



Dear fellow investors,

Following strong returns in the third quarter, the Fortress funds were weaker in the final quarter of 2024. There were gains across the board for the year, but results were below the high points reached temporarily mid-year. We wrote last quarter that it would be hard for financial markets to live up to their evident hope for both dramatically lower interest rates and healthy corporate profits. As it turned out, interest rate expectations were the weak link, and in the final months of the year many markets came under pressure because central banks grew more cautious on their likely pace of relief from relatively high interest rates.

Early November also saw the U.S. election and its early impacts on global markets. While U.S. equity indexes gained in the weeks following the result, expectation of "America first" policies from the new administration simultaneously led to weakness in global currencies, and international equities. This left U.S. equities (on average) even more expensive than before. It also created an even better outlook for international and emerging markets investments, where valuations are still attractive, and currencies are at fresh multi-year lows. Tomorrow's returns do not come from yesterday's returns; they come from today's prices. We need to listen to this information. And today, asset prices are practically screaming for investors to invest widely, to think outside the largest, most expensive stocks in the U.S., and to own high-quality assets from all over the world. We are listening. We remain very constructive on the funds' portfolios of well-valued holdings here in the Caribbean region, and, most importantly, all around the world.

Thank you very much for investing with us.

Sincerely,  
Fortress Fund Managers

## OF INTEREST THIS QUARTER:

### THE CARIBBEAN GROWTH FUND

declined 5.0% in the fourth quarter and is up 1.4% over the past year. International equities and currencies weakened following the U.S. election, as interest rates appeared poised to stay higher for longer.

### THE CARIBBEAN HIGH INTEREST FUND

declined 1.2% in the fourth quarter and is up 2.5% over the past year. U.S. bond prices fell, and yields rose, on expectations central bank easing would be slower than hoped.

### THE CARIBBEAN PENSION FUND

shares declined between 1.7% and 4.2% in the fourth quarter and are up between 2.1% and 2.3% over the past year. A slower pace of rate cuts led to weakness in international stocks, bonds and currencies.



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# Caribbean Growth Fund



## HIGHLIGHTS:

- After a strong third quarter, the Fund declined 5.0% in the fourth quarter and is up 1.4% over the past year.
- Global equities had mixed performance as investors digested the U.S. election results.

The Fund declined 5.0% in the fourth quarter and is up 1.4% over the past year. The net asset value (NAV) per share as of December 27 was \$7.5274. Net assets of the Fund were \$657 million, up from \$641 million this time last year. The Fund's annual compound rate of return since inception in 1996 is 7.5% per year. Its portfolio remains well diversified by security, geography, and currency.

Global equity performance was mixed this quarter. The S&P 500 index of large U.S. stocks returned 4% but the gains were concentrated among large cap technology and financial companies. Growth stocks again outperformed value this quarter, as earnings growth and lofty outlooks supported strong advances. Our more value-oriented holdings lagged the broader market in the U.S. and the Fund's U.S. holdings via the U.S. Equity Fund also underperformed. Following the U.S. election result, higher treasury yields also pushed the U.S. dollar higher and caused major currencies to weaken between 6% and 8%. Developed international and emerging market stocks declined slightly in local currency terms, but the weaker currencies deepened losses in U.S. dollar terms. Among emerging market stocks, Brazilian shares fell especially sharply, amidst concerns over the country's fiscal and political outlook, while Chinese stocks, the outperformers last quarter, reversed most of their third quarter gains. Overall, the Fund's core allocations to U.S., international and emerging markets shares declined 7% to 10%, while the Fund's individual global holdings like Johnson & Johnson and Biotech ETF decreased in line with sector performance.

In the Caribbean, share prices were flat to slightly higher this quarter. Performance among the Fund's larger holdings in the region included Massy Holdings (+11%), Agostini's (+4%) and Guardian Holdings (+2%). The returns this quarter in the Trinidad holdings suggest a slight improvement in investor sentiment but prices remain near cycle lows. Outside of Trinidad, the Fund's Caribbean holdings were mostly little changed.

