

## PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

**NORTHERN FUNDS  
EQUITY INDEX FUNDS**

**SUPPLEMENT DATED NOVEMBER 28, 2011 TO  
PROSPECTUS DATED JULY 31, 2011**

*The following replaces the information under “FUND MANAGEMENT – Legal Proceedings” on page 30 of the Prospectus:*

In December 2007, the Mid Cap Index Fund, as a shareholder of Lyondell Chemical Company (“Lyondell”), participated in a cash out merger of Lyondell in which it received \$48/share of merger consideration. Lyondell later filed for bankruptcy and two entities created by the Lyondell bankruptcy plan of reorganization have initiated lawsuits seeking to recover, or clawback, proceeds received by shareholders in the December 2007 merger based on fraudulent transfer claims.

The first action, *Edward S. Weisfelner, as Trustee of the LB Creditor Trust v. Morgan Stanley & Co., Inc., et. al* (“Creditor Trust Action”), was initiated on October 22, 2010, in the Supreme Court of the State of New York in the County of New York but has subsequently been removed to the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of New York. Defendants in the Creditor Trust Action have filed motions to dismiss the case, which are pending.

The second action, *Edward S. Weisfelner, as Trustee of the LB Litigation Trust v. A Holmes & H Holmes TTEE, et. al* (“Litigation Trust Action”), was initiated on December 23, 2010, in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of New York. Defendants in the Litigation Trust Action have also filed motions to dismiss the case. After the Court heard oral arguments on these motions, the plaintiffs agreed to dismiss their claim for constructive fraudulent transfer. Accordingly, the court in the Litigation Trust Action filed an order on October 6, 2011 in which the court (a) denied without prejudice the challenge to the plaintiff’s standing to pursue claims, and authorized discovery on this issue; (b) confirmed the dismissal of the constructive fraudulent transfer claim; and (c) stated that other grounds for seeking dismissal remain under consideration, during which the obligation to answer plaintiff’s complaint remains stayed. Both actions attempt to recover the proceeds paid out to the holders of Lyondell shares at the time of the 2007 merger.

The value of the proceeds received by the Mid Cap Index Fund was approximately \$4,171,000. The Fund cannot predict the outcome of these proceedings. The Mid Cap Index Fund intends to vigorously defend any lawsuit. The Fund is currently assessing the case and has not yet determined the potential effect, if any, on its net asset value.

\* \* \*

## PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

**SUPPLEMENT DATED AUGUST 29, 2011 (AS  
REVISED AND RESTATED OCTOBER 26, 2011)  
TO PROSPECTUS DATED JULY 31, 2011**

Northern Trust Investments, Inc. is scheduled to increase the expense reimbursements it provides to certain Northern Funds effective as of January 1, 2012. This increase in expense reimbursements will have the effect of reducing the Total Annual Fund Operating Expenses paid by investors. The following chart illustrates the increase in expense reimbursements:

| Fund                          | Total Annual Fund Operating Expenses After Expense Reimbursement (if any) | Operating Expense Reduction | Total Annual Fund Operating Expenses After Expense Reimbursement Effective 1/1/2012 |
|-------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|---|
| Emerging Markets Equity Index | 0.72%   | -0.42%                      | 0.30%   |
| Global Real Estate Index      | 0.65%   | -0.15%                      | 0.50%   |
| Global Sustainability Index   | 0.65%   | -0.35%                      | 0.30%   |
| International Equity Index    | 0.45%   | -0.20%                      | 0.25%   |
| Mid Cap Index                 | 0.30%   | -0.15%                      | 0.15%   |
| Small Cap Index               | 0.35%   | -0.20%                      | 0.15%   |
| Stock Index                   | 0.25%   | -0.15%                      | 0.10%   |

These new contractual expense reimbursement arrangements are expected to continue from implementation until at least December 31, 2012.

*Please retain this Supplement with your Prospectus for future reference.*

50 South LaSalle Street  
P.O. Box 75986  
Chicago, Illinois 60675-5986  
800-595-9111  
northernfunds.com



Managed by  
**Northern Trust**

INDX SPT (11/11)

**NORTHERN FUNDS PROSPECTUS****EMERGING MARKETS EQUITY INDEX  
FUND (NOEMX)****GLOBAL REAL ESTATE INDEX FUND  
(NGREX)****GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY INDEX FUND  
(NSRIX)****INTERNATIONAL EQUITY INDEX FUND  
(NOINX)****MID CAP INDEX FUND (NOMIX)****SMALL CAP INDEX FUND (NSIDX)****STOCK INDEX FUND (NOSIX)****Prospectus dated July 31, 2011**

---

An investment in a Fund is not a deposit of any bank and is not insured or guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation ("FDIC"), any other government agency, or The Northern Trust Company, its affiliates, subsidiaries or any other bank. An investment in a Fund involves investment risks, including possible loss of principal.

The Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC") has not approved or disapproved these securities or passed upon the adequacy of this Prospectus. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS****3 FUND SUMMARIES**

3 EMERGING MARKETS EQUITY INDEX FUND

7 GLOBAL REAL ESTATE INDEX FUND

11 GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY INDEX FUND

15 INTERNATIONAL EQUITY INDEX FUND

18 MID CAP INDEX FUND

21 SMALL CAP INDEX FUND

24 STOCK INDEX FUND

**27 BROAD-BASED SECURITIES MARKET INDICES****28 INVESTMENT ADVISER****29 ADVISORY FEES****30 FUND MANAGEMENT****31 OTHER FUND SERVICES****32 PURCHASING AND SELLING SHARES**

32 PURCHASING SHARES

32 OPENING AN ACCOUNT

33 SELLING SHARES

**36 ACCOUNT POLICIES AND OTHER INFORMATION****43 DIVIDENDS AND DISTRIBUTIONS****44 TAX CONSIDERATIONS****46 SECURITIES, TECHNIQUES AND RISKS**

46 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON INVESTMENT OBJECTIVES,  
PRINCIPAL INVESTMENT STRATEGIES AND RELATED RISKS

51 ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTION OF SECURITIES AND COMMON  
INVESTMENT TECHNIQUES

60 DISCLAIMERS

**62 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS****72 FOR MORE INFORMATION**

## FUND SUMMARIES

## EMERGING MARKETS EQUITY INDEX FUND

## INVESTMENT OBJECTIVE

The Fund seeks to provide investment results approximating the overall performance of the MSCI Emerging Markets Index.

## FEES AND EXPENSES OF THE FUND

This table describes the fees and expenses that you may pay if you buy and hold shares of the Fund.

**Shareholder Fees** (fees paid directly from your investment)

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| Maximum Sales Charge (Load) Imposed on Purchases (as a percentage of offering price)            | None  |
| Redemption Fee (within 30 days of purchase) (as a percentage of amount redeemed, if applicable) | 2.00% |

**Annual Fund Operating Expenses** (expenses that you pay each year as a percentage of the value of your investment)

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| Management Fees                             | 0.35%        |
| Distribution (12b-1) Fees                   | 0.00%        |
| Other Expenses                              | 0.37%        |
| Administration Fees                         | 0.15%        |
| Transfer Agency Fees                        | 0.10%        |
| Other Operating Expenses                    | 0.12%        |
| <b>Total Annual Fund Operating Expenses</b> | <b>0.72%</b> |

## EXAMPLE

The following Example is intended to help you compare the cost of investing in the Fund with the cost of investing in other mutual funds. The Example assumes that you invest \$10,000 in the Fund for the time periods indicated and then redeem all of your shares at the end of those periods. The Example also assumes that your investment has a 5% return each year and that the Fund's operating expenses remain the same. Although your actual costs may be higher or lower, based on these assumptions your costs would be:

| 1 Year | 3 Years | 5 Years | 10 Years |
|--------|---------|---------|----------|
| \$74   | \$230   | \$401   | \$894    |

**PORTFOLIO TURNOVER.** The Fund pays transaction costs, such as commissions, when it buys and sells securities (or "turns over" its portfolio). A higher portfolio turnover rate may indicate higher transaction costs and may result in higher taxes when Fund shares are held in a taxable account. These costs, which are not reflected in annual portfolio operating expenses or in the Example, affect the Fund's performance. During the

most recent fiscal year, the Fund's portfolio turnover rate was 40.61% of the average value of its portfolio.

## PRINCIPAL INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

Under normal circumstances, the Fund will invest substantially all (and at least 80%) of its net assets in equity securities, in weightings that approximate the relative composition of the securities included in the MSCI Emerging Markets Index, in American Depositary Receipts ("ADRs"), European Depositary Receipts ("EDRs"), and Global Depositary Receipts ("GDRs") representing such securities, and in MSCI Emerging Markets Index futures approved by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

The MSCI Emerging Markets Index is a free float-adjusted market capitalization index that is designed to measure equity market performance in the global emerging markets. As of May 30, 2011, the MSCI Emerging Markets Index consisted of the following 21 emerging market country indices: Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Czech Republic, Egypt, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Russia, South Africa, Taiwan, Thailand and Turkey.

The Fund is passively managed, which means it tries to duplicate the investment composition and performance of the MSCI Emerging Markets Index by using computer programs and statistical procedures. The investment management team will buy and sell securities in response to changes in the MSCI Emerging Markets Index as well as in response to subscriptions and redemptions. Because the Fund will have fees and transaction expenses (while the MSCI Emerging Markets Index has none), returns may be lower than those of the MSCI Emerging Markets Index.

The Fund generally will not hold every stock in the MSCI Emerging Markets Index because of the expense and inefficiency involved in such a strategy. Rather, it will use a representative sampling and optimization strategy to seek to construct a portfolio that minimizes tracking error versus the MSCI Emerging Markets Index and transaction costs. As part of its strategy, the Fund may substitute certain stocks in the MSCI Emerging Markets Index with ADRs, EDRs or GDRs that represent such stocks. Representative sampling involves selecting a representative sample of securities included in an index that will resemble the full index based on such factors as industry and country weightings, market capitalization and other financial characteristics.

Because the proportion of assets allocated to each country will approximate the relative country weightings in the MSCI Emerging Markets Index, more than 25% of the Fund's assets may be invested in a single country (such as South Korea, Taiwan, Brazil, Mexico, South Africa, or China) or geographic region. This may make the Fund's performance more dependent upon the performance of a single country's securities than if the Fund allocated its assets among issuers in a larger number of countries.

The Investment Adviser expects that, under normal circumstances, the quarterly performance of the Fund, before expenses, will track the performance of the MSCI Emerging Markets Index within a 0.95 correlation coefficient.

*Morgan Stanley Capital International, Inc. ("MSCI") does not endorse any of the securities in the MSCI Emerging Markets Index. It is not a sponsor of the Emerging Markets Equity Index Fund and is not affiliated with the Fund in any way.*

#### PRINCIPAL RISKS

**MARKET RISK** is the risk that the value of equity securities owned by the Fund may decline, at times sharply and unpredictably, because of economic changes or other events that affect individual issuers or large portions of the market.

**MANAGEMENT RISK** is the risk that a strategy used by the investment management team may fail to produce the intended results.

**FOREIGN SECURITIES RISK** is the risk that investing in foreign (non-U.S.) securities may result in the Fund experiencing more rapid and extreme changes in value than a fund that invests exclusively in securities of U.S. companies, due to less liquid markets and adverse economic, political, diplomatic, financial, and regulatory factors. Foreign governments also may impose limits on investment and repatriation and impose taxes. Any of these events could cause the value of the Fund's investments to decline. The Index tracked by the Emerging Markets Equity Index Fund (and therefore the Emerging Markets Equity Index Fund itself) has a heavy exposure to Brazil, China, Russia, South Korea and Taiwan. This exposure will subject the Emerging Markets Equity Index Fund to a higher degree of risk than that of a more geographically diverse fund. To the extent that the Fund's assets are concentrated in a single country or geographic region, the Fund will be subject to the risks associated with that particular country or region.

**CURRENCY RISK** is the risk that foreign currencies will fluctuate in value relative to the U.S. dollar, adversely affecting the value of the Fund's investments and its returns. Because the Fund's net asset value is determined on the basis of U.S. dollars, you may lose money if the local currency of a foreign market

depreciates against the U.S. dollar, even if the market value of the Fund's holdings appreciates.

**EMERGING MARKETS RISK** is the risk that markets of emerging market countries are less developed and less liquid, subject to greater price volatility and generally subject to increased economic, political, regulatory and other uncertainties than more developed markets.

**SMALL CAP STOCK RISK** is the risk that stocks of smaller companies may be subject to more abrupt or erratic market movements than stocks of larger, more established companies. Small companies may have limited product lines or financial resources, or may be dependent upon a small or inexperienced management group, and their securities may trade less frequently and in lower volume than the securities of larger companies, which could lead to higher transaction costs. Generally the smaller the company size, the greater the risk.

**TRACKING RISK** is the risk that the Fund's performance may vary substantially from the performance of the benchmark index it tracks as a result of share purchases and redemptions, transaction costs, expenses and other factors.

As with any mutual fund, it is possible to lose money on an investment in the Fund. An investment in the Fund is not a deposit of any bank and is not insured or guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, any other government agency, or The Northern Trust Company, its affiliates, subsidiaries or any other bank.

#### FUND PERFORMANCE

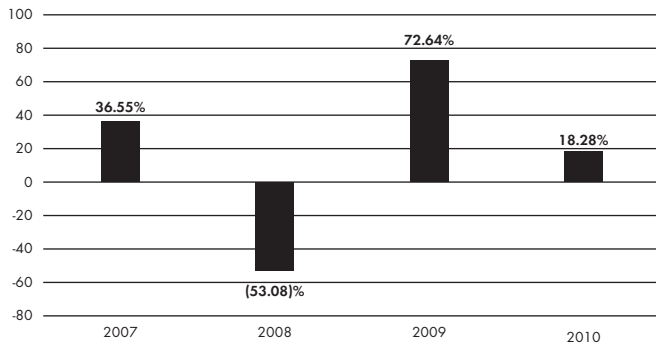
The bar chart and table that follow provide an indication of the risks of investing in the Fund by showing (A) changes in the performance of the Fund from year to year, and (B) how the average annual total returns of the Fund compare to those of a broad-based securities market index.

The Fund's past performance, before and after taxes, is not necessarily an indication of how the Fund will perform in the future.

Updated performance information for the Fund is available and may be obtained on the Fund's Web site at [www.northernfunds.com](http://www.northernfunds.com) or by calling 800-595-9111.

## EMERGING MARKETS EQUITY INDEX FUND

## CALENDAR YEAR TOTAL RETURN\*



\* Year to date total return for the six months ended June 30, 2011 is 0.70%. For the periods shown in the bar chart above, the highest quarterly return was 32.97% in the second quarter of 2009, and the lowest quarterly return was (28.28)% in the fourth quarter of 2008.

## AVERAGE ANNUAL TOTAL RETURN

(For the periods ended December 31, 2010)

|  | Inception Date | 1-Year | Since Inception |
|--|----------------|--------|-----------------|
| Emerging Markets Equity Index Fund   | 4/25/06        |        |                 |
| Return before taxes  |                | 18.28% | 8.04%           |
| Return after taxes on distributions  |                | 17.79% | 7.43%           |
| Return after taxes on distributions and sale of Fund shares                      |                | 12.04% | 6.66%           |
| MSCI Emerging Markets Index (reflects no deduction for fees, expenses, or taxes) |                | 18.88% | 9.50%           |

After-tax returns are calculated using the historical highest individual federal marginal income tax rates and do not reflect the impact of state and local taxes. Actual after-tax returns depend on an investor's tax situation and may differ from those shown. After-tax returns shown are not relevant to investors who hold their shares through tax-deferred arrangements, such as 401(k) plans or individual retirement accounts.

## MANAGEMENT

**INVESTMENT ADVISER AND PORTFOLIO MANAGER.** Northern Trust Investments, Inc., an indirect subsidiary of Northern Trust Corporation, serves as the Investment Adviser of the Emerging Markets Equity Index Fund. Shaun Murphy, Senior Vice President of Northern Trust Investments, Inc., and Steven J. Santiccioli, Vice President of Northern Trust Investments, Inc., have been managers of the Fund since November 2006 and July 2007, respectively.

