not if, the paradigm will shift back to dividend-focused stock investing, in our view.

Unless otherwise noted, all information is as of 4/30/24. **Past performance is no guarantee of future results.**

Not FDIC Insured • May Lose Value • No Bank Guarantee

## Strategic Value Dividend SMA

### Our philosophy

We believe in owning businesses that are committed to providing investors regular dividend payments.

We are not a traditional equity value shop; rather, we believe in an income-first approach that seeks to deliver a high current yield and growing income stream to our clients. We believe we can meet the needs of investors seeking current income, as well as those looking for moderate capital appreciation through dividend growth.

### Objective

The strategy's objective is to provide a high level of current income and long-term capital appreciation driven by dividend growth.

- Pursues a substantially higher dividend yield than the broad market average
- Invests in high-quality companies that are positioned to increase their dividend distribution over time
- Seeks competitive performance in strong market environments and lower downside risk in periods of broad market weakness

### Key data

- Gross weighted average dividend yield of 5.16%<sup>1</sup> is more than 3x the S&P 500<sup>®</sup> at 1.46% and more than the 10-year Treasury at 4.69%
- Trailing 12 months there were 33 dividend increases and zero cuts
- Top sector weights: Utilities 22.29% / Energy 15.95% / Health Care 15.30% / Staples 13.90%; (0% in Discretionary and 0% in Technology)
- Exited positions in April: Paychex, Inc., Unilever PLC; Trimmed positions: Crown Castle, Inc., Kimberly-Clark Corp., TotalEnergies SE, Williams Companies Inc.
- Increased positions: Amgen Inc., Bristol-Myers Squibb Company, Chevron Corp., Realty Income Corp., Sanofi ADR, Xcel Energy, Inc.
- 100% of the 38 holdings were investment-grade rated (highest S&P-rated holdings: Sanofi at AA; lowest: ConagraBrands, Inc. at BBB-)

Portfolio statistics	Strategic Value Dividend SMA	S&P 500 <sup>®</sup> Index	Top 10 holdings (%)	Weight	Prospective dividend yield <sup>1</sup>
<b>Wtd. average dividend yield (%)<sup>1</sup></b>	5.16	1.46	<b>Philip Morris International Inc.</b>	4.52	5.48
<b>Wtd. median P/E ratio (NTM)</b>	13.69x	22.39x	<b>Verizon Communications Inc.</b>	4.37	6.74
<b>Median 3-year average dividend payout ratio</b>	66.44	31.85	<b>Duke Energy Corporation</b>	4.11	4.17
<b>Wtd. median price/book</b>	1.76x	7.30x	<b>National Grid PLC</b>	3.82	5.44
<b>Wtd. median price/cash flow</b>	7.83x	19.84x	<b>LyondellBasell Industries N.V.</b>	3.70	5.00
<b>Portfolio beta vs. S&amp;P 500 (3 year)<sup>2</sup></b>	0.61	1.00	<b>TotalEnergies SE</b>	3.64	4.61
<b>Percentage in non-U.S./ADRs</b>	23.11	0.00	<b>Enbridge Inc.</b>	3.61	7.48
<b>Number of holdings</b>	38	500	<b>Sanofi</b>	3.51	4.04
			<b>Williams Companies Inc.</b>	3.24	4.95
			<b>Southern Company</b>	3.13	3.92

### Average annual total returns as of 3/31/24

	1-yr	5-yr	10-yr	20-yr	Since inception 10/1/01
<b>Strategic Value Dividend SMA (gross)</b>	3.81	5.70	6.82	7.37	8.46
<b>Strategic Value Dividend SMA (net of maximum 300 bps fee)</b>	0.75	2.58	3.67	4.21	5.27
<b>S&amp;P 500<sup>®</sup></b>	29.88	15.05	12.96	10.15	9.56

Unless otherwise noted, all information is as of 4/30/24.

<sup>1</sup> **Portfolio yield is only one component of available portfolio characteristics and it is not and should not be viewed as a statement of the current or future performance.** See the disclosures at the end of this document for yield definition.

<sup>2</sup> The 3 year beta is derived using 3 years of monthly linked returns to calculate the covariance of the portfolio and the broad market divided by the variance of the 3 year monthly linked returns of the broad market.