There were no major changes to the Fund's portfolio this quarter. Despite (and where price is concerned, because of) widely expressed concerns over "America first" policies, we see tremendous value in holding a globally diversified portfolio. By the end of the quarter, some international currencies were at the low ebbs of their long-term average, and if history repeats itself, the portfolio is well positioned to benefit from mean reversion in international currencies. Further, U.S. large-cap stocks are even more expensive now and by the end of the year, traded at 22x forward earnings, well above historical averages. While these valuations are currently supported by strong fundamentals and earnings growth projections, there is little room for error. Against this backdrop, we see even better prospects for investing long term in well-valued global stocks.

The Fund continues to be open to all new subscriptions.

## FUND OBJECTIVE

Capital growth over the long term. The Fund uses a value approach to invest primarily in Caribbean and international equities.

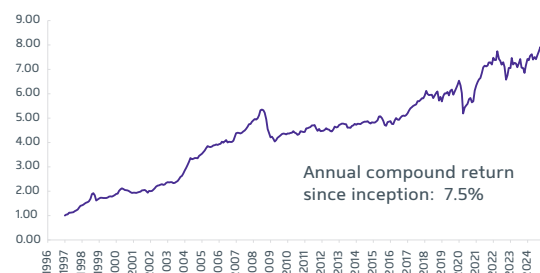
<b>Dealing</b>	Weekly on Fridays
<b>Net Asset Value per share</b>	\$7.5274
<b>Fund Net Assets</b>	\$656,774,959
<b>Fund Inception</b>	Dec 9, 1996

## INVESTMENT RETURNS

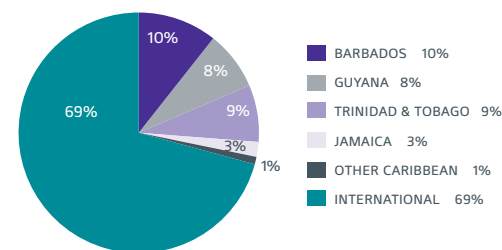
	3 Mo	1 Yr	3 Yrs	5 Yrs	Incept
<b>Fortress</b>	<b>-5.0%</b>	<b>1.4%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>7.5%</b>
Jamaica	7.2%	1.3%	-6.0%	-11.1%	5.6%
Trinidad	2.3%	-11.4%	-10.4%	-6.1%	6.5%
Barbados	-3.0%	2.4%	6.0%	-2.2%	2.9%
MSCI World	1.1%	20.7%	7.3%	12.0%	8.0%

\*periods longer than 1 year are annual compound returns

## NAV SINCE INCEPTION TO DECEMBER 31ST, 2024



## GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF PORTFOLIO



## TOP 5 HOLDINGS

Holding	Country/Region
1 Fortress International Equity Fund	International
2 Fortress US Equity Fund	US
3 Fortress Emerging Markets Fund	International
4 Berkshire Hathaway Inc Class B	US
5 Templeton Asian Smaller Companies	International

## EXPENSES

**Manager:**  
1.75% per annum on the first \$500 million of net assets  
1.50% per annum on remaining balance of net assets  
**Custodian:**  
0.0875% on first \$30M in net assets  
0.075% on amounts over \$30M in net assets  
**Administrator:**  
0.10% on the first \$30M in net assets  
0.0875% on amounts over \$30M in net assets  
**Redemption Charge:** none  
**Initial Charges:** 2%  
Where allocations are made to other Fortress funds, management fees are rebated to the Fund to avoid double charging.

## MANAGER & ADMINISTRATOR

Fortress Fund Managers Ltd.

## CUSTODIAN

SigniaGlobe Financial Group

## AUDITORS

EY Barbados

## ATTORNEY-AT-LAW

Clarke Gittens Farmer

## DIRECTORS

Roger Cave, Chairman  
Ruth Henry  
John Howard  
Greg McConnie  
Maria Nicholls  
Tracey Shuffler  
John Williams

Please see our **Fund Prospectus** for further important information.