## PURCHASE AND SALE OF FUND SHARES

You may purchase Fund shares through your account at Northern Trust or an authorized intermediary or you may

open an account directly with the Trust with a minimum initial investment of \$2,500 in the Fund (\$500 for an IRA; \$250 under the Automatic Investment Plan; and \$500 for employees of Northern Trust and its affiliates). The minimum subsequent investment is \$50 (except for reinvestments of distributions for which there is no minimum). The Fund reserves the right to waive these minimums.

On any business day, you may sell (redeem) or exchange shares through your account by contacting your Northern Trust account representative or authorized intermediary. If you purchase shares directly from the Trust, you may sell (redeem) or exchange your shares in one of the following ways:

- By Mail – Send a written request to: Northern Funds, P.O. Box 75986, Chicago, Illinois 60675-5986.
- By Telephone – Authorize the telephone privilege on your New Account Application. Call 800-595-9111 to use the telephone privilege.
- By Wire – Authorize wire redemptions on your New Account Application and have proceeds sent by federal wire transfer to a previously designated account (the minimum redemption amount by this method is \$250). You will be charged \$15 for each wire redemption unless the designated account is maintained at Northern Trust or an affiliated bank. Call 800-595-9111 for instructions.
- By Systematic Withdrawal – If you own shares of the Fund with a minimum value of \$10,000, you may elect to have a fixed sum redeemed at regular intervals and distributed in cash or reinvested in one or more other funds of the Trust. Call 800-595-9111 for an application form and additional information. The minimum amount is \$250 per withdrawal.
- By Exchange – Complete the Exchange Privilege section of your New Account Application to exchange shares of one fund in the Trust for shares of another fund in the Trust. Shares being exchanged must have a value of at least \$1,000 (\$2,500 if a new account is being established by the exchange, \$500 if the new account is an IRA). Call 800-595-9111 for more information.
- By Internet – You may initiate transactions between Northern Trust banking and Fund accounts by using Northern Trust Private Passport. For details and to sign up for this service, go to [www.northernfunds.com](http://www.northernfunds.com) or contact your Relationship Manager.

## TAX INFORMATION

The Fund's distributions are generally taxable to you as ordinary income, capital gains, or a combination of the two, unless you are investing through a tax-exempt or tax-deferred

arrangement, such as a 401(k) plan or an individual retirement account. Distributions may be taxable upon withdrawal from tax-deferred accounts.

**PAYMENTS TO BROKERS-DEALERS AND OTHER FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES**

If you purchase the Fund through a broker-dealer or other financial intermediary (such as a bank), the Fund and its related companies may pay the intermediary for the sale of Fund shares and related services. These payments may create a conflict of interest by influencing the broker-dealer or other intermediary and your salesperson to recommend the Fund over another investment. Ask your salesperson or visit your financial intermediary's Web site for more information.

## GLOBAL REAL ESTATE INDEX FUND

## INVESTMENT OBJECTIVE

The Fund seeks to provide investment results approximating the overall performance of the securities included in the FTSE® EPRA®/NAREIT® Global Index (“FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Index”).

## FEES AND EXPENSES OF THE FUND

This table describes the fees and expenses that you may pay if you buy and hold shares of the Fund.

**Shareholder Fees** (fees paid directly from your investment)

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| Maximum Sales Charge (Load) Imposed on Purchases (as a percentage of offering price)            | None  |
| Redemption Fee (within 30 days of purchase) (as a percentage of amount redeemed, if applicable) | 2.00% |

**Annual Fund Operating Expenses** (expenses that you pay each year as a percentage of the value of your investment)

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| Management Fees   | 0.35%        |
| Distribution (12b-1) Fees   | 0.00%        |
| Other Expenses  | 0.39%        |
| Administration Fees   | 0.15%        |
| Transfer Agency Fees  | 0.10%        |
| Other Operating Expenses  | 0.14%        |
| <b>Total Annual Fund Operating Expenses</b>                             | <b>0.74%</b> |
| Expense Reimbursement <sup>(1)</sup>                                    | (0.09)%      |
| <b>Total Annual Fund Operating Expenses After Expense Reimbursement</b> | <b>0.65%</b> |

<sup>(1)</sup> Northern Trust Investments, Inc. (“NTI” or the “Investment Adviser”) has contractually agreed to reimburse certain expenses of the Fund. Reimbursed amounts are charged first against “Management Fees” and then, if necessary, against “Other Expenses” to the extent they exceed “Management Fees.” The contractual reimbursement arrangement is expected to continue until at least July 31, 2012. After this date, NTI or the Fund may terminate the contractual arrangement. The Fund’s Board of Trustees may terminate the contractual arrangement at any time if it determines that it is in the best interest of the Fund and its shareholders.

## EXAMPLE

The following Example is intended to help you compare the cost of investing in the Fund with the cost of investing in other mutual funds. The Example assumes that you invest \$10,000 in the Fund for the time periods indicated and then redeem all of your shares at the end of those periods. The Example also assumes that your investment has a 5% return each year and that the Fund’s operating expenses remain the same. Although your actual costs may be higher or lower, based on these assumptions your costs would be:

| 1 Year | 3 Years | 5 Years | 10 Years |
|--------|---------|---------|----------|
| \$66   | \$228   | \$403   | \$910    |

**PORTFOLIO TURNOVER.** The Fund pays transaction costs, such as commissions, when it buys and sells securities (or “turns over” its portfolio). A higher portfolio turnover rate may indicate higher transaction costs and may result in higher taxes when Fund shares are held in a taxable account. These costs, which are not reflected in annual portfolio operating expenses or in the Example, affect the Fund’s performance. During the most recent fiscal year, the Fund’s portfolio turnover rate was 4.56% of the average value of its portfolio.

## PRINCIPAL INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

Under normal circumstances, the Fund will invest substantially all (and at least 80%) of its net assets in equity securities included in the FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Global Index (“FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Index”), in weightings that approximate the relative composition of the securities contained in the FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Index. Companies included in the FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Index are engaged principally in real estate activities, including ownership, trading and development of income-producing real estate, and include REITs.

The FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Index is a free float, market capitalization-weighted real estate index designed to represent publicly traded equity REITs and listed property companies globally. The FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Index covers both developed and emerging markets, and represents 48 countries worldwide. As of June 30, 2011, the FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Index consisted of issuers from the following 36 countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the Philippines, Poland, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United Arab Emirates and the United States.

The Fund is passively managed, which means it tries to duplicate the investment composition and performance of the FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Index by using computer programs and statistical procedures. The investment management team will buy and sell securities in response to changes in the FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Index. Because the Fund will have fees and transaction expenses (while the FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Index has none), returns are likely to be below those of the FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Index.

The proportions of the Fund’s assets allocated to each country will approximate and vary with the relative country weights in the FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Index. As of June 30, 2011, the FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Index consisted primarily of issuers located in developed countries, concentrated in the following geographic areas: Americas, Asia Pacific and Europe. As of the same date,

approximately 38.8% of the issuers in the FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Index were located in the United States.

The Investment Adviser expects that, under normal circumstances, the quarterly performance of the Fund, before expenses, will track the performance of the FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Index within a 0.95 correlation coefficient.

*FTSE International Limited (“FTSE”), The European Public Real Estate Association (“EPRA”) and the National Association of Real Estate Investment Trusts (“NAREIT”) do not endorse any of the securities in the FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Index. These entities are not sponsors of the Global Real Estate Index Fund and are not affiliated with the Fund in any way.*

## PRINCIPAL RISKS

**MARKET RISK** is the risk that the value of equity securities owned by the Fund may decline, at times sharply and unpredictably, because of economic changes or other events that affect individual issuers or large portions of the market.

**MANAGEMENT RISK** is the risk that a strategy used by the investment management team may fail to produce the intended results.

**TRACKING RISK** is the risk that the Fund’s performance may vary substantially from the performance of the benchmark index it tracks as a result of share purchases and redemptions, transaction costs, expenses and other factors.

**FOREIGN SECURITIES RISK** is the risk that investing in foreign (non-U.S.) securities may result in the Fund experiencing more rapid and extreme changes in value than a fund that invests exclusively in securities of U.S. companies, due to less liquid markets and adverse economic, political, diplomatic, financial, and regulatory factors. Foreign governments also may impose limits on investment and repatriation and impose taxes. Any of these events could cause the value of the Fund’s investments to decline. To the extent that the Fund’s assets are concentrated in a single country or geographic region, the Fund will be subject to the risks associated with that particular country or region.

**CURRENCY RISK** is the risk that foreign currencies will fluctuate in value relative to the U.S. dollar, adversely affecting the value of the Fund’s investments and its returns. Because the Fund’s net asset value is determined on the basis of U.S. dollars, you may lose money if the local currency of a foreign market depreciates against the U.S. dollar, even if the market value of the Fund’s holdings appreciates.

**MID CAP STOCK RISK** is the risk that stocks of mid-sized companies may be subject to more abrupt or erratic market movements than stocks of larger, more established companies. Mid-sized companies may have limited product lines or financial resources, and may be dependent upon a particular niche of the market.

**SMALL CAP STOCK RISK** is the risk that stocks of smaller companies may be subject to more abrupt or erratic market movements than stocks of larger, more established companies. Small companies may have limited product lines or financial resources, or may be dependent upon a small or inexperienced management group, and their securities may trade less frequently and in lower volume than the securities of larger companies, which could lead to higher transaction costs. Generally the smaller the company size, the greater the risk.

**IPO RISK** is the risk that the market value of shares in an initial public offering (IPO) will fluctuate considerably or decline shortly after the initial public offering, due to factors such as the absence of a prior public market, unseasoned trading, the small number of shares available for trading and limited information about the issuer.

**REAL ESTATE SECURITIES CONCENTRATION RISK** is the risk that investments in securities of real estate companies will make the Fund more susceptible to risks associated with the ownership of real estate and with the real estate industry in general. Real estate companies may have lower trading volumes and may be subject to more abrupt or erratic price movements than the overall securities markets. The value of real estate securities may underperform other sectors of the economy or broader equity markets. To the extent that the Fund concentrates its investments in the real estate sector, it may be subject to greater risk of loss than if it were diversified across different industry sectors.

**REIT RISK** is the risk that the Fund’s investments will be affected by factors affecting real estate investment trusts (REITs) and the real estate sector generally. Investing in REITs involves certain unique risks in addition to those risks associated with investing in the real estate industry in general. REITs whose underlying properties are concentrated in a particular industry or geographic region are also subject to risks affecting such industries and regions. REITs (especially mortgage REITs) are also subject to interest rate risks. By investing in REITs through the Fund, a shareholder will bear expenses of the REITs in addition to expenses of the Fund.

**INTEREST RATE/MATURITY RISK** is the risk that the value of the Fund’s assets will decline because of rising interest rates. The magnitude of this decline will often be greater for longer-term fixed-income securities than shorter-term fixed-income securities.

As with any mutual fund, it is possible to lose money on an investment in the Fund. An investment in the Fund is not a deposit of any bank and is not insured or guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, any other government agency, or The Northern Trust Company, its affiliates, subsidiaries or any other bank.

## GLOBAL REAL ESTATE INDEX FUND

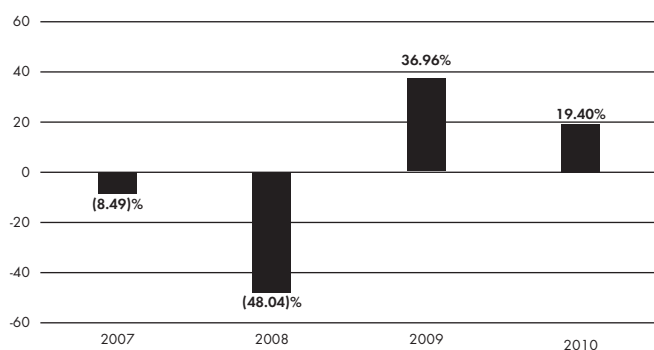
## FUND PERFORMANCE

The bar chart and table that follow provide an indication of the risks of investing in the Fund by showing (A) changes in the performance of the Fund from year to year, and (B) how the average annual total returns of the Fund compare to those of a broad-based securities market index.

The Fund's past performance, before and after taxes, is not necessarily an indication of how the Fund will perform in the future.

Updated performance information for the Fund is available and may be obtained on the Fund's Web site at [www.northernfunds.com](http://www.northernfunds.com) or by calling 800-595-9111.

## CALENDAR YEAR TOTAL RETURN\*



\* Year to date total return for the six months ended June 30, 2011 is 4.52%. For the periods shown in the bar chart above, the highest quarterly return was 36.26% in the second quarter of 2009, and the lowest quarterly return was (33.21)% in the fourth quarter of 2008.

## AVERAGE ANNUAL TOTAL RETURN

(For the periods ended December 31, 2010)

|  | Inception Date | 1-Year | Since Inception |
|--|----------------|--------|-----------------|
| Global Real Estate Index Fund  | 7/26/06        |        |                 |
| Return before taxes  |                | 19.40% | (1.12)%         |
| Return after taxes on distributions  |                | 18.42% | (2.11)%         |
| Return after taxes on distributions and sale of Fund shares                          |                | 12.57% | (1.52)%         |
| FTSE®EPRA®/NAREIT® Global Index (reflects no deduction for fees, expenses, or taxes) |                | 19.31% | (0.27)%         |

After-tax returns are calculated using the historical highest individual federal marginal income tax rates and do not reflect the impact of state and local taxes. Actual after-tax returns depend on an investor's tax situation and may differ from those shown. After-tax returns shown are not relevant to investors who hold their shares through tax-deferred arrangements, such as 401(k) plans or individual retirement accounts.

In calculating the federal income taxes due on redemptions, capital gains taxes resulting from redemptions are subtracted from the redemption proceeds and the tax benefits from capital losses resulting from the redemptions are added to the redemption proceeds. Under certain circumstances, the addition of the tax benefits from capital losses resulting from redemptions may cause the Returns After Taxes on Distributions and Sale of Fund Shares to be greater than the Returns After Taxes on Distributions or even the Returns Before Taxes.

## MANAGEMENT

**INVESTMENT ADVISER AND PORTFOLIO MANAGER.** Northern Trust Investments, Inc., an indirect subsidiary of Northern Trust Corporation, serves as the Investment Adviser of the Global Real Estate Index Fund. Shaun Murphy, Senior Vice President of Northern Trust Investments, Inc., and Thomas E. O'Brien, Vice President of Northern Trust Investments, Inc., have been managers of the Fund since November 2006 and March 2008, respectively.

## PURCHASE AND SALE OF FUND SHARES

You may purchase Fund shares through your account at Northern Trust or an authorized intermediary or you may open an account directly with Northern Funds (the "Trust") with a minimum initial investment of \$2,500 in the Fund (\$500 for an IRA; \$250 under the Automatic Investment Plan; and \$500 for employees of Northern Trust and its affiliates). The minimum subsequent investment is \$50 (except for reinvestments of distributions for which there is no minimum). The Fund reserves the right to waive these minimums.

On any business day, you may sell (redeem) or exchange shares through your account by contacting your Northern Trust account representative or authorized intermediary. If you purchase shares directly from the Trust, you may sell (redeem) or exchange your shares in one of the following ways:

- By Mail – Send a written request to: Northern Funds, P.O. Box 75986, Chicago, Illinois 60675-5986.
- By Telephone – Authorize the telephone privilege on your New Account Application. Call 800-595-9111 to use the telephone privilege.
- By Wire – Authorize wire redemptions on your New Account Application and have proceeds sent by federal wire transfer to a previously designated account (the minimum redemption amount by this method is \$250). You will be charged \$15 for each wire redemption unless the designated account is maintained at Northern Trust or an affiliated bank. Call 800-595-9111 for instructions.
- By Systematic Withdrawal – If you own shares of the Fund with a minimum value of \$10,000, you may elect to have a

fixed sum redeemed at regular intervals and distributed in cash or reinvested in one or more other funds of the Trust. Call 800-595-9111 for an application form and additional information. The minimum amount is \$250 per withdrawal.