Yield for the portfolio and index is the weighted average dividend yield. The current U.S. 10-year Treasury yield is not a dividend yield and is shown for comparison purposes. See the disclosures at the end of this document for yield definitions. Refer to the attached GIPS<sup>®</sup> report for additional information.

While there is no assurance that the strategy will achieve its objective, the advisor endeavors to do so by selecting securities in the manner described in this document.

Investment-grade securities are securities that are rated at least "BBB" or unrated securities of a comparable quality. Non-investment-grade securities are securities that are not rated at least "BBB" or unrated securities of a comparable quality.

**Past performance is no guarantee of future results.**

## Schedule of rates of return and statistics

Composite Federated Hermes Strategic Value Dividend SMA  
 Index S&P 500 Index  
 Periods ending 3/31/24

	Returns (%)		
	Composite pure gross return <sup>^</sup>	Index	Net composite return (assuming maximum fee)
<b>Q1 24</b>	3.59	10.56	2.82
<b>YTD</b>	3.59	10.56	2.82
<b>1 Year</b>	3.81	29.88	0.75
<b>3 Years (Annldz)</b>	6.41	11.49	3.27
<b>5 Years (Annldz)</b>	5.70	15.05	2.58
<b>7 Years (Annldz)</b>	5.82	14.09	2.70
<b>10 Years (Annldz)</b>	6.82	12.96	3.67
<b>15 Years (Annldz)</b>	10.72	15.63	7.47
<b>20 Years (Annldz)</b>	7.37	10.15	4.21
<b>Oct 01 - Mar 24 (Annldz)<sup>^^</sup></b>	8.46	9.56	5.27

	Composite pure gross return (%) <sup>^</sup>	Composite net return (%)	Benchmark return (%)	*Composite 3-yr std dev	*Benchmark 3-yr std dev	Number of portfolios	**Dispersion	Composite assets (\$mil)	Firm assets (\$bil)
<b>2014</b>	12.34	9.05	13.68	8.92	8.97	6,412	0.23	2,223.3	349.3
<b>2015</b>	4.00	0.93	1.37	9.97	10.47	6,982	0.21	2,309.9	343.4
<b>2016</b>	10.05	6.82	11.95	9.93	10.59	11,970	0.25	3,189.3	342.3
<b>2017</b>	15.64	12.26	21.82	9.11	9.92	13,884	0.16	3,918.8	354.7
<b>2018</b>	-7.89	-10.64	-4.40	9.83	10.80	10,330	0.21	2,526.3	377.2
<b>2019</b>	20.43	16.91	31.49	9.64	11.94	11,038	0.24	3,037.4	503.1
<b>2020</b>	-6.94	-9.71	18.40	15.60	18.53	9,585	0.87	2,497.4	585.7
<b>2021</b>	22.89	19.32	28.71	15.52	17.17	9,776	0.41	3,062.5	634.2
<b>2022</b>	5.94	2.82	-18.11	18.00	20.87	2,533	0.28	999.0	627.4
<b>2023</b>	-2.54	-5.43	26.29	15.19	17.29	2,178	0.25	780.0	720.0

<sup>^</sup>Pure gross returns are shown as supplemental and do not reflect the deduction of transaction costs.

<sup>^^</sup>Represents composite inception period. See additional notes to the schedule of rates of return and statistics.

\*Represents the 3-year annualized standard deviation for both the gross composite and the index returns. Statistic is used to measure the volatility of composite returns.

\*\*Standard deviation is calculated using gross returns. Standard deviation is not applicable ("N/A") for any period if fewer than five accounts are in the composite for that period. (See footnote 5)