# Caribbean High Interest Fund



## HIGHLIGHTS:

- *The Fund declined 1.2% in the fourth quarter and is up 2.5% over the past year.*
- *A rise in U.S. treasury yields reflected expectations for fewer upcoming rate cuts and brought bond prices down.*

The Fund declined 1.2% in the fourth quarter and is up 2.5% over the past year. The net asset value (NAV) of the Fund's Accumulation share as of December 27 was \$2.2169, while the Distribution share finished at \$1.0598. Net assets of the Fund were \$144 million, up from \$143 million this time last year. The Fund's annual compound rate of return since inception in 2002 is 3.6% per year. Its portfolio remains as diversified as possible across various issuers, industries, geographies, and terms to maturity.

After declining in the third quarter, U.S. bond yields increased steadily over the fourth quarter, leading to a broad decline in bond prices. Several factors contributed to the rise in yields. First, the outcome of the U.S. election prompted investors to factor in the inflationary impacts of potential policies, such as higher U.S. fiscal spending and tariffs. A second driver of yields was the strength of the U.S. economy. Strong economic data and sticky inflation renewed the "higher for longer" narrative on interest rates. The U.S. Federal Reserve (Fed) cut its target rate by 0.5% this quarter but communicated that swift and aggressive rate cuts were likely off the table for 2025. The higher for longer narrative was further reinforced by the Fed's projected path of interest rates which showed only two rate cuts in 2025, down markedly from previous predictions. The broad U.S. bond market fell by 3.6% in the quarter. The Fund's core allocation to the US\$ Fortress Fixed Income Fund outperformed the benchmark but still declined by 2%. The rise in U.S. treasury yields and the resultant strength in the U.S. dollar created a challenging environment for emerging market bonds, and the Fund's emerging market bond allocations declined in the 4-5% range.

Over the quarter, corporate spreads narrowed, reflecting a positive outlook on the economy. U.S. corporate spreads were near the tightest levels seen in a while, and even though the U.S. economy appeared healthy, it is usually difficult to maintain strong business activity in a high-rate environment. During the quarter, we gradually extended term by switching out of U.S. treasury bills into five-year treasury notes, a part of the curve where the fund had only minimal exposure. We continue to position the Fund to benefit from a range of scenarios relating to credit and yield curve changes.

In Barbados, the local bond market saw the Government of Barbados (GOB) issue a new 7.75% 20-year bond in which the Fund made a small allocation, increasing GOB exposure slightly by the end of the quarter to 16%. The Fund's existing corporate holdings all performed as expected. Cash in the Fund declined to 12%, and the average term to maturity of the Fund's portfolio is six years. The gross yield is now 4.2%, a good estimate of its medium-term return potential.

*The Fund is currently open only to monthly savings programmes and pensions. It remains closed to new lump sum investments.*

## FUND OBJECTIVE

Income and capital preservation over the medium term. The Fund actively invests in a diversified portfolio of primarily Caribbean and international debt securities.

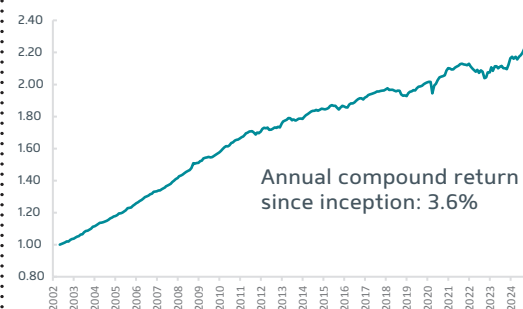
<i>Dealing</i>	Weekly on Fridays
<i>Net Asset Value per share</i>	\$2.2169/ \$1.0598
<i>Fund Net Assets</i>	\$144,252,724
<i>Fund Inception</i>	May 17, 2002