- **By Exchange** – Complete the Exchange Privilege section of your New Account Application to exchange shares of one fund in the Trust for shares of another fund in the Trust. Shares being exchanged must have a value of at least \$1,000 (\$2,500 if a new account is being established by the exchange, \$500 if the new account is an IRA). Call 800-595-9111 for more information.
- **By Internet** – You may initiate transactions between Northern Trust banking and Fund accounts by using Northern Trust Private Passport. For details and to sign up for this service, go to [www.northernfunds.com](http://www.northernfunds.com) or contact your Relationship Manager.

#### TAX INFORMATION

The Fund's distributions are generally taxable to you as ordinary income, capital gains, or a combination of the two, unless you are investing through a tax-exempt or tax-deferred arrangement, such as a 401(k) plan or an individual retirement account. Distributions may be taxable upon withdrawal from tax-deferred accounts.

#### PAYMENTS TO BROKERS-DEALERS AND OTHER FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

If you purchase the Fund through a broker-dealer or other financial intermediary (such as a bank), the Fund and its related companies may pay the intermediary for the sale of Fund shares and related services. These payments may create a conflict of interest by influencing the broker-dealer or other intermediary and your salesperson to recommend the Fund over another investment. Ask your salesperson or visit your financial intermediary's Web site for more information.

## GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY INDEX FUND

## INVESTMENT OBJECTIVE

The Fund seeks to provide investment results approximating the overall performance of the securities included in the MSCI World ESG Index.

## FEES AND EXPENSES OF THE FUND

This table describes the fees and expenses that you may pay if you buy and hold shares of the Fund.

**Shareholder Fees** (fees paid directly from your investment)

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| Maximum Sales Charge (Load) Imposed on Purchases (as a percentage of offering price)            | None  |
| Redemption Fee (within 30 days of purchase) (as a percentage of amount redeemed, if applicable) | 2.00% |

**Annual Fund Operating Expenses** (expenses that you pay each year as a percentage of the value of your investment)

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| Management Fees   | 0.35%        |
| Distribution (12b-1) Fees   | 0.00%        |
| Other Expenses  | 0.56%        |
| Administration Fees   | 0.15%        |
| Transfer Agency Fees  | 0.10%        |
| Other Operating Expenses  | 0.31%        |
| <b>Total Annual Fund Operating Expenses</b>                             | <b>0.91%</b> |
| Expense Reimbursement <sup>(1)</sup>                                    | (0.26)%      |
| <b>Total Annual Fund Operating Expenses After Expense Reimbursement</b> | <b>0.65%</b> |

<sup>(1)</sup> Northern Trust Investments, Inc. ("NTI" or the "Investment Adviser") has contractually agreed to reimburse certain expenses of the Fund. Reimbursed amounts are charged first against "Management Fees" and then, if necessary, against "Other Expenses" to the extent they exceed "Management Fees." The contractual reimbursement arrangement is expected to continue until at least July 31, 2012. After this date, NTI or the Fund may terminate the contractual arrangement. The Fund's Board of Trustees may terminate the contractual arrangement at any time if it determines that it is in the best interest of the Fund and its shareholders.

## EXAMPLE

The following Example is intended to help you compare the cost of investing in the Fund with the cost of investing in other mutual funds. The Example assumes that you invest \$10,000 in the Fund for the time periods indicated and then redeem all of your shares at the end of those periods. The Example also assumes that your investment has a 5% return each year and that the Fund's operating expenses remain the same. Although your actual costs may be higher or lower, based on these assumptions your costs would be:

| 1 Year | 3 Years | 5 Years | 10 Years |
|--------|---------|---------|----------|
| \$66   | \$264   | \$478   | \$1,096  |

**PORTFOLIO TURNOVER.** The Fund pays transaction costs, such as commissions, when it buys and sells securities (or "turns over" its portfolio). A higher portfolio turnover rate may indicate higher transaction costs and may result in higher taxes when Fund shares are held in a taxable account. These costs, which are not reflected in annual portfolio operating expenses or in the Example, affect the Fund's performance. During the most recent fiscal year, the Fund's portfolio turnover rate was 28.77% of the average value of its portfolio.

## PRINCIPAL INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

Under normal circumstances, the Fund will invest substantially all (and at least 80%) of its net assets in equity securities included in the MSCI World ESG Index, in weightings that approximate the relative composition of the securities contained in the MSCI World ESG Index.

The MSCI World ESG Index (formerly known as the FTSE KLD Global Sustainability Index) is a free float-adjusted, market capitalization weighted index comprised of large- and mid-cap developed market companies in Asia-Pacific, Europe & the Middle East, Canada and the United States. The Index holds a broad, diversified set of global companies, selected based on regional sector rankings of environmental, social and governance performance. As of June 30, 2011, the MSCI World ESG Index consisted of issuers from the following 26 countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States. As of June 30, 2011, the market capitalization of the companies in the MSCI World ESG Index was between \$979.3 million and \$209.2 billion.

The MSCI World ESG Index includes the highest-ranked companies in each regional sector based on environmental, social and governance screening and research criteria applied by the index provider. Rankings are based on qualitative and quantitative analysis. The MSCI World ESG Index has no automatic industry exclusions.

For companies involved in alcohol, gambling, firearms, nuclear power, tobacco and weapons manufacturing, the index provider conducts case-by-case evaluations to determine MSCI World ESG Index inclusion/exclusion eligibility. The index provider analyzes companies involved in alcohol and gambling to determine how and to what extent their commercial activities contribute to social problems caused by gambling and alcohol abuse. The index provider analyzes companies involved in nuclear power generation to determine how and to what extent their commercial activities promulgate risks associated with nuclear power production, plant safety, security and waste

disposal. The index provider evaluates tobacco manufacturers in the context of the social problems associated with tobacco including addiction, second-hand smoke and the negative external costs tied to tobacco-related illness. It weighs heavily the large negative impact on society of tobacco products when evaluating a tobacco manufacturer's overall sustainability performance. The index provider evaluates military weapons contractors and firearms companies in terms of the types of weapons they produce or for which they supply components. The index provider also considers their role in the global arms trade, contribution to global weapons proliferation and lobbying and contracting practices.

The Fund is passively managed, which means it tries to duplicate the investment composition and performance of the MSCI World ESG Index using computer programs and statistical procedures. The investment management team will buy and sell securities in response to changes in the MSCI World ESG Index. The Fund will have fees and transaction expenses while the MSCI World ESG Index has none. Therefore, the Fund's returns may be below those of the MSCI World ESG Index.

The proportions of the Fund's assets allocated to each country will approximate and vary with the relative country weights and countries included in the MSCI World ESG Index. As of June 30, 2011, the MSCI World ESG Index consisted primarily of issuers located in developed countries, concentrated in the following geographic areas: North America, Asia and Europe. As of the same date, approximately 47.8% of the market capitalization of the MSCI World ESG Index consisted of issuers located in the United States.

The Investment Adviser expects that, under normal circumstances, the quarterly performance of the Fund, before expenses, will track the performance of the MSCI World ESG Index within a 0.95 correlation coefficient.

*Morgan Stanley Capital International, Inc. ("MSCI") does not endorse any of the securities in the MSCI World ESG Index. It is not a sponsor of the Global Sustainability Index Fund and is not affiliated with the Fund in any way.*

## PRINCIPAL RISKS

**MARKET RISK** is the risk that the value of equity securities owned by the Fund may decline, at times sharply and unpredictably, because of economic changes or other events that affect individual issuers or large portions of the market.

**MANAGEMENT RISK** is the risk that a strategy used by the investment management team may fail to produce the intended results.

**FOREIGN SECURITIES RISK** is the risk that investing in foreign (non-U.S.) securities may result in the Fund experiencing more

rapid and extreme changes in value than a fund that invests exclusively in securities of U.S. companies, due to less liquid markets and adverse economic, political, diplomatic, financial, and regulatory factors. Foreign governments also may impose limits on investment and repatriation and impose taxes. Any of these events could cause the value of the Fund's investments to decline. To the extent that the Fund's assets are concentrated in a single country or geographic region, the Fund will be subject to the risks associated with that particular country or region.

**CURRENCY RISK** is the risk that foreign currencies will fluctuate in value relative to the U.S. dollar, adversely affecting the value of the Fund's investments and its returns. Because the Fund's net asset value is determined on the basis of U.S. dollars, you may lose money if the local currency of a foreign market depreciates against the U.S. dollar, even if the market value of the Fund's holdings appreciates.

**TRACKING RISK** is the risk that the Fund's performance may vary substantially from the performance of the benchmark index it tracks as a result of share purchases and redemptions, transaction costs, expenses and other factors.

**MID CAP STOCK RISK** is the risk that stocks of mid-sized companies may be subject to more abrupt or erratic market movements than stocks of larger, more established companies. Mid-sized companies may have limited product lines or financial resources, and may be dependent upon a particular niche of the market.

**SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENT RISK** is the risk that the socially responsible investment policies of the MSCI World ESG Index may restrict the investments available to the Fund. This could cause the Fund to underperform similar funds that do not have a social responsibility objective.

As with any mutual fund, it is possible to lose money on an investment in the Fund. An investment in the Fund is not a deposit of any bank and is not insured or guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, any other government agency, or The Northern Trust Company, its affiliates, subsidiaries or any other bank.

## FUND PERFORMANCE

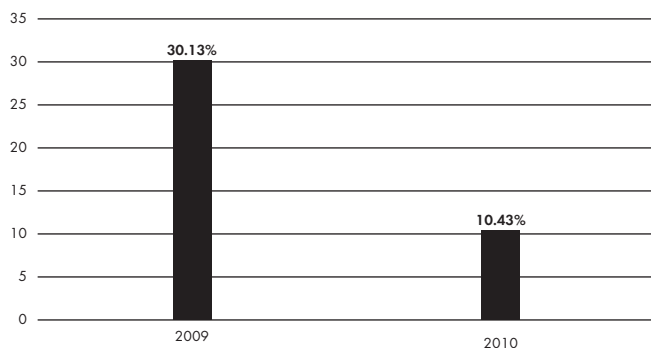
The bar chart and table that follow provide an indication of the risks of investing in the Fund by showing (A) changes in the performance of the Fund from year to year, and (B) how the average annual total returns of the Fund compare to those of a broad-based securities market index.

The Fund's past performance, before and after taxes, is not necessarily an indication of how the Fund will perform in the future.

## GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY INDEX FUND

Updated performance information for the Fund is available and may be obtained on the Fund's Web site at [www.northernfunds.com](http://www.northernfunds.com) or by calling 800-595-9111.

## CALENDAR YEAR TOTAL RETURN\*



\* Year to date total return for the six months ended June 30, 2011 is 4.77%. For the period shown in the bar chart above, the highest quarterly return was 21.53% in the second quarter of 2009, and the lowest quarterly return was (13.00)% in the first quarter of 2009.

## AVERAGE ANNUAL TOTAL RETURN

(For the periods ended December 31, 2010)

|  | Inception Date | 1-Year | Since Inception |
|--|----------------|--------|-----------------|
| Global Sustainability Index Fund   | 3/05/08        |        |                 |
| Return before taxes  |                | 10.43% | (2.11)%         |
| Return after taxes on distributions  |                | 10.16% | (2.41)%         |
| Return after taxes on distributions and sale of Fund shares                |                | 7.08%  | (1.89)%         |
| MSCI World ESG Index* (reflects no deduction for fees, expenses, or taxes) |                | 11.22% | (1.15)%         |

After-tax returns are calculated using the historical highest individual federal marginal income tax rates and do not reflect the impact of state and local taxes. Actual after-tax returns depend on an investor's tax situation and may differ from those shown. After-tax returns shown are not relevant to investors who hold their shares through tax-deferred arrangements, such as 401(k) plans or individual retirement accounts.

In calculating the federal income taxes due on redemptions, capital gains taxes resulting from redemptions are subtracted from the redemption proceeds and the tax benefits from capital losses resulting from the redemptions are added to the redemption proceeds. Under certain circumstances, the addition of the tax benefits from capital losses resulting from redemptions may cause the Returns After Taxes on Distributions and Sale of Fund Shares to be greater than the Returns After Taxes on Distributions or even the Returns Before Taxes.

\* Effective September 1, 2010, FTSE KLD Indices have been transitioned to a newly created family of MSCI ESG Indices. The FTSE KLD Global Sustainability Index is now the MSCI World ESG Index.

## MANAGEMENT

**INVESTMENT ADVISER AND PORTFOLIO MANAGER.** Northern Trust Investments, Inc., an indirect subsidiary of Northern Trust Corporation, serves as the Investment Adviser of the Global Sustainability Index Fund. Shaun Murphy, Senior Vice President of Northern Trust Investments, Inc., and Thomas E. O'Brien, Vice President of Northern Trust Investments, Inc., have been managers since March 2008.

## PURCHASE AND SALE OF FUND SHARES

You may purchase Fund shares through your account at Northern Trust or an authorized intermediary or you may open an account directly with Northern Funds (the "Trust") with a minimum initial investment of \$2,500 in the Fund (\$500 for an IRA; \$250 under the Automatic Investment Plan; and \$500 for employees of Northern Trust and its affiliates). The minimum subsequent investment is \$50 (except for reinvestments of distributions for which there is no minimum). The Fund reserves the right to waive these minimums.

On any business day, you may sell (redeem) or exchange shares through your account by contacting your Northern Trust account representative or authorized intermediary. If you purchase shares directly from the Trust, you may sell (redeem) or exchange your shares in one of the following ways:

- By Mail – Send a written request to: Northern Funds, P.O. Box 75986, Chicago, Illinois 60675-5986.
- By Telephone – Authorize the telephone privilege on your New Account Application. Call 800-595-9111 to use the telephone privilege.
- By Wire – Authorize wire redemptions on your New Account Application and have proceeds sent by federal wire transfer to a previously designated account (the minimum redemption amount by this method is \$250). You will be charged \$15 for each wire redemption unless the designated account is maintained at Northern Trust or an affiliated bank. Call 800-595-9111 for instructions.
- By Systematic Withdrawal – If you own shares of the Fund with a minimum value of \$10,000, you may elect to have a fixed sum redeemed at regular intervals and distributed in cash or reinvested in one or more other funds of the Trust. Call 800-595-9111 for an application form and additional information. The minimum amount is \$250 per withdrawal.
- By Exchange – Complete the Exchange Privilege section of your New Account Application to exchange shares of one fund in the Trust for shares of another fund in the Trust. Shares being exchanged must have a value of at least \$1,000

(\$2,500 if a new account is being established by the exchange, \$500 if the new account is an IRA). Call 800-595-9111 for more information.

- By Internet – You may initiate transactions between Northern Trust banking and Fund accounts by using Northern Trust Private Passport. For details and to sign up for this service, go to [www.northernfunds.com](http://www.northernfunds.com) or contact your Relationship Manager.

#### TAX INFORMATION

The Fund's distributions are generally taxable to you as ordinary income, capital gains, or a combination of the two, unless you are investing through a tax-exempt or tax-deferred arrangement, such as a 401(k) plan or an individual retirement account. Distributions may be taxable upon withdrawal from tax-deferred accounts.

#### PAYMENTS TO BROKERS-DEALERS AND OTHER FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

If you purchase the Fund through a broker-dealer or other financial intermediary (such as a bank), the Fund and its related companies may pay the intermediary for the sale of Fund shares and related services. These payments may create a conflict of interest by influencing the broker-dealer or other intermediary and your salesperson to recommend the Fund over another investment. Ask your salesperson or visit your financial intermediary's Web site for more information.

## INTERNATIONAL EQUITY INDEX FUND

## INVESTMENT OBJECTIVE

The Fund seeks to provide investment results approximating the aggregate price and dividend performance of the securities included in the MSCI EAFE<sup>®</sup> Index.

## FEES AND EXPENSES OF THE FUND

This table describes the fees and expenses that you may pay if you buy and hold shares of the Fund.