This composite is comprised of all domestic portfolios investing in U.S. and foreign stocks that management believes will provide high yield, reasonable dividend growth and lower volatility in falling equity market environments yet will provide potential participation in rising markets. Eligible portfolios are managed with wide latitude to choose the sectors and securities to fulfill the mandate. Within eligible portfolios, securities are selected based on a fundamental assessment of their financial strength, dividend yields, dividend growth rates, and performance during periods of market weakness. Portfolios in this composite implement the strategy using American Depositary Receipts (ADR) versus directly purchasing shares of companies on foreign exchanges. Investments in ADRs entail risks related to daily fluctuations in the value of currency, which may be more volatile in times of increased market risk. There are no guarantees that dividend-paying stocks will continue to pay dividends. Effective December 2022 and retroactive to inception, the composite's official benchmark is the S&P 500. The S&P 500 is an unmanaged capitalization-weighted index of 500 stocks designed to measure performance of the broad domestic economy through changes in the aggregate market value of 500 stocks representing all major industries. Previously, the composite utilized the Dow Jones Select Dividend Index (2007-2022) and the Russell MidCap Value Index (2001-2007). Because the strategy's objectives of dividend yield and dividend growth are absolute in nature, and the strategy's investment universe/guidelines do not align well to many dividend index proxies, the S&P 500 was chosen as the most applicable broad market comparison for the strategy's overall risk/return performance profile. The strategy generally takes a benchmark-agnostic investment approach, and while the strategy expects lower volatility than the S&P 500 (or broad equity market), it does not actively seek to outperform the S&P 500 as one of its investment goals. Indexes are unmanaged and cannot be invested in directly. Effective July 2013, performance for this composite is calculated in U.S. dollars net of foreign withholding taxes on dividends, interest, and capital gains. Individual tax rates may vary dependent on individual residency. Effective January 2016 accounts previously assigned to a platform-restricted composite may be eligible for inclusion in this composite. Accounts deemed by the portfolio manager to have a category restriction shall be excluded from this composite. A category is defined as a collection of investments with similar attributes such as industry classification, business sensitivity, social theme, or security features. Separate accounts eligible for this composite generally have a minimum of \$100,000 at the time of opening and are a part of an asset-based pricing program. Wrap fee accounts make up 100% of this composite for all time periods. This composite was created in December 2001. Federated Hermes has managed portfolios in this investment style since July 1997. Performance shown for 2001 is for a partial period starting on October 1, 2001. Federated Hermes claims compliance with the Global Investment Performance Standards ("GIPS®") and has prepared and presented this report in compliance with the GIPS® standards. Federated Hermes has been independently verified for the period of January 1, 1992, through December 31, 2023. The verification report is available upon request. A firm that claims compliance with the GIPS® standards must establish policies and procedures for complying with all the applicable requirements of the GIPS® standards. Verification provides assurance on whether the firm's policies and procedures related to composite and pooled fund maintenance, as well as the calculation, presentation, and distribution of performance, have been designed in compliance with the GIPS® standards and have been implemented on a firm-wide basis. Verification does not provide assurance on the accuracy of any specific performance report. Performance results are presented both net and gross of total wrap fees and reflect the reinvestment of income. "Pure" gross returns are shown as supplemental and do not reflect the deduction of transaction costs. Net returns reflect the deduction of a maximum fee. A fee equal to the highest anticipated wrap fee that a client could pay (3.00% annually as charged by the program sponsor, inclusive of up to a maximum investment advisory fee of 0.70%) is used. This total wrap fee includes all charges for trading costs, portfolio management, custody and other administrative fees. Actual fees may vary depending on, among other things, the applicable fee schedule and portfolio size.