## INVESTMENT RETURNS

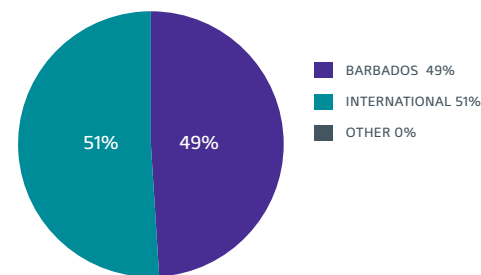
3 Months	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years	Inception
-1.2%	2.5%	1.3%	1.9%	3.6%

\*periods longer than 1 year are annual compound returns

## NAV SINCE INCEPTION TO DECEMBER 31ST, 2024



## GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF PORTFOLIO



## TOP 5 HOLDINGS

Holding	Country
1 Fortress Fixed Income Fund	International
2 Deposits - CIBC Caribbean Bank	Barbados
3 Fortress World Fixed Income Fund	International
4 Barbados Series B Sep 30, 2033	Barbados
5 GEL Note Nov 30 2025	Barbados

## EXPENSES

*Manager:*  
1.75% per annum on the first \$500 million of net assets  
1.50% per annum on remaining balance of net assets  
*Custodian:*  
0.0875% on first \$30M in net assets  
0.075% on amounts over \$30M in net assets  
*Administrator:*  
0.10% on the first \$30M in net assets  
0.0875% on amounts over \$30M in net assets  
*Redemption Charge:* none  
*Initial Charges:* 2%

Where allocations are made to other Fortress funds, management fees are rebated to the Fund to avoid double charging.

## MANAGER & ADMINISTRATOR

Fortress Fund Managers Ltd.

## CUSTODIAN

SigniaGlobe Financial Group

## AUDITORS

EY Barbados

## ATTORNEY-AT-LAW

Clarke Gittens Farmer

## DIRECTORS

Roger Cave, Chairman  
Ruth Henry  
John Howard  
Greg McConnie  
Maria Nicholls  
Tracey Shuffler  
John Williams

Please see our **Fund Prospectus** for further important information.

# Caribbean Pension Fund



## HIGHLIGHTS:

- The three classes of shares of the Pension Fund declined between 1.7% and 4.2% in the fourth quarter and are up between 2.1% and 2.3% over the past year. A slower pace of interest rate cuts led to weakness in international stocks, bonds and currencies.
- Returns by class of share are shown in the table to the right.

What is a lot of money, really, when it comes to saving for retirement?

It depends on our stage of life. Should \$100,000 in cash and investments, while still in your prime working years, be considered a lot? Probably. For the 35- to 40-year-old with 25 to 35 working years to go, fresh income each pay period, and decades of compounding investment growth ahead, this is a strong situation to be in.

What about the same \$100,000 in total savings at age 55? Is this also “a lot”? \$100,000 is \$100,000, correct, so shouldn't this all feel the same? Not exactly. Because time – and time left to retirement – matters. Unfortunately, we often realise this too late, and in the meantime, we are told, and might tell ourselves, different stories about what is enough. If I could for a moment embody the 55-year-old, then the future me standing off at age 65 waiting patiently for the sum of all my efforts to finally settle must be very uncomfortable. Like the sorcerer standing over a years' long brewing cauldron with likely another 25 years to live, future me knows, trying to stretch thin the result of an investment pot of that size is just too hard.

We are often too late smart. In today's environment, the social nets to which we collectively have been accustomed are being challenged to satisfy all promised; the older among us will likely still be served their dose of NIS, but the rest can only hope. Of those lucky to have an employer willing to contribute towards their future retirement, there still may be a gap between what you need to survive and the reality of your pension fund.

The time was yesterday, and we'll have to settle for right now. Whether we are near the finish line or just starting, we can still put our dollars today to work to produce the outcome we most want – a comfortable retirement.