**Shareholder Fees** (fees paid directly from your investment)

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| Maximum Sales Charge (Load) Imposed on Purchases (as a percentage of offering price)            | None  |
| Redemption Fee (within 30 days of purchase) (as a percentage of amount redeemed, if applicable) | 2.00% |

**Annual Fund Operating Expenses** (expenses that you pay each year as a percentage of the value of your investment)

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| Management Fees   | 0.25%        |
| Distribution (12b-1) Fees   | 0.00%        |
| Other Expenses  | 0.37%        |
| Administration Fees   | 0.15%        |
| Transfer Agency Fees  | 0.10%        |
| Other Operating Expenses  | 0.12%        |
| <b>Total Annual Fund Operating Expenses</b>                             | <b>0.62%</b> |
| Expense Reimbursement <sup>(1)</sup>                                    | (0.17)%      |
| <b>Total Annual Fund Operating Expenses After Expense Reimbursement</b> | <b>0.45%</b> |

<sup>(1)</sup> Northern Trust Investments, Inc. ("NTI" or the "Investment Adviser") has contractually agreed to reimburse certain expenses of the Fund. Reimbursed amounts are charged first against "Management Fees" and then, if necessary, against "Other Expenses" to the extent they exceed "Management Fees." The contractual reimbursement arrangement is expected to continue until at least July 31, 2012. After this date, NTI or the Fund may terminate the contractual arrangement. The Fund's Board of Trustees may terminate the contractual arrangement at any time if it determines that it is in the best interest of the Fund and its shareholders.

## EXAMPLE

The following Example is intended to help you compare the cost of investing in the Fund with the cost of investing in other mutual funds. The Example assumes that you invest \$10,000 in the Fund for the time periods indicated and then redeem all of your shares at the end of those periods. The Example also assumes that your investment has a 5% return each year and that the Fund's operating expenses remain the same. Although your actual costs may be higher or lower, based on these assumptions your costs would be:

| 1 Year | 3 Years | 5 Years | 10 Years |
|--------|---------|---------|----------|
| \$46   | \$181   | \$329   | \$758    |

**PORTFOLIO TURNOVER.** The Fund pays transaction costs, such as commissions, when it buys and sells securities (or "turns over" its portfolio). A higher portfolio turnover rate may indicate higher transaction costs and may result in higher taxes when Fund shares are held in a taxable account. These costs, which are not reflected in annual portfolio operating expenses or in the Example, affect the Fund's performance. During the most recent fiscal year, the Fund's portfolio turnover rate was 8.41% of the average value of its portfolio.

## PRINCIPAL INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

Under normal circumstances, the Fund will invest substantially all (and at least 80%) of its net assets in the equity securities included in the MSCI EAFE Index, in weightings that approximate the relative composition of the securities contained in the MSCI EAFE Index, and in MSCI EAFE Index futures approved by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

The MSCI EAFE Index is a free float-adjusted market capitalization index that is designed to measure the equity market performance of developed markets, excluding the United States and Canada. As of May 30, 2011, the MSCI EAFE Index consisted of the following 22 developed market country indices: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

The Fund is passively managed, which means it tries to duplicate the investment composition and performance of the MSCI EAFE Index by using computer programs and statistical procedures. The investment management team will buy and sell securities in response to changes in the MSCI EAFE Index. Because the Fund will have fees and transaction expenses (while the MSCI EAFE Index has none), returns are likely to be below those of the MSCI EAFE Index.

Because the proportion of assets allocated to each country will approximate the relative country weights in the MSCI EAFE Index, more than 25% of the Fund's assets may be invested in a single country (such as the United Kingdom and Japan). This may make the Fund's performance more dependent upon the performance of a single country than if the Fund allocated its assets among issuers in a larger number of countries.

The Investment Adviser expects that, under normal circumstances, the quarterly performance of the Fund, before expenses, will track the performance of the MSCI EAFE Index within a 0.95 correlation coefficient.

*Morgan Stanley Capital International ("MSCI") does not endorse any of the securities in the MSCI EAFE Index. It is not a sponsor of the International Equity Index Fund and is not affiliated with the Fund in any way.*

## PRINCIPAL RISKS

**MARKET RISK** is the risk that the value of equity securities owned by the Fund may decline, at times sharply and unpredictably, because of economic changes or other events that affect individual issuers or large portions of the market.

**MANAGEMENT RISK** is the risk that a strategy used by the investment management team may fail to produce the intended results.

**TRACKING RISK** is the risk that the Fund's performance may vary substantially from the performance of the benchmark index it tracks as a result of share purchases and redemptions, transaction costs, expenses and other factors.

**FOREIGN SECURITIES RISK** is the risk that investing in foreign (non-U.S.) securities may result in the Fund experiencing more rapid and extreme changes in value than a fund that invests exclusively in securities of U.S. companies, due to less liquid markets and adverse economic, political, diplomatic, financial, and regulatory factors. Foreign governments also may impose limits on investment and repatriation and impose taxes. Any of these events could cause the value of the Fund's investments to decline. To the extent that the Fund's assets are concentrated in a single country or geographic region, the Fund will be subject to the risks associated with that particular country or region.

**CURRENCY RISK** is the risk that foreign currencies will fluctuate in value relative to the U.S. dollar, adversely affecting the value of the Fund's investments and its returns. Because the Fund's net asset value ("NAV") is determined on the basis of U.S. dollars, you may lose money if the local currency of a foreign market depreciates against the U.S. dollar, even if the market value of the Fund's holdings appreciates.

As with any mutual fund, it is possible to lose money on an investment in the Fund. An investment in the Fund is not a deposit of any bank and is not insured or guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, any other government agency, or The Northern Trust Company, its affiliates, subsidiaries or any other bank.

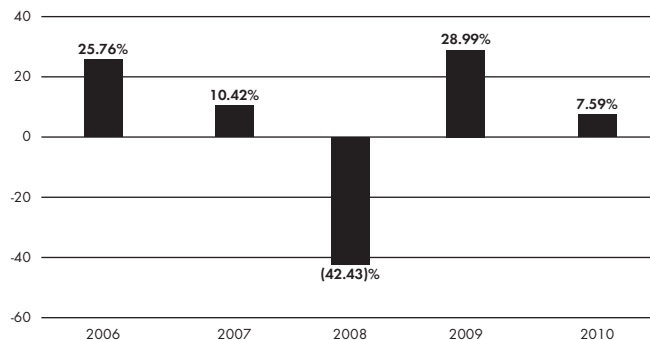
## FUND PERFORMANCE

The bar chart and table that follow provide an indication of the risks of investing in the Fund by showing (A) changes in the performance of the Fund from year to year, and (B) how the average annual total returns of the Fund compare to those of a broad-based securities market index.

The Fund's past performance, before and after taxes, is not necessarily an indication of how the Fund will perform in the future.

Updated performance information for the Fund is available and may be obtained on the Fund's Web site at [www.northernfunds.com](http://www.northernfunds.com) or by calling 800-595-9111.

## CALENDAR YEAR TOTAL RETURN\*



\* Year to date total return for the six months ended June 30, 2011 is 5.41%. For the periods shown in the bar chart above, the highest quarterly return was 25.37% in the second quarter of 2009, and the lowest quarterly return was (20.19)% in the fourth quarter of 2008.

## AVERAGE ANNUAL TOTAL RETURN

(For the periods ended December 31, 2010)

|  | Inception Date | 1-Year | 5-Year | Since Inception |
|--|----------------|--------|--------|-----------------|
| International Equity Index Fund  | 3/22/05        |        |        |                 |
| Return before taxes  |                | 7.59%  | 2.10%  | 3.74%           |
| Return after taxes on distributions                                      |                | 7.25%  | 1.56%  | 3.23%           |
| Return after taxes on distributions and sale of Fund shares              |                | 5.32%  | 1.70%  | 3.12%           |
| MSCI EAFE® Index<br>(reflects no deduction for fees, expenses, or taxes) |                | 7.75%  | 2.46%  | 4.08%           |

After-tax returns are calculated using the historical highest individual federal marginal income tax rates and do not reflect the impact of state and local taxes. Actual after-tax returns depend on an investor's tax situation and may differ from those shown. After-tax returns shown are not relevant to investors who hold their shares through tax-deferred arrangements, such as 401(k) plans or individual retirement accounts.

In calculating the federal income taxes due on redemptions, capital gains taxes resulting from redemptions are subtracted from the redemption proceeds and the tax benefits from capital losses resulting from the redemptions are added to the redemption proceeds. Under certain circumstances, the addition of the tax benefits from capital losses resulting from redemptions may cause the Returns After Taxes on Distributions and Sale of Fund Shares to be greater than the Returns After Taxes on Distributions or even the Returns Before Taxes.

## INTERNATIONAL EQUITY INDEX FUND

## MANAGEMENT

**INVESTMENT ADVISER AND PORTFOLIO MANAGER.** Northern Trust Investments, Inc., an indirect subsidiary of Northern Trust Corporation, serves as the Investment Adviser of the International Equity Index Fund. Shaun Murphy, Senior Vice President of Northern Trust Investments, Inc., and Steven J. Santiccioli, Vice President of Northern Trust Investments, Inc., have been managers of the Fund since November 2006 and July 2007, respectively.

## PURCHASE AND SALE OF FUND SHARES

You may purchase Fund shares through your account at Northern Trust or an authorized intermediary or you may open an account directly with Northern Funds (the "Trust") with a minimum initial investment of \$2,500 in the Fund (\$500 for an IRA; \$250 under the Automatic Investment Plan; and \$500 for employees of Northern Trust and its affiliates). The minimum subsequent investment is \$50 (except for reinvestments of distributions for which there is no minimum). The Fund reserves the right to waive these minimums.

On any business day, you may sell (redeem) or exchange shares through your account by contacting your Northern Trust account representative or authorized intermediary. If you purchase shares directly from the Trust, you may sell (redeem) or exchange your shares in one of the following ways:

- **By Mail** – Send a written request to: Northern Funds, P.O. Box 75986, Chicago, Illinois 60675-5986.
- **By Telephone** – Authorize the telephone privilege on your New Account Application. Call 800-595-9111 to use the telephone privilege.
- **By Wire** – Authorize wire redemptions on your New Account Application and have proceeds sent by federal wire transfer to a previously designated account (the minimum redemption amount by this method is \$250). You will be charged \$15 for each wire redemption unless the designated account is maintained at Northern Trust or an affiliated bank. Call 800-595-9111 for instructions.
- **By Systematic Withdrawal** – If you own shares of the Fund with a minimum value of \$10,000, you may elect to have a fixed sum redeemed at regular intervals and distributed in cash or reinvested in one or more other funds of the Trust. Call 800-595-9111 for an application form and additional information. The minimum amount is \$250 per withdrawal.
- **By Exchange** – Complete the Exchange Privilege section of your New Account Application to exchange shares of one fund in the Trust for shares of another fund in the Trust.

Shares being exchanged must have a value of at least \$1,000 (\$2,500 if a new account is being established by the exchange, \$500 if the new account is an IRA). Call 800-595-9111 for more information.

- **By Internet** – You may initiate transactions between Northern Trust banking and Fund accounts by using Northern Trust Private Passport. For details and to sign up for this service, go to [www.northernfunds.com](http://www.northernfunds.com) or contact your Relationship Manager.

## TAX INFORMATION

The Fund's distributions are generally taxable to you as ordinary income, capital gains, or a combination of the two, unless you are investing through a tax-exempt or tax-deferred arrangement, such as a 401(k) plan or an individual retirement account. Distributions may be taxable upon withdrawal from tax-deferred accounts.

## PAYMENTS TO BROKERS-DEALERS AND OTHER FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

If you purchase the Fund through a broker-dealer or other financial intermediary (such as a bank), the Fund and its related companies may pay the intermediary for the sale of Fund shares and related services. These payments may create a conflict of interest by influencing the broker-dealer or other intermediary and your salesperson to recommend the Fund over another investment. Ask your salesperson or visit your financial intermediary's Web site for more information.

## INVESTMENT OBJECTIVE

The Fund seeks to provide investment results approximating the overall performance of the common stocks included in the Standard & Poor's MidCap 400<sup>®</sup> Composite Stock Price Index ("S&P MidCap 400 Index").

## FEES AND EXPENSES OF THE FUND

This table describes the fees and expenses that you may pay if you buy and hold shares of the Fund.

**Shareholder Fees** (fees paid directly from your investment)

None

**Annual Fund Operating Expenses** (expenses that you pay each year as a percentage of the value of your investment)

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| Management Fees   | 0.20%        |
| Distribution (12b-1) Fees   | 0.00%        |
| Other Expenses  | 0.33%        |
| Administration Fees   | 0.15%        |
| Transfer Agency Fees  | 0.10%        |
| Other Operating Expenses  | 0.08%        |
| <b>Total Annual Fund Operating Expenses</b>                             | <b>0.53%</b> |
| Expense Reimbursement <sup>(1)</sup>                                    | (0.23)%      |
| <b>Total Annual Fund Operating Expenses After Expense Reimbursement</b> | <b>0.30%</b> |

<sup>(1)</sup> Northern Trust Investments, Inc. ("NTI" or the "Investment Adviser") has contractually agreed to reimburse certain expenses of the Fund. Reimbursed amounts are charged first against "Management Fees" and then, if necessary, against "Other Expenses" to the extent they exceed "Management Fees." The contractual reimbursement arrangement is expected to continue until at least July 31, 2012. After this date, NTI or the Fund may terminate the contractual arrangement. The Fund's Board of Trustees may terminate the contractual arrangement at any time if it determines that it is in the best interest of the Fund and its shareholders.

## EXAMPLE

The following Example is intended to help you compare the cost of investing in the Fund with the cost of investing in other mutual funds. The Example assumes that you invest \$10,000 in the Fund for the time periods indicated and then redeem all of your shares at the end of those periods. The Example also assumes that your investment has a 5% return each year and that the Fund's operating expenses remain the same. Although your actual costs may be higher or lower, based on these assumptions your costs would be:

| 1 Year | 3 Years | 5 Years | 10 Years |
|--------|---------|---------|----------|
| \$31   | \$147   | \$273   | \$643    |

**PORTFOLIO TURNOVER.** The Fund pays transaction costs, such as commissions, when it buys and sells securities (or "turns over" its portfolio). A higher portfolio turnover rate may indicate higher transaction costs and may result in higher taxes when Fund shares are held in a taxable account. These costs, which are not reflected in annual portfolio operating expenses or in the Example, affect the Fund's performance. During the most recent fiscal year, the Fund's portfolio turnover rate was 13.01% of the average value of its portfolio.

## PRINCIPAL INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

Under normal circumstances, the Fund will invest substantially all (and at least 80%) of its net assets in equity securities included in the S&P MidCap 400 Index, in weightings that approximate the relative composition of securities contained in the S&P MidCap 400 Index, and in S&P MidCap 400 Index futures approved by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

The S&P MidCap 400 Index is a capitalization-weighted index of mid cap common stocks selected by Standard & Poor's. The companies chosen for inclusion in the S&P MidCap 400 Index tend to be industry leaders within the U.S. economy as determined by Standard & Poor's<sup>®</sup> Ratings Services ("S&P"). However, companies are not selected by S&P for inclusion in the S&P MidCap 400 Index because they are expected to have superior stock price performance relative to the market in general or other stocks in particular. As of June 30, 2011, the market capitalization of the companies in the S&P MidCap 400 Index was between \$315.9 million and \$11.15 billion.

The Fund is passively managed, which means it tries to duplicate the investment composition and performance of the S&P MidCap 400 Index by using computer programs and statistical procedures. The investment management team will buy and sell securities in response to changes in the S&P MidCap 400 Index. Because the Fund will have fees and transaction expenses (while the S&P MidCap 400 Index has none), returns are likely to be below those of the S&P MidCap 400 Index.

The Investment Adviser expects that, under normal circumstances, the quarterly performance of the Fund, before expenses, will track the performance of the S&P MidCap 400 Index within a 0.95 correlation coefficient.