## Notes to the schedule of rates of return and statistics

1. Federated Hermes is a global, independent, multi-strategy investment management firm. For GIPS® purposes, Federated Hermes is defined to include the assets of registered investment companies that are advised or sub-advised by the various Federated Hermes advisory companies. Effective September 30, 2020, for GIPS® purposes the name of the firm was officially changed to Federated Hermes. Firm assets on this report exclude assets affiliated with Hermes GPE and the advisory-only, model-based assets that may be included in other reports providing total firm assets.
2. Interest income and dividends are recognized on an accrual basis. Returns include the reinvestment of all income.
3. All market values and performance information are valued in USD unless currency is denoted in composite description.
4. Annual composite dispersion is measured and presented using the asset weighted standard deviation of the gross returns of all of the portfolios included in the composite over the entire year. Prior to January 2023, annual dispersion for the CW Henderson composites was measured using the equal weighted standard deviation of the returns of all the portfolios included in the composite over the entire year. Effective January 2023 this was changed to asset weighted. Prior to March 2020 with regard to Federated Clover Investment Advisors composites, annual dispersion was measured using the equal weighted standard deviation of the returns of all the portfolios included in the composite over the entire year.
5. Composite dispersion does not measure the risk of the product presented, it simply measures the return variance among portfolios managed in a similar fashion. This variance can be affected by variations in cash flow or specific client parameters among the portfolios comprising the composites, as well as by execution of strategy across accounts.
6. See the composite description language for a discussion on appropriate fees currently applied to calculate composite performance. With regard to the institutional composites not managed by the MDT Advisers and Federated Hermes London office teams, for the period July 1, 1992 through September 30, 2009, net of fee performance was calculated monthly by reducing the gross composite return by the highest actual fee of any account in the composite for that month, regardless of investment vehicle. Prior to July 1992, the maximum management fee for third quarter 1992 was used to calculate net of fee performance historically to inception of the composite. For those composites managed by the Federated Hermes London office investment team, net composite results are based off model fees using the stated fee schedule. In addition, further fee information can be obtained from the firm's respective Forms ADV Part 2 Brochure Item 5.
7. Additional information regarding the policies for valuing investments, calculating performance, and preparing GIPS® reports, as well as a complete list and description of the firm's composites and pooled funds is available upon request.
8. Past performance is not indicative of future results.
9. GIPS® 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.
10. See disclosures on the Schedule of Rates of Return and Statistics Reports for additional information.

Portfolio characteristics are based on a portfolio which is used as a guide for cloning (or managing) underlying accounts to a particular strategy. Taking into consideration individual investor circumstances could cause deviation from this guide (e.g. restrictions, tax requests, etc.). Portfolio characteristics are as of the date indicated and are based on individual securities in the portfolio on that date. Securities in the portfolio are subject to change.

Since this is a managed portfolio and market conditions can fluctuate suddenly and frequently, the portfolio holdings and investment mix will change.

**10-year Treasury yield** is the yield received for investing in a US government issued treasury security that has a maturity of 10 years.

**Beta** analyzes the market risk of a fund by showing how responsive the fund is to the market. The beta of the market is 1.00. Accordingly, a fund with a 1.10 beta is expected to perform 10% better than the market in up markets and 10% worse in down markets. Usually higher betas represent riskier investments.

**Dividend payout ratio** is the proportion of earnings paid out as dividends to shareholders, typically expressed as a percentage.

**Price-to-cash flow ratio** is a stock valuation indicator or multiple that measures the value of a stock's price relative to its operating cash flow per share.

**Price-to-earnings ratio (P/E ratio)** is a valuation ratio of a company's current share price compared to its per-share earnings. The P/E ratio helps investors determine the market value of a stock as compared to the company's earnings. A low P/E ratio might indicate that a stock that has the potential for significant growth is undervalued. P/E ratios are only one indicator of a company's financial well-being.

**Price/book value ratio** is a ratio used to compare a stock's market value to its book value. It is calculated by dividing the current closing price of the stock by the latest quarter's book value per share.

**Fama-French portfolios** are formed on D/P at the end of each June using NYSE breakpoints. The dividend yield used to form portfolios in June of year t is the total dividends paid from July of t-1 to June of t per dollar of equity in June of t. Includes all NYSE, AMEX, and NASDAQ stocks for which we have market equity for June of year t, and at least 7 monthly returns (to compute the dividend yield) from July of t-1 to June of t.

**S&P 500® Index** an unmanaged capitalization-weighted index of 500 stocks designated to measure performance of the broad domestic economy through changes in the aggregate market value of 500 stocks representing all major industries.

Indexes are unmanaged and cannot be invested in directly.

**Weighted average dividend yield** is the prospective dividend yield for each security averaged based on the percentages of the securities in the portfolio. Prospective dividend yield is calculated by taking the most recent declared dividend payment multiplied by the number of dividend payments typically made during the year for each holding divided by the current share price for each security. This is calculated based on a snapshot in time and may change due to fluctuations in share prices, dividends actually paid and changes in holdings in the portfolio.

### Risk considerations

Investing in equities is speculative and involves substantial risk.

There are no guarantees that dividend-paying stocks will continue to pay dividends. In addition, dividend-paying stocks may not experience the same capital appreciation potential as non-dividend-paying stocks.

International investing involves special risks including currency risk, increased volatility, political risks and differences in auditing and other financial standards.