*Investors in the Pension Fund typically select from three different classes of shares, based on personal circumstances and risk tolerance. These classes differ in how their assets are spread across the major asset classes of equities, bonds, and real estate and other assets. The graphs show how each of the classes (AA, CC, CS) is allocated currently. The reports on the Caribbean Growth Fund and Caribbean High Interest Fund on pages two and three of this quarterly report give you a direct look into the performance, positioning and outlook for the major underlying investments in the Pension Fund.*

**Fortress is a leading provider of investment management and pension administration services to defined contribution (DC) and defined benefit (DB) pension plans of all sizes.**

In addition, our proprietary pension products serve companies and employees both before and after retirement:

### Personal Pension (RRSP)

- Individual account for investing your own pension savings.
- If you change employers your accumulated pension savings can be transferred into an RRSP and remain invested as you select.

### INNOVA Lifestage Income Plan

- An alternative to low rates on fixed annuities after retirement.
- You stay invested even in retirement and draw down a variable monthly pension from your own investment account.
- Any undrawn amount forms part of your estate.

*The Fortress Caribbean Pension Fund is the primary investment offering behind all our pension products and for company defined contribution pension plans.*

## FUND OBJECTIVE

Capital growth, income and security over the long term, as appropriate to each class of share. The Fund invests in equities, fixed income, and real estate assets primarily via the other Fortress funds.

### Net Asset Value

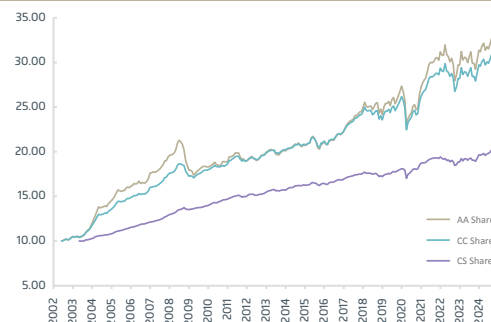
Per Share: \$32.03 / \$30.40 / \$20.11 (AA/CC/CS)  
Fund Net Assets: \$418,008,989

## INVESTMENT RETURNS

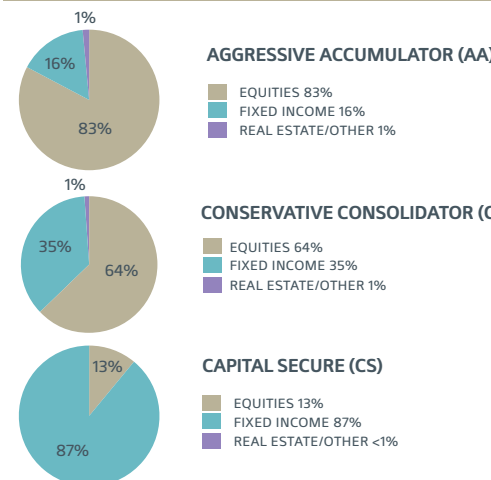
	3 Mo	1 Yr	3 Yrs	5 Yrs	Incept.
AA Share	-4.2%	2.1%	0.9%	3.2%	5.3%
CC Share	-3.5%	2.2%	1.2%	3.0%	5.0%
CS Share	-1.7%	2.3%	1.2%	2.1%	3.3%

\*periods longer than 1 year are annual compound returns

## NAV SINCE INCEPTION TO DECEMBER 31ST, 2024



## ASSET ALLOCATION



## EXPENSES

**Manager:** 0.50% per annum of net assets at the Fund level.  
Fees from the underlying Fortress funds in which the Fund invests are capped at between 0.25% and 0.50% per annum of net assets, depending on the fund.  
**Custodian:** \$7,500 per year paid by the Fund as a whole.  
**Administrator:** 0.03% per annum.  
**Sales Charge:** None  
**Redemption Charge:** none

## MANAGER & ADMINISTRATOR

Fortress Fund Managers Ltd

## CUSTODIAN

SigniaGlobe Financial Group

## AUDITORS

EY Barbados

## ATTORNEY-AT-LAW

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## DIRECTORS

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