*S&P does not endorse any of the securities in the S&P MidCap 400 Index. It is not a sponsor of the Mid Cap Index Fund and is not affiliated with the Fund in any way.*

## MID CAP INDEX FUND

## PRINCIPAL RISKS

**MARKET RISK** is the risk that the value of equity securities owned by the Fund may decline, at times sharply and unpredictably, because of economic changes or other events that affect individual issuers or large portions of the market.

**MANAGEMENT RISK** is the risk that a strategy used by the investment management team may fail to produce the intended results.

**TRACKING RISK** is the risk that the Fund's performance may vary substantially from the performance of the benchmark index it tracks as a result of share purchases and redemptions, transaction costs, expenses and other factors.

**MID CAP STOCK RISK** is the risk that stocks of mid-sized companies may be subject to more abrupt or erratic market movements than stocks of larger, more established companies. Mid-sized companies may have limited product lines or financial resources, and may be dependent upon a particular niche of the market.

As with any mutual fund, it is possible to lose money on an investment in the Fund. An investment in the Fund is not a deposit of any bank and is not insured or guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, any other government agency, or The Northern Trust Company, its affiliates, subsidiaries or any other bank.

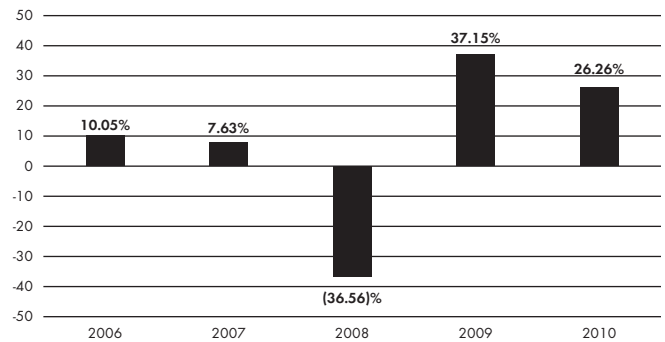
## FUND PERFORMANCE

The bar chart and table that follow provide an indication of the risks of investing in the Fund by showing (A) changes in the performance of the Fund from year to year, and (B) how the average annual total returns of the Fund compare to those of a broad-based securities market index.

The Fund's past performance, before and after taxes, is not necessarily an indication of how the Fund will perform in the future.

Updated performance information for the Fund is available and may be obtained on the Fund's Web site at [www.northernfunds.com](http://www.northernfunds.com) or by calling 800-595-9111.

## CALENDAR YEAR TOTAL RETURN\*



\* Year to date total return for the six months ended June 30, 2011 is 8.45%. For the periods shown in the bar chart above, the highest quarterly return was 19.90% in the third quarter of 2009, and the lowest quarterly return was (25.72)% in the fourth quarter of 2008.

## AVERAGE ANNUAL TOTAL RETURN

(For the periods ended December 31, 2010)

|  | Inception Date | 1-Year | 5-Year | Since Inception |
|--|----------------|--------|--------|-----------------|
| Mid Cap Index Fund   | 3/22/05        |        |        |                 |
| Return before taxes  |                | 26.26% | 5.41%  | 6.76%           |
| Return after taxes on distributions  |                | 26.05% | 4.66%  | 6.06%           |
| Return after taxes on distributions and sale of Fund shares                |                | 17.22% | 4.38%  | 5.60%           |
| S&P MidCap 400® Index (reflects no deduction for fees, expenses, or taxes) |                | 26.64% | 5.73%  | 7.19%           |

After-tax returns are calculated using the historical highest individual federal marginal income tax rates and do not reflect the impact of state and local taxes. Actual after-tax returns depend on an investor's tax situation and may differ from those shown. After-tax returns shown are not relevant to investors who hold their shares through tax-deferred arrangements, such as 401(k) plans or individual retirement accounts.

## MANAGEMENT

**INVESTMENT ADVISER AND PORTFOLIO MANAGER.** Northern Trust Investments, Inc., an indirect subsidiary of Northern Trust Corporation, serves as the Investment Adviser of the Mid Cap Index Fund. Chad M. Rakvin and Brent Reeder, each a Senior Vice President of Northern Trust Investments, Inc., have been managers of the Fund since September 2005 and November 2006, respectively.

## PURCHASE AND SALE OF FUND SHARES

You may purchase Fund shares through your account at Northern Trust or an authorized intermediary or you may open an account directly with Northern Funds (the “Trust”) with a minimum initial investment of \$2,500 in the Fund (\$500 for an IRA; \$250 under the Automatic Investment Plan; and \$500 for employees of Northern Trust and its affiliates). The minimum subsequent investment is \$50 (except for reinvestments of distributions for which there is no minimum). The Fund reserves the right to waive these minimums.

On any business day, you may sell (redeem) or exchange shares through your account by contacting your Northern Trust account representative or authorized intermediary. If you purchase shares directly from the Trust, you may sell (redeem) or exchange your shares in one of the following ways:

- **By Mail** – Send a written request to: Northern Funds, P.O. Box 75986, Chicago, Illinois 60675-5986.
- **By Telephone** – Authorize the telephone privilege on your New Account Application. Call 800-595-9111 to use the telephone privilege.
- **By Wire** – Authorize wire redemptions on your New Account Application and have proceeds sent by federal wire transfer to a previously designated account (the minimum redemption amount by this method is \$250). You will be charged \$15 for each wire redemption unless the designated account is maintained at Northern Trust or an affiliated bank. Call 800-595-9111 for instructions.
- **By Systematic Withdrawal** – If you own shares of the Fund with a minimum value of \$10,000, you may elect to have a fixed sum redeemed at regular intervals and distributed in cash or reinvested in one or more other funds of the Trust. Call 800-595-9111 for an application form and additional information. The minimum amount is \$250 per withdrawal.
- **By Exchange** – Complete the Exchange Privilege section of your New Account Application to exchange shares of one fund in the Trust for shares of another fund in the Trust. Shares being exchanged must have a value of at least \$1,000 (\$2,500 if a new account is being established by the exchange, \$500 if the new account is an IRA). Call 800-595-9111 for more information.
- **By Internet** – You may initiate transactions between Northern Trust banking and Fund accounts by using Northern Trust Private Passport. For details and to sign up for this service, go to [www.northernfunds.com](http://www.northernfunds.com) or contact your Relationship Manager.

## TAX INFORMATION

The Fund’s distributions are generally taxable to you as ordinary income, capital gains, or a combination of the two, unless you are investing through a tax-exempt or tax-deferred arrangement, such as a 401(k) plan or an individual retirement account. Distributions may be taxable upon withdrawal from tax-deferred accounts.

## PAYMENTS TO BROKERS-DEALERS AND OTHER FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

If you purchase the Fund through a broker-dealer or other financial intermediary (such as a bank), the Fund and its related companies may pay the intermediary for the sale of Fund shares and related services. These payments may create a conflict of interest by influencing the broker-dealer or other intermediary and your salesperson to recommend the Fund over another investment. Ask your salesperson or visit your financial intermediary’s Web site for more information.

## SMALL CAP INDEX FUND

## INVESTMENT OBJECTIVE

The Fund seeks to provide investment results approximating the aggregate price and dividend performance of the securities included in the Russell 2000® Index.

## FEES AND EXPENSES OF THE FUND

This table describes the fees and expenses that you may pay if you buy and hold shares of the Fund.

**Shareholder Fees** (fees paid directly from your investment)

None

**Annual Fund Operating Expenses** (expenses that you pay each year as a percentage of the value of your investment)

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| Management Fees   | 0.20%        |
| Distribution (12b-1) Fees   | 0.00%        |
| Other Expenses  | 0.35%        |
| Administration Fees   | 0.15%        |
| Transfer Agency Fees  | 0.10%        |
| Other Operating Expenses  | 0.10%        |
| <b>Total Annual Fund Operating Expenses</b>                             | <b>0.55%</b> |
| Expense Reimbursement <sup>(1)</sup>                                    | (0.20)%      |
| <b>Total Annual Fund Operating Expenses After Expense Reimbursement</b> | <b>0.35%</b> |

<sup>(1)</sup> Northern Trust Investments, Inc. ("NTI" or the "Investment Adviser") has contractually agreed to reimburse certain expenses of the Fund. Reimbursed amounts are charged first against "Management Fees" and then, if necessary, against "Other Expenses" to the extent they exceed "Management Fees." The contractual reimbursement arrangement is expected to continue until at least July 31, 2012. After this date, NTI or the Fund may terminate the contractual arrangement. The Fund's Board of Trustees may terminate the contractual arrangement at any time if it determines that it is in the best interest of the Fund and its shareholders.

## EXAMPLE

The following Example is intended to help you compare the cost of investing in the Fund with the cost of investing in other mutual funds. The Example assumes that you invest \$10,000 in the Fund for the time periods indicated and then redeem all of your shares at the end of those periods. The Example also assumes that your investment has a 5% return each year and that the Fund's operating expenses remain the same. Although your actual costs may be higher or lower, based on these assumptions your costs would be:

| 1 Year | 3 Years | 5 Years | 10 Years |
|--------|---------|---------|----------|
| \$36   | \$156   | \$287   | \$670    |

**PORTFOLIO TURNOVER.** The Fund pays transaction costs, such as commissions, when it buys and sells securities (or "turns over" its portfolio). A higher portfolio turnover rate may indicate higher transaction costs and may result in higher taxes when Fund shares are held in a taxable account. These costs, which are not reflected in annual portfolio operating expenses or in the Example, affect the Fund's performance. During the most recent fiscal year, the Fund's portfolio turnover rate was 13.55% of the average value of its portfolio.

## PRINCIPAL INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

Under normal circumstances, the Fund will invest substantially all (and at least 80%) of its net assets in the equity securities included in the Russell 2000 Index, in weightings that approximate the relative composition of securities contained in the Russell 2000 Index, and in Russell 2000 Index futures approved by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

The Russell 2000 Index is widely considered representative of smaller company stock performance as a whole. The companies in the Russell 2000 Index are selected according to their total market capitalization. However, companies are *not* selected by Frank Russell Company ("Russell") for inclusion in the Russell 2000 Index because they are expected to have superior stock price performance relative to the stock market in general or other stocks in particular. As of June 30, 2011, the approximate market capitalization range of the companies included in the Russell 2000 Index was between \$15.2 million and \$3.12 billion.

The Fund is passively managed, which means it tries to duplicate the investment composition and performance of the Russell 2000 Index by using computer programs and statistical procedures. The investment management team will buy and sell securities in response to changes in the Russell 2000 Index. Because the Fund will have fees and transaction expenses (while the Russell 2000 Index has none), returns are likely to be below those of the Russell 2000 Index.

The Investment Adviser expects that, under normal circumstances, the quarterly performance of the Fund, before expenses, will track the performance of the Russell 2000 Index within a 0.95 correlation coefficient.

*Frank Russell Company does not endorse any of the securities in the Russell 2000 Index. It is not a sponsor of the Small Cap Index Fund and is not affiliated with the Fund in any way.*

## PRINCIPAL RISKS

**MARKET RISK** is the risk that the value of equity securities owned by the Fund may decline, at times sharply and unpredictably, because of economic changes or other events that affect individual issuers or large portions of the market.

## SMALL CAP INDEX FUND

**MANAGEMENT RISK** is the risk that a strategy used by the investment management team may fail to produce the intended results.

**TRACKING RISK** is the risk that the Fund's performance may vary substantially from the performance of the benchmark index it tracks as a result of share purchases and redemptions, transaction costs, expenses and other factors.

**SMALL CAP STOCK RISK** is the risk that stocks of smaller companies may be subject to more abrupt or erratic market movements than stocks of larger, more established companies. Small companies may have limited product lines or financial resources, or may be dependent upon a small or inexperienced management group, and their securities may trade less frequently and in lower volume than the securities of larger companies, which could lead to higher transaction costs. Generally the smaller the company size, the greater the risk.

As with any mutual fund, it is possible to lose money on an investment in the Fund. An investment in the Fund is not a deposit of any bank and is not insured or guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, any other government agency, or The Northern Trust Company, its affiliates, subsidiaries or any other bank.

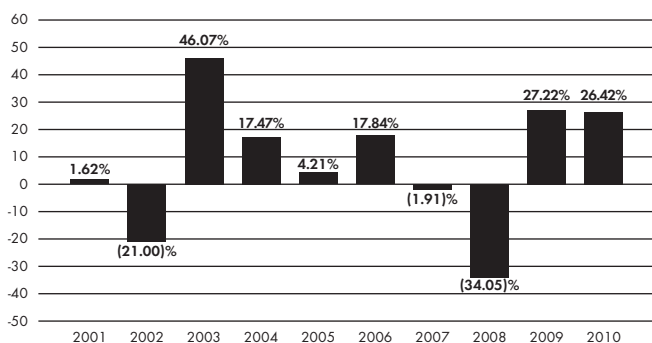
## FUND PERFORMANCE

The bar chart and table that follow provide an indication of the risks of investing in the Fund by showing (A) changes in the performance of the Fund from year to year, and (B) how the average annual total returns of the Fund compare to those of a broad-based securities market index.

The Fund's past performance, before and after taxes, is not necessarily an indication of how the Fund will perform in the future.

Updated performance information for the Fund is available and may be obtained on the Fund's Web site at [www.northernfunds.com](http://www.northernfunds.com) or by calling 800-595-9111.

## CALENDAR YEAR TOTAL RETURN\*



\* Year to date total return for the six months ended June 30, 2011 is 6.04%. For the periods shown in the bar chart above, the highest quarterly return was 23.13% in the second quarter of 2003, and the lowest quarterly return was (26.16)% in the fourth quarter of 2008.

## AVERAGE ANNUAL TOTAL RETURN

(For the periods ended December 31, 2010)

|  | Inception Date | 1-Year | 5-Year | 10-Year | Since Inception |
|--|----------------|--------|--------|---------|-----------------|
| Small Cap Index Fund   | 9/3/99         |        |        |         |                 |
| Return before taxes  |                | 26.42% | 4.16%  | 5.82%   | 6.17%           |
| Return after taxes on distributions                                      |                | 26.22% | 2.87%  | 5.05%   | 4.66%           |
| Return after taxes on distributions and sale of Fund shares              |                | 17.29% | 3.30%  | 4.90%   | 4.71%           |
| Russell 2000® Index (reflects no deduction for fees, expenses, or taxes) |                | 26.85% | 4.47%  | 6.33%   | 6.87%           |

After-tax returns are calculated using the historical highest individual federal marginal income tax rates and do not reflect the impact of state and local taxes. Actual after-tax returns depend on an investor's tax situation and may differ from those shown. After-tax returns shown are not relevant to investors who hold their shares through tax-deferred arrangements, such as 401(k) plans or individual retirement accounts.

In calculating the federal income taxes due on redemptions, capital gains taxes resulting from redemptions are subtracted from the redemption proceeds and the tax benefits from capital losses resulting from the redemptions are added to the redemption proceeds. Under certain circumstances, the addition of the tax benefits from capital losses resulting from redemptions may cause the Returns After Taxes on Distributions and Sale of Fund Shares to be greater than the Returns After Taxes on Distributions or even the Returns Before Taxes.

## MANAGEMENT

**INVESTMENT ADVISER AND PORTFOLIO MANAGER.** Northern Trust Investments, Inc., an indirect subsidiary of Northern Trust Corporation, serves as the Investment Adviser of the Small Cap Index Fund. Chad M. Rakvin and Brent Reeder, each a Senior Vice President of Northern Trust Investments, Inc., have been managers of the Fund since September 2005 and November 2006, respectively.

## PURCHASE AND SALE OF FUND SHARES

You may purchase Fund shares through your account at Northern Trust or an authorized intermediary or you may open an account directly with Northern Funds (the "Trust") with a minimum initial investment of \$2,500 in the Fund (\$500 for an IRA; \$250 under the Automatic Investment Plan; and \$500 for employees of Northern Trust and its affiliates). The

## SMALL CAP INDEX FUND

minimum subsequent investment is \$50 (except for reinvestments of distributions for which there is no minimum). The Fund reserves the right to waive these minimums.

On any business day, you may sell (redeem) or exchange shares through your account by contacting your Northern Trust account representative or authorized intermediary. If you purchase shares directly from the Trust, you may sell (redeem) or exchange your shares in one of the following ways:

- By Mail – Send a written request to: Northern Funds, P.O. Box 75986, Chicago, Illinois 60675-5986.
- By Telephone – Authorize the telephone privilege on your New Account Application. Call 800-595-9111 to use the telephone privilege.
- By Wire – Authorize wire redemptions on your New Account Application and have proceeds sent by federal wire transfer to a previously designated account (the minimum redemption amount by this method is \$250). You will be charged \$15 for each wire redemption unless the designated account is maintained at Northern Trust or an affiliated bank. Call 800-595-9111 for instructions.
- By Systematic Withdrawal – If you own shares of the Fund with a minimum value of \$10,000, you may elect to have a fixed sum redeemed at regular intervals and distributed in cash or reinvested in one or more other funds of the Trust. Call 800-595-9111 for an application form and additional information. The minimum amount is \$250 per withdrawal.
- By Exchange – Complete the Exchange Privilege section of your New Account Application to exchange shares of one fund in the Trust for shares of another fund in the Trust. Shares being exchanged must have a value of at least \$1,000 (\$2,500 if a new account is being established by the exchange, \$500 if the new account is an IRA). Call 800-595-9111 for more information.
- By Internet – You may initiate transactions between Northern Trust banking and Fund accounts by using Northern Trust Private Passport. For details and to sign up for this service, go to [www.northernfunds.com](http://www.northernfunds.com) or contact your Relationship Manager.

## TAX INFORMATION

The Fund's distributions are generally taxable to you as ordinary income, capital gains, or a combination of the two, unless you are investing through a tax-exempt or tax-deferred arrangement, such as a 401(k) plan or an individual retirement account. Distributions may be taxable upon withdrawal from tax-deferred accounts.

## PAYMENTS TO BROKERS-DEALERS AND OTHER FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

If you purchase the Fund through a broker-dealer or other financial intermediary (such as a bank), the Fund and its related companies may pay the intermediary for the sale of Fund shares and related services. These payments may create a conflict of interest by influencing the broker-dealer or other intermediary and your salesperson to recommend the Fund over another investment. Ask your salesperson or visit your financial intermediary's Web site for more information.

## INVESTMENT OBJECTIVE

The Fund seeks to provide investment results approximating the aggregate price and dividend performance of the securities included in the S&P 500® Index.

## FEES AND EXPENSES OF THE FUND

This table describes the fees and expenses that you may pay if you buy and hold shares of the Fund.

**Shareholder Fees** (fees paid directly from your investment)

None

**Annual Fund Operating Expenses** (expenses that you pay each year as a percentage of the value of your investment)

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| Management Fees   | 0.10%        |
| Distribution (12b-1) Fees   | 0.00%        |
| Other Expenses  | 0.29%        |
| Administration Fees   | 0.15%        |
| Transfer Agency Fees  | 0.10%        |
| Other Operating Expenses  | 0.04%        |
| <b>Total Annual Fund Operating Expenses</b>                             | <b>0.39%</b> |
| Expense Reimbursement <sup>(1)</sup>                                    | (0.14)%      |
| <b>Total Annual Fund Operating Expenses After Expense Reimbursement</b> | <b>0.25%</b> |

<sup>(1)</sup> Northern Trust Investments, Inc. ("NTI" or the "Investment Adviser") has contractually agreed to reimburse certain expenses of the Fund. Reimbursed amounts are charged first against "Management Fees" and then, if necessary, against "Other Expenses" to the extent they exceed "Management Fees." The contractual reimbursement arrangement is expected to continue until at least July 31, 2012. After this date, NTI or the Fund may terminate the contractual arrangement. The Fund's Board of Trustees may terminate the contractual arrangement at any time if it determines that it is in the best interest of the Fund and its shareholders.

## EXAMPLE

The following Example is intended to help you compare the cost of investing in the Fund with the cost of investing in other mutual funds. The Example assumes that you invest \$10,000 in the Fund for the time periods indicated and then redeem all of your shares at the end of those periods. The Example also assumes that your investment has a 5% return each year and that the Fund's operating expenses remain the same. Although your actual costs may be higher or lower, based on these assumptions your costs would be:

| 1 Year | 3 Years | 5 Years | 10 Years |
|--------|---------|---------|----------|
| \$26   | \$111   | \$205   | \$479    |

**PORTFOLIO TURNOVER.** The Fund pays transaction costs, such as commissions, when it buys and sells securities (or "turns over" its portfolio). A higher portfolio turnover rate may indicate higher transaction costs and may result in higher taxes when Fund shares are held in a taxable account. These costs, which are not reflected in annual portfolio operating expenses or in the Example, affect the Fund's performance. During the most recent fiscal year, the Fund's portfolio turnover rate was 4.35% of the average value of its portfolio.

## PRINCIPAL INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

Under normal circumstances, the Fund will invest substantially all (and at least 80%) of its net assets in the equity securities included in the S&P 500 Index, in weightings that approximate the relative composition of the securities contained in the S&P 500 Index, and in S&P 500 Index futures approved by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

The S&P 500 Index is a capitalization-weighted index that includes 500 companies operating across a broad spectrum of the U.S. economy, and its performance is widely considered representative of the U.S. stock market as a whole. As of June 30, 2011, the approximate market capitalization range of the companies included in the S&P 500 Index was between \$1.41 billion and \$400.88 billion.

The Fund is passively managed, which means it tries to duplicate the investment composition and performance of the S&P 500 Index using computer programs and statistical procedures. The investment management team will buy and sell securities in response to changes in the S&P 500 Index. Because the Fund will have fees and transaction expenses (while the S&P 500 Index has none), returns are likely to be below those of the S&P 500 Index.

The Investment Adviser expects that, under normal circumstances, the quarterly performance of the Fund, before expenses, will track the performance of the S&P 500 Index within a 0.95 correlation coefficient.

*Standard & Poor's® Ratings Services ("S&P") does not endorse any of the securities in the S&P 500 Index. It is not a sponsor of the Stock Index Fund and is not affiliated with the Fund in any way.*

## PRINCIPAL RISKS

**MARKET RISK** is the risk that the value of equity securities owned by the Fund may decline, at times sharply and unpredictably, because of economic changes or other events that affect individual issuers or large portions of the market.

## STOCK INDEX FUND

**MANAGEMENT RISK** is the risk that a strategy used by the investment management team may fail to produce the intended results.

**TRACKING RISK** is the risk that the Fund's performance may vary substantially from the performance of the benchmark index it tracks as a result of share purchases and redemptions, transaction costs, expenses and other factors.

**As with any mutual fund, it is possible to lose money on an investment in the Fund. An investment in the Fund is not a deposit of any bank and is not insured or guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, any other government agency, or The Northern Trust Company, its affiliates, subsidiaries or any other bank.**

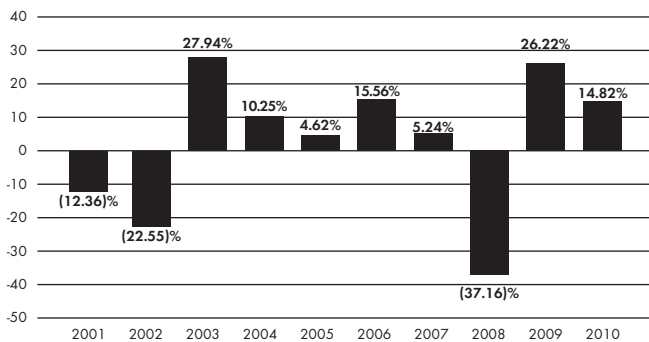
## FUND PERFORMANCE

The bar chart and table that follow provide an indication of the risks of investing in the Fund by showing (A) changes in the performance of the Fund from year to year, and (B) how the average annual total returns of the Fund compare to those of a broad-based securities market index.

The Fund's past performance, before and after taxes, is not necessarily an indication of how the Fund will perform in the future.

Updated performance information for the Fund is available and may be obtained on the Fund's Web site at [www.northernfunds.com](http://www.northernfunds.com) or by calling 800-595-9111.

## CALENDAR YEAR TOTAL RETURN\*



\* Year to date total return for the six months ended June 30, 2011 is 5.91%. For the periods shown in the bar chart above, the highest quarterly return was 15.88% in the second quarter of 2009, and the lowest quarterly return was (22.00)% in the fourth quarter of 2008.

## AVERAGE ANNUAL TOTAL RETURN

(For the periods ended December 31, 2010)

|   | Inception Date | 1-Year | 5-Year | 10-Year | Since Inception |
|---|----------------|--------|--------|---------|-----------------|
| Stock Index Fund  | 10/7/96        |        |        |         |                 |
| Return before taxes   |                | 14.82% | 2.06%  | 1.04%   | 5.57%           |
| Return after taxes on distributions                                 |                | 14.53% | 1.77%  | 0.75%   | 4.98%           |
| Return after taxes on distributions and sale of Fund shares         |                | 9.97%  | 1.72%  | 0.81%   | 4.65%           |
| S&P 500® Index (reflects no deduction for fees, expenses, or taxes) |                | 15.06% | 2.29%  | 1.41%   | 6.18%           |

After-tax returns are calculated using the historical highest individual federal marginal income tax rates and do not reflect the impact of state and local taxes. Actual after-tax returns depend on an investor's tax situation and may differ from those shown. After-tax returns shown are not relevant to investors who hold their shares through tax-deferred arrangements, such as 401(k) plans or individual retirement accounts.

In calculating the federal income taxes due on redemptions, capital gains taxes resulting from redemptions are subtracted from the redemption proceeds and the tax benefits from capital losses resulting from the redemptions are added to the redemption proceeds. Under certain circumstances, the addition of the tax benefits from capital losses resulting from redemptions may cause the Returns After Taxes on Distributions and Sale of Fund Shares to be greater than the Returns After Taxes on Distributions or even the Returns Before Taxes.

## MANAGEMENT

**INVESTMENT ADVISER AND PORTFOLIO MANAGER.** Northern Trust Investments, Inc., an indirect subsidiary of Northern Trust Corporation, serves as the Investment Adviser of the Stock Index Fund. Chad M. Rakvin and Brent Reeder, each a Senior Vice President of Northern Trust Investments, Inc., have been managers of the Fund since September 2005 and November 2006, respectively.

## PURCHASE AND SALE OF FUND SHARES

You may purchase Fund shares through your account at Northern Trust or an authorized intermediary or you may open an account directly with Northern Funds (the "Trust") with a minimum initial investment of \$2,500 in the Fund (\$500 for an IRA; \$250 under the Automatic Investment Plan; and \$500 for employees of Northern Trust and its affiliates). The minimum subsequent investment is \$50 (except for reinvestments of distributions for which there is no minimum). The Fund reserves the right to waive these minimums.

On any business day, you may sell (redeem) or exchange shares through your account by contacting your Northern Trust account representative or authorized intermediary. If you purchase shares directly from the Trust, you may sell (redeem) or exchange your shares in one of the following ways:

- **By Mail** – Send a written request to: Northern Funds, P.O. Box 75986, Chicago, Illinois 60675-5986.
- **By Telephone** – Authorize the telephone privilege on your New Account Application. Call 800-595-9111 to use the telephone privilege.
- **By Wire** – Authorize wire redemptions on your New Account Application and have proceeds sent by federal wire transfer to a previously designated account (the minimum redemption amount by this method is \$250). You will be charged \$15 for each wire redemption unless the designated account is maintained at Northern Trust or an affiliated bank. Call 800-595-9111 for instructions.
- **By Systematic Withdrawal** – If you own shares of the Fund with a minimum value of \$10,000, you may elect to have a fixed sum redeemed at regular intervals and distributed in cash or reinvested in one or more other funds of the Trust. Call 800-595-9111 for an application form and additional information. The minimum amount is \$250 per withdrawal.
- **By Exchange** – Complete the Exchange Privilege section of your New Account Application to exchange shares of one fund in the Trust for shares of another fund in the Trust. Shares being exchanged must have a value of at least \$1,000 (\$2,500 if a new account is being established by the exchange, \$500 if the new account is an IRA). Call 800-595-9111 for more information.
- **By Internet** – You may initiate transactions between Northern Trust banking and Fund accounts by using Northern Trust Private Passport. For details and to sign up for this service, go to [www.northernfunds.com](http://www.northernfunds.com) or contact your Relationship Manager.

## TAX INFORMATION

The Fund's distributions are generally taxable to you as ordinary income, capital gains, or a combination of the two, unless you are investing through a tax-exempt or tax-deferred arrangement, such as a 401(k) plan or an individual retirement account. Distributions may be taxable upon withdrawal from tax-deferred accounts.

## PAYMENTS TO BROKERS-DEALERS AND OTHER FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

If you purchase the Fund through a broker-dealer or other financial intermediary (such as a bank), the Fund and its related companies may pay the intermediary for the sale of Fund shares and related services. These payments may create a conflict of interest by influencing the broker-dealer or other intermediary and your salesperson to recommend the Fund over another investment. Ask your salesperson or visit your financial intermediary's Web site for more information.

## BROAD-BASED SECURITIES MARKET INDICES

**THE FTSE® EPRA®/NAREIT® GLOBAL INDEX** is a free float, market capitalization-weighted real estate index designed to represent publicly traded equity REITs and listed property companies globally. The FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Global Index covers both developed and emerging markets, and represents 48 countries worldwide. As of June 30, 2011, the FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Global Index consisted of issuers from the following 36 countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the Philippines, Poland, Singapore, Spain, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United Arab Emirates and the United States.

**THE MSCI EMERGING MARKETS INDEX** is a free float-adjusted market capitalization index that is designed to measure equity market performance in the global emerging markets. As of May 30, 2011, the MSCI Emerging Markets Index consisted of the following 21 emerging market country indices: Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Czech Republic, Egypt, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Russia, South Africa, Taiwan, Thailand and Turkey.

**THE MSCI EAFE® INDEX** (Europe, Australasia, Far East) is a free float-adjusted market capitalization index that is designed to measure the equity market performance of developed markets, excluding the United States and Canada. As of May 30, 2011, the MSCI EAFE Index consisted of the following 22 developed market country indices: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

**THE MSCI WORLD ESG INDEX** is a free float-adjusted, market capitalization weighted index comprised of large- and mid-cap developed market companies in Asia Pacific, Europe & the Middle East, Canada and the United States. The MSCI World ESG Index holds a broad, diversified set of global companies, selected based on regional sector ranking of environmental, social and governance performance. As of June 30, 2011, the MSCI World ESG Index consisted of issuers from the following 26 countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States.

**THE RUSSELL 2000® INDEX** is an unmanaged index which measures the performance of the 2,000 smallest of the 3,000 largest U.S. companies, based on market capitalization, which represents approximately 10% of the total market capitalization of the Russell 3000® Index as of May 31, 2011.

**THE RUSSELL 3000® INDEX** is an unmanaged index measuring the performance of the 3,000 largest U.S. companies based on total market capitalization, which represents approximately 98% of the investable U.S. equity market as of May 31, 2011.

**THE S&P MIDCAP 400® INDEX** is an unmanaged index consisting of 400 mid-cap stocks. The S&P MidCap 400 Index covers over 7% of the U.S. equities market as of June 30, 2011.

**THE S&P 500® INDEX** is an unmanaged index consisting of 500 stocks and is a widely recognized common measure of the performance of the overall U.S. stock market.

## INVESTMENT ADVISER

This Prospectus describes seven equity index funds (each a “Fund,” collectively, the “Funds”), which are currently offered by Northern Funds (the “Trust”).

Northern Trust Investments, Inc. (“NTI” or the “Investment Adviser,” formerly known and conducting business as Northern Trust Investments, N.A.), an indirect subsidiary of Northern Trust Corporation, serves as the Investment Adviser of each of the Funds. NTI is located at 50 South LaSalle Street, Chicago, IL 60603.

NTI is an Illinois State Banking Corporation and an investment adviser registered under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940, as amended. It primarily manages assets for institutional and individual separately managed accounts, investment companies and bank common and collective funds.

Northern Trust Corporation is regulated by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System as a financial holding company under the U.S. Bank Holding Company Act of 1956, as amended.

As of June 30, 2011, Northern Trust Corporation, through its affiliates, had assets under custody of \$4.4 trillion, and assets under investment management of \$684.1 billion.

Under the Advisory Agreement with the Trust, the Investment Adviser, subject to the general supervision of the Trust’s Board of Trustees, is responsible for making investment decisions for the Funds and for placing purchase and sale orders for portfolio securities.

## ADVISORY FEES

As compensation for advisory services and the assumption of related expenses, the Investment Adviser is entitled to an advisory fee, computed daily and payable monthly, at annual rates set forth in the table below (expressed as a percentage of each Fund's respective average daily net assets). The table also reflects the advisory fees paid by the Funds for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2011 (expressed as a percentage of each Fund's respective average daily net assets).

Starting July 31, 2010, the Investment Adviser has contractually agreed to reimburse a portion of each Fund's expenses (other than acquired fund fees and expenses, extraordinary expenses and interest, if any) so that for each Fund, except the Emerging Markets Equity Index Fund, its "Total Annual Fund Operating Expenses After Expense Reimbursement" do not exceed the amounts shown in the table under the caption "Fees and Expenses of the Fund" in each Fund's Fund Summary (plus acquired fund fees and expenses, extraordinary expenses and interest, if any). With respect to the Emerging Markets Equity Index Fund, the Investment Adviser has contractually agreed to reimburse a portion of the Fund's expenses (other than acquired fund fees and expenses, extraordinary expenses and

interest, if any) so that its "Total Annual Fund Operating Expenses" do not exceed 0.80% (plus acquired fund fees and expenses, extraordinary expenses and interest, if any). Prior to July 31, 2010, these reimbursements had been voluntary. The contractual reimbursement arrangements are expected to continue until at least July 31, 2012. After this date, the Investment Adviser or a Fund may terminate the contractual arrangements. The Board of Trustees may terminate the contractual arrangement at any time if it determines that it is in the best interest of the Fund and its shareholders.

The Investment Adviser may reimburse additional expenses or waive advisory fees of the Funds. Any such additional expense reimbursement or waiver would be voluntary and could be implemented, increased or decreased, or discontinued at any time.

A discussion regarding the Board of Trustees' basis for its most recent approval of the Funds' Advisory Agreement will be available in the Funds' semiannual report to shareholders for the six-month period ending September 30, 2011.

| Fund                          | Contractual Rate | Advisory Fee Paid for Fiscal Year Ended 3/31/11 |
|-------------------------------|------------------|---|
| EMERGING MARKETS EQUITY INDEX | 0.35%            | 0.35%   |
| GLOBAL REAL ESTATE INDEX      | 0.35%            | 0.35%   |
| GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY INDEX   | 0.35%            | 0.35%   |
| INTERNATIONAL EQUITY INDEX    | 0.25%            | 0.25%   |
| MID CAP INDEX                 | 0.20%            | 0.20%   |
| SMALL CAP INDEX               | 0.20%            | 0.20%   |
| STOCK INDEX                   | 0.10%            | 0.10%   |

## FUND MANAGEMENT

### BELOW IS INFORMATION REGARDING THE MANAGEMENT OF THE FUNDS.

Unless otherwise provided below, for any Fund with more than one manager, each manager has full and joint responsibility for managing the Fund with no restrictions or limitations on such manager's role.

The managers for the **Emerging Markets Equity Index Fund** are Shaun Murphy, Senior Vice President of Northern Trust Investments, Inc., and Steven J. Santiccioli, Vice President of Northern Trust Investments, Inc. Mr. Murphy has been manager since November 2006 and Mr. Santiccioli since July 2007. Since joining Northern Trust Investments, Inc. in June 2004, Mr. Murphy has managed quantitative equity portfolios. Mr. Santiccioli joined Northern Trust Investments, Inc. in 2003 and manages various quantitative equity portfolios.

The managers for the **Global Real Estate Index Fund** and **Global Sustainability Index Fund** are Shaun Murphy, Senior Vice President of Northern Trust Investments, Inc., and Thomas E. O'Brien, Vice President of Northern Trust Investments, Inc. Mr. Murphy has been manager since November 2006 and Mr. O'Brien since March 2008. Mr. Murphy is also a manager of the Emerging Markets Equity Index Fund and International Equity Index Fund. Mr. O'Brien joined Northern Trust Investments, Inc. in November 2004.

The managers for the **International Equity Index Fund** are Shaun Murphy, Senior Vice President of Northern Trust Investments, Inc., and Steven J. Santiccioli, Vice President of Northern Trust Investments, Inc. Mr. Murphy has been manager since November 2006 and Mr. Santiccioli since July 2007. Mr. Murphy is also a manager of the Emerging Markets Equity Index Fund, Global Real Estate Index Fund and the Global Sustainability Index Fund. Mr. Santiccioli is also a manager of the Emerging Markets Equity Index Fund.

The managers for the **Mid Cap Index Fund**, **Small Cap Index Fund** and **Stock Index Fund** are Chad M. Rakvin and Brent Reeder, each a Senior Vice President of Northern Trust Investments, Inc. Mr. Rakvin has been manager since September 2005 and Mr. Reeder since November 2006.

Mr. Rakvin joined Northern Trust Investments, Inc. in 2004, and has been a member of the quantitative management group for domestic index products. Mr. Reeder joined Northern Trust Investments, Inc. in 1993 and has managed quantitative equity portfolios.

Additional information about the Fund Managers' compensation, other accounts managed by the Fund Managers and the Fund Managers' ownership of securities in the Funds is available in the Statement of Additional Information ("SAI").

### LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

In December 2007, the Mid Cap Index Fund, as a shareholder of Lyondell Chemical Company "Lyondell"), participated in a cash out merger of Lyondell in which it received \$48/share of merger consideration. Lyondell later filed for bankruptcy and two entities created by the Lyondell bankruptcy plan of reorganization have initiated lawsuits seeking to recover, or clawback, proceeds received by shareholders in the December 2007 merger based on fraudulent transfer claims.

The first action, *Edward S. Weisfelner, as Trustee of the LB Creditor Trust v. Morgan Stanley & Co., Inc., et. al.*, was initiated on October 22, 2010, in the Supreme Court of the State of New York in the County of New York but has subsequently been removed to the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of New York. The second action, *Edward S. Weisfelner, as Trustee of the LB Litigation Trust v. A Holmes & H Holmes TTEE, et. al.*, was initiated on December 23, 2010, in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of New York. Both actions attempt to recover the proceeds paid out to the holders of Lyondell shares at the time of the 2007 merger.

The value of the proceeds received by the Mid Cap Index Fund is approximately \$4,171,000. The Mid Cap Index Fund cannot predict the outcome of this proceeding. The complaints, however, allege no misconduct by the Mid Cap Index Fund and the Mid Cap Index Fund intends to vigorously defend any lawsuit. The Mid Cap Index Fund is currently assessing the case and has not yet determined the potential effect, if any, on its net asset value.

**OTHER FUND SERVICES**

The Northern Trust Company (“TNTC,” together with NTI, referred to as “Northern Trust”) serves as Transfer Agent and Custodian for each Fund. The Transfer Agent performs various shareholder servicing functions, and any shareholder inquiries should be directed to it. In addition, NTI serves as Administrator for the Funds. TNTC also performs certain administrative services for the Funds pursuant to a sub-administration agreement with NTI. NTI pays TNTC for its sub-administration services out of its administration fees and TNTC’s fees do not represent additional expenses to the Funds.

NTI, as Administrator, is entitled to an administration fee from the Funds at the annual rate of 0.15% of the average daily net assets of each Fund. TNTC, as Transfer Agent, is entitled to transfer agency fees of 0.10% of the average daily net assets of each Fund.

Pursuant to an exemptive order issued by the SEC, each Fund invests its uninvested cash in a money market fund advised by the Investment Adviser or its affiliates. Accordingly, each Fund will bear indirectly a proportionate share of that money market fund’s operating expenses. These operating expenses include the advisory, administrative, transfer agency and custody fees

that the money market fund pays to the Investment Adviser and/or its affiliates. Currently, the uninvested cash of the Funds is invested in the Northern Institutional Diversified Assets Portfolio. The aggregate annual rate of advisory, administration, transfer agency and custody fees payable to the Investment Adviser and/or its affiliates on any assets invested in the Northern Institutional Diversified Assets Portfolio is 0.35%. However, pursuant to the exemptive order, Northern will reimburse each Fund for advisory fees otherwise payable to the Fund on any assets invested in an affiliated money market fund.

TNTC, NTI and other Northern Trust affiliates may provide other services to the Funds and receive compensation for such services, if consistent with the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended (the “1940 Act”) and the rules, exemptive orders and no-action letters issued by the SEC thereunder. Unless required, investors in a Fund may or may not receive specific notice of such additional services and fees.

Shares of the Trust are distributed by Northern Funds Distributors, LLC (“NFD”), Three Canal Plaza, Suite 100, Portland, Maine, 04101. NFD is not affiliated with TNTC, NTI, or any other Northern Trust affiliate.

## PURCHASING AND SELLING SHARES

**THE TRUST IS A FAMILY OF NO-LOAD MUTUAL FUNDS THAT OFFERS A SELECTION OF FUNDS TO INVESTORS, EACH WITH A DISTINCT INVESTMENT OBJECTIVE AND RISK/REWARD PROFILE.**

The descriptions in the Fund Summaries may help you choose the Fund or Funds that best fit your investment needs. Keep in mind, however, that no Fund can guarantee it will meet its investment objective, and no Fund should be relied upon as a complete investment program. The Trust also offers other funds, including additional equity, fixed-income and money market funds, which are described in separate prospectuses.

Please note that the fee and expense information shown under “Fees and Expenses of the Fund” in the Fund Summaries beginning on page 3 does not reflect any charges that may be imposed by TNTC, its affiliates, correspondent banks and other institutions on their customers. (For more information, please see “Account Policies and Other Information—Financial Intermediaries” on page 41.)

### PURCHASING SHARES

You may purchase shares directly from the Trust or, if you maintain certain accounts, through Northern Trust and certain other institutions. If you have any questions or need assistance in opening an investment account or purchasing shares, call 800-595-9111.

### OPENING AN ACCOUNT

**THROUGH AN AUTHORIZED INTERMEDIARY.** The Trust may authorize certain institutions acting as financial intermediaries (including banks, trust companies, brokers and investment advisers) to accept purchase orders from their customers on behalf of the Funds. See “Account Policies and Other Information—Financial Intermediaries” on page 41 for additional information regarding purchases of Fund shares through authorized intermediaries.

**DIRECTLY FROM THE FUNDS.** You may open a shareholder account and purchase shares directly from the Funds with a minimum initial investment per Fund of \$2,500 (\$500 for an IRA; \$250 under the Automatic Investment Plan; and \$500 for employees of Northern Trust and its affiliates). The minimum subsequent investment is \$50 (except for reinvestments of distributions for which there is no minimum). The Funds reserve the right to waive these minimums.

For your convenience, there are a number of ways to invest directly in the Funds:

### BY MAIL

- Read this Prospectus carefully.
- Complete and sign the New Account Application.
- Enclose a check payable to Northern Funds.
- If you are investing on behalf of a corporation or other entity, your New Account Application must be accompanied by a Northern Funds Certification Form or other acceptable evidence of authority (if applicable).
- Mail your check, Northern Funds Certification Form or other acceptable evidence of authority (if applicable) and completed New Account Application to:

Northern Funds  
P.O. Box 75986  
Chicago, Illinois 60675-5986

- Additional documentation may be required to fulfill the requirements of the “Customer Identification Program” described on page 40.
- For overnight delivery use the following address:

Northern Funds  
801 South Canal Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60607

- For subsequent investments:
  - Enclose your check with the investment slip portion of the confirmation of your previous investment; or
  - Indicate on your check or a separate piece of paper your name, address and account number.

All checks must be payable in U.S. dollars and drawn on a bank located in the United States. Cash, travelers checks, money orders and third party checks are not acceptable.

### BY WIRE OR AUTOMATED CLEARING HOUSE (“ACH”) TRANSFER

#### TO OPEN A NEW ACCOUNT:

- For more information or instructions regarding the purchase of shares, call the Northern Funds Center at 800-595-9111.

- Complete a New Account Application and send it to:

Northern Funds  
P.O. Box 75986  
Chicago, IL 60675-5986

**TO ADD TO AN EXISTING ACCOUNT:**

- Have your bank wire federal funds or effect an ACH transfer to:

The Northern Trust Company  
Chicago, Illinois  
ABA Routing No. 0710-00152  
(Reference 10-Digit Fund account number, with no spaces  
(e.g., #####))  
(Reference Shareholder's Name)

**BY DIRECT DEPOSIT**

**TO PURCHASE ADDITIONAL SHARES:**

- Determine if your employer has direct deposit capabilities through the ACH.
- Have your employer send payments to:

ABA Routing No. 0710-00152  
(Reference 10-Digit Fund account number, with no spaces  
(e.g., #####))  
(Reference Shareholder's Name)

- The minimum periodic investment for direct deposit is \$50.

**BY AUTOMATIC INVESTMENT**

**TO OPEN A NEW ACCOUNT:**

- Complete a New Account Application, including the Automatic Investment section.
- Send it to:

Northern Funds  
P.O. Box 75986  
Chicago, IL 60675-5986

- The minimum initial investment is \$250; \$50 for monthly minimum additions.

**TO ADD TO AN EXISTING ACCOUNT:**

- Call 800-595-9111 to obtain an Automatic Investment Plan Form.
- The minimum for automatic investment additions is \$50.

If you discontinue participation in the plan, the Funds reserve the right to redeem your account involuntarily, upon 30 days' written notice, if the account's net asset value ("NAV") is \$1,000 or less. Involuntary redemptions will not be made if the

value of shares in an account falls below the minimum amount solely because of a decline in the Fund's NAV.

**BY DIRECTED REINVESTMENT**

You may elect to have your income dividend and capital gain distributions automatically invested in another Fund account.

- Complete the "Choose Your Dividend and Capital Gain Distributions" section on the New Account Application.
- Reinvestments can only be directed to an existing Fund account (which must meet the minimum investment requirement).

**BY EXCHANGE**

You may open a new account or add to an existing account by exchanging shares of one Fund of the Trust for shares of any other Fund offered by the Trust. See "Selling Shares—By Exchange."

**BY INTERNET**

You may initiate transactions between Northern Trust banking and Fund accounts by using Northern Trust Private Passport. For details and to sign up for this service, go to [northernfunds.com](http://northernfunds.com) or contact your Relationship Manager.

**THROUGH NORTHERN TRUST AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS**

If you have an account with Northern Trust, you may purchase shares through Northern Trust. You also may purchase shares through other financial institutions that have entered into agreements with the Trust. To determine whether you may purchase shares through your institution, contact your institution directly or call 800-595-9111. Northern Trust and other financial institutions may impose charges against your account which will reduce the net return on an investment in a Fund. These charges may include asset allocation fees, account maintenance fees, sweep fees, compensating balance requirements or other charges based upon account transactions, assets or income.

**SELLING SHARES**

**THROUGH AN AUTHORIZED INTERMEDIARY.** If you purchase shares from an authorized intermediary, you may sell (redeem) shares by contacting your financial intermediary. See "Account Policies and Other Information – Financial Intermediaries" on page 41 for additional information regarding sales (redemptions) of Fund shares through authorized intermediaries.

**REDEEMING AND EXCHANGING DIRECTLY FROM THE FUNDS**

If you purchased shares directly or, if you purchased your shares through an account at Northern Trust or another financial institution and you appear on Fund records as the registered holder, you may redeem all or part of your shares using one of the methods described below.

**BY MAIL****SEND A WRITTEN REQUEST TO:**

Northern Funds  
P.O. Box 75986  
Chicago, Illinois 60675-5986

**THE REDEMPTION REQUEST MUST INCLUDE:**

- The number of shares or the dollar amount to be redeemed;
- The Fund account number;
- The signatures of all account owners;
- A signature guarantee also is required if:
  - The proceeds are to be sent elsewhere than the address of record, or
  - The redemption amount is greater than \$50,000.

**BY WIRE**

If you authorize wire redemptions on your New Account Application, you can redeem shares and have the proceeds sent by federal wire transfer to a previously designated account.

- You will be charged \$15 for each wire redemption unless the designated account is maintained at Northern Trust or an affiliated bank.
- Call the Transfer Agent at 800-595-9111 for instructions.
- The minimum amount that may be redeemed by this method is \$250.

**BY SYSTEMATIC WITHDRAWAL**

If you own shares of a Fund with a minimum value of \$10,000, you may elect to have a fixed sum redeemed at regular intervals and distributed in cash or reinvested in one or more other Funds of the Trust.

- Call 800-595-9111 for an application form and additional information.
- The minimum amount is \$250 per withdrawal.

**BY EXCHANGE**

The Trust offers you the ability to exchange shares of one Fund in the Trust for shares of another Fund in the Trust.

- When opening an account, complete the Exchange Privilege section of the New Account Application or, if your account is already opened, send a written request to:

Northern Funds  
P.O. Box 75986  
Chicago, IL 60675-5986

- Shares being exchanged must have a value of at least \$1,000 (\$2,500 if a new account is being established by the exchange, \$500 if the new account is an IRA).
- Call 800-595-9111 for more information.

**BY TELEPHONE**

If you authorize the telephone privilege on your New Account Application, you may redeem shares by telephone.

- If your account is already opened, send a written request to:

Northern Funds  
P.O. Box 75986  
Chicago, IL 60675-5986

- The request must be signed by each owner of the account and must be accompanied by signature guarantees.
- Call 800-595-9111 to use the telephone privilege.
- During periods of unusual economic or market activity, telephone redemptions may be difficult to implement. In such event, shareholders should follow the procedures outlined above under “Selling Shares—By Mail” and outlined below under “Selling Shares—By Internet.”

**BY INTERNET**

You may initiate transactions between Northern Trust banking and Fund accounts by using Northern Trust Private Passport. For details and to sign up for this service, go to [northernfunds.com](http://northernfunds.com) or contact your Relationship Manager.

**REDEEMING AND EXCHANGING THROUGH NORTHERN TRUST AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS**

If you purchased your shares through an account at Northern Trust or through another financial institution, you may redeem or exchange your shares according to the instructions pertaining to that account.

- Although the Trust imposes no charges when you redeem shares of a Fund (other than the 2.00% redemption fee charged for shares of the Emerging Markets Equity Index, Global Real Estate Index, Global Sustainability Index and International Equity Index Funds held for less than 30 days), when shares are purchased through an account at Northern Trust or through other financial institutions, a fee may be charged by those institutions for providing services in connection with your account.
- Contact your account representative at Northern Trust or at another financial institution for more information about redemptions or exchanges.

## ACCOUNT POLICIES AND OTHER INFORMATION

**CALCULATING SHARE PRICE.** The Trust issues shares and redeems shares at NAV. The NAV for each Fund is calculated by dividing the value of the Fund's net assets by the number of the Fund's outstanding shares. The NAV is calculated on each Business Day as of 3:00 p.m. Central time for each Fund. The NAV used in determining the price of your shares is the one calculated after your purchase, exchange or redemption order is received in good order as described on page 40.

Investments of the Funds for which market quotations are readily available are priced at their market value. If market quotations are not readily available, or if it is believed that such quotations do not accurately reflect fair value, the fair value of the Funds' investments may be otherwise determined in good faith under procedures established by the Trustees. Circumstances in which securities may be fair valued include periods when trading in a security is suspended, the exchange or market on which a security trades closes early, the trading volume in a security is limited, corporate actions and announcements take place, or regulatory news is released such as governmental approvals. Additionally, the Trust, in its discretion, may make adjustments to the prices of securities held by a Fund if an event occurs after the publication of market values normally used by a Fund but before the time as of which the Fund calculates its NAV, depending on the nature and significance of the event, consistent with applicable regulatory guidance and the Trust's fair value procedures. This may occur particularly with respect to certain foreign securities held by a Fund, in which case the Trust may use adjustment factors obtained from an independent evaluation service that are intended to reflect more accurately the value of those securities as of the time the Fund's NAV is calculated. Other events that can trigger fair valuing of foreign securities include, for example, significant fluctuations in general market indicators, governmental actions, or natural disasters. The use of fair valuation involves the risk that the values used by the Funds to price their investments may be higher or lower than the values used by other unaffiliated investment companies and investors to price the same investments. Short-term obligations, which are debt instruments with a maturity of 60 days or less, held by a Fund are valued at their amortized cost which, according to the Investment Adviser, approximates fair value.

A Fund may hold foreign securities that trade on weekends or other days when the Fund does not price its shares. Therefore, the value of such securities may change on days when shareholders will not be able to purchase or redeem shares.

**TIMING OF PURCHASE REQUESTS.** Purchase requests received in good order and accepted by the Transfer Agent or other authorized intermediary by 3:00 p.m. Central time on any Business Day will be executed the day they are received by either the Transfer Agent or other authorized intermediary, at

that day's closing share price for the applicable Fund(s), provided that one of the following occurs:

- The Transfer Agent receives payment by 3:00 p.m. Central time on the same Business Day; or
- The requests are placed by a financial or authorized intermediary that has entered into a servicing agreement with the Trust and payment in federal or other immediately available funds is received by the Transfer Agent by the close of the same Business Day or on the next Business Day, depending on the terms of the Trust's agreement with the intermediary.

Purchase requests received in good order by the Transfer Agent or other authorized intermediary on a non-Business Day or after 3:00 p.m. Central time on a Business Day will be executed on the next Business Day, at that day's closing share price for the applicable Fund(s), provided that payment is made as noted above.

**MISCELLANEOUS PURCHASE INFORMATION.**

- You will be responsible for all losses and expenses of a Fund, and purchase orders may be cancelled, in the event of any failure to make payment according to the procedures outlined in this Prospectus. In addition, a \$20 charge will be imposed if a check does not clear.
- You may initiate transactions between Northern Trust banking and Fund accounts by using Northern Trust Private Passport. For additional details, please go to [northernfunds.com](http://northernfunds.com) or contact your Relationship Manager.
- Exchanges into the Funds from another fund in the Trust may be subject to any redemption fee imposed by the other fund.
- The Trust and NFD each reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to suspend the offering of shares of a Fund or to reject any purchase order, in whole or in part, when, in the judgment of management, such suspension or rejection is in the best interests of the Fund. The Trust also reserves the right to change or discontinue any of its purchase procedures.
- In certain circumstances, the Trust may advance the time by which purchase orders must be received. See "Early Closings" on page 40.
- If the Transfer Agent cannot locate an investor for a period of time specified by appropriate state law, the investor's account may be deemed legally abandoned and then escheated (transferred) to the state's unclaimed property administrator in accordance with statutory requirements.

**TIMING OF REDEMPTION AND EXCHANGE REQUESTS.**

Redemption and exchange requests received in good order by the Transfer Agent or other authorized intermediary on a Business Day by 3:00 p.m. Central time will be executed on the same day at that day's closing share price for the applicable Fund(s) (less any applicable redemption fee).

Redemption and exchange requests received in good order by the Transfer Agent or other authorized intermediary on a non-Business Day or after 3:00 p.m. Central time on a Business Day will be executed the next Business Day, at that day's closing share price for the applicable Fund(s) (less any applicable redemption fee).

**PAYMENT OF REDEMPTION PROCEEDS.** Redemption proceeds normally will be sent or credited on the next Business Day or, if you are redeeming your shares through an authorized intermediary, up to three Business Days, following the Business Day on which such redemption request is received in good order by the deadline noted above. However, if you have recently purchased shares with a check or through an electronic transaction, payment may be delayed as discussed below under "Miscellaneous Redemption Information."

**REDEMPTION FEES.** The Emerging Markets Equity Index, Global Real Estate Index, Global Sustainability Index and International Equity Index Funds charge a 2.00% redemption fee on the redemption of shares (including by exchange) held for 30 days or less. For the purpose of applying the fee, the Funds use a first-in, first-out ("FIFO") method so that shares held longest are treated as being redeemed first and shares held shortest are treated as being redeemed last. The redemption fee is paid to the Fund from which the redemption is made, and is intended to offset the trading, market impact and other costs associated with short-term money movements in and out of the Fund. The redemption fee may be collected by deduction from the redemption proceeds or, if assessed after the redemption transaction, through a separate billing.

The Funds are authorized to waive the redemption fee for the following transactions:

- Redemptions from omnibus accounts, fee-based programs and employer-sponsored defined contribution plans maintained by financial intermediaries that inform the Fund that they are unable to impose a redemption fee on their underlying customer accounts;
- Redemptions where the shares were purchased through financial intermediaries that the Investment Adviser determines to have appropriate anti-short-term trading policies in place or as to which the Investment Adviser has received assurances that look-through redemption fee procedures or effective anti-short-term trading policies and procedures are in place;
- Redemptions effected pursuant to asset allocation programs, wrap fee programs and other investment programs offered by financial institutions where investment decisions are made on a discretionary basis by investment professionals;
- Redemptions pursuant to systematic withdrawal plans and automatic exchange plans;
- Redemptions of shares acquired by reinvestment of dividends, distributions or other payments;
- Redemptions due to the death or the post-purchase disability of the beneficial owner of the account;
- Redemptions to satisfy minimum required distributions from retirement accounts;
- Redemptions representing the return of excess contributions in retirement accounts;
- Redemptions initiated by the Fund; and
- Redemptions following investments of contributions in the Fund by participants in defined contribution plans.

In addition to the circumstances noted above, each Fund reserves the right to waive the redemption fee in its discretion where it believes such waiver is consistent with the best interests of the Fund, to the extent permitted by law. In addition, each Fund reserves the right to add, modify or eliminate the redemption fee or waivers at any time and will give 60 days' prior written notice of any material changes, unless otherwise provided by law.

Currently, the Funds are limited in their ability to assess or collect the redemption fee on all shares redeemed by financial intermediaries on behalf of their customers. For example, where a financial intermediary is not able to determine if the redemption fee applies and/or is not able to assess or collect the fee, or does not collect the fee at the time of a redemption, a Fund will not receive the redemption fee. If Fund shares are redeemed by a financial intermediary at the direction of its customers, the Funds may not know whether a redemption fee is applicable or the identity of the customer who should pay the redemption fee. Due to operational requirements, a financial intermediary's method for tracking and calculating the redemption fee may differ in some respects from that used by the Funds. Northern Trust will ask financial intermediaries to assess redemption fees on shareholder accounts in appropriate cases and remit these fees to the applicable Fund. However, for the reasons set forth above, there can be no assurance that the financial intermediaries will properly assess redemption fees. Customers purchasing shares from financial intermediaries should contact these intermediaries or refer to their account agreements or plan documents for more information on how the redemption fee is applied to their shares.

**MISCELLANEOUS REDEMPTION INFORMATION.** All redemption proceeds will be sent by check unless the Transfer Agent is directed otherwise. Redemption proceeds also may be wired. Redemptions are subject to the following restrictions:

- The Trust may require any information from the shareholder reasonably necessary to ensure that a redemption request has been duly authorized.
- Redemption requests made to the Transfer Agent by mail must be signed by a person authorized by acceptable documentation on file with the Transfer Agent.
- The Trust reserves the right, on 30 days' written notice, to redeem the shares held in any account if, at the time of redemption, the NAV of the remaining shares in the account falls below \$1,000. Involuntary redemptions will not be made if the value of shares in an account falls below the minimum solely because of a decline in a Fund's NAV.
- If you are redeeming recently purchased shares by check or electronic transaction, your redemption request may not be paid until your check or electronic transaction has cleared. This may delay your payment for up to 10 days.
- The Trust and the Transfer Agent reserve the right to redeem shares held by any shareholder who provides incorrect or incomplete account information or when such involuntary redemptions are necessary to avoid adverse consequences to the Trust and its shareholders or the Transfer Agent.
- You may initiate transactions between Northern Trust banking and the Trust's accounts by using Northern Trust Private Passport. For additional details, please go to [northernfunds.com](http://northernfunds.com) or contact your Relationship Manager.
- The Trust reserves the right to change or discontinue any of its redemption procedures.
- The Trust reserves the right to defer crediting, sending or wiring redemption proceeds for up to 7 days (or such longer period permitted by the SEC) after receiving the redemption order if, in its judgment, an earlier payment could adversely affect a Fund.
- The Trust does not permit redemption proceeds to be sent by outgoing International ACH Transaction ("IAT"). An IAT is a payment transaction involving a financial institution's office located outside U.S. territorial jurisdiction.
- In certain circumstances, the Trust may advance the time by which redemption and exchange orders must be received. See "Early Closings" on page 40.

**EXCHANGE PRIVILEGES.** You may exchange shares of one Fund in the Trust for shares of another Fund in the Trust only if the registration of both accounts is identical. Both accounts must have the same owner's name and title, if applicable. An

exchange is a redemption of shares of one Fund and the purchase of shares of another Fund in the Trust. If the shares redeemed are held in a taxable account, an exchange is considered a taxable event and may result in a gain or loss. The Trust reserves the right to waive or modify minimum investment requirements in connection with exchanges.

The Trust reserves the right to change or discontinue the exchange privilege at any time upon 60 days' written notice to shareholders and to reject any exchange request. Exchanges are only available in states where an exchange can legally be made. Before making an exchange, you should read the Prospectus for the shares you are acquiring.

#### **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES ON EXCESSIVE TRADING**

**PRACTICES.** In accordance with the policy adopted by the Board of Trustees, the Trust discourages market timing and other excessive trading practices. Purchases and exchanges should be made with a view to longer-term investment purposes only. Excessive, short-term (market timing) trading practices may disrupt fund management strategies, increase brokerage and administrative costs, harm Fund performance and result in dilution in the value of Fund shares held by long-term shareholders. The Funds that invest primarily in foreign securities may be susceptible to the risk of excessive, short-term trading due to the potential for time zone arbitrage. These risks may be enhanced with respect to Funds that invest in issuers located in emerging markets. Securities of emerging market issuers tend to be less liquid than issuers located in developed markets, and Funds that invest principally in issuers located in emerging markets may therefore be subject to an increased risk of arbitrage. The Trust and Northern Trust reserve the right to reject or restrict purchase or exchange requests from any investor. The Trust and Northern Trust will not be liable for any loss resulting from rejected purchase or exchange orders. To minimize harm to the Trust and its shareholders (or Northern Trust), the Trust (or Northern Trust) will exercise this right if, in the Trust's (or Northern Trust's) judgment, an investor has a history of excessive trading or if an investor's trading, in the judgment of the Trust (or Northern Trust), has been or may be disruptive to a Fund. In making this judgment, trades executed in multiple accounts under common ownership or control may be considered together to the extent they can be identified. No waivers of the provisions of the policy established to detect and deter market timing and other excessive trading activity are permitted that would harm the Trust or its shareholders or would subordinate the interests of the Trust or its shareholders to those of Northern Trust or any affiliated person or associated person of Northern Trust.

To deter excessive shareholder trading, a shareholder is restricted to no more than two "round trips" in a Fund during a calendar quarter. A "round trip" is a redemption or exchange out of a Fund followed by a purchase or exchange into the same

Fund. The Trust is authorized to permit more than two “round trips” in a Fund during a calendar quarter if the Trust determines in its reasonable judgment that the Trust’s excessive trading policies would not be violated. Examples of such transactions include, but are not limited to, trades involving:

- asset allocation programs, wrap fee programs and other investment programs offered by financial institutions where investment decisions are made on a discretionary basis by investment professionals;
- systematic withdrawal plans and automatic exchange plans;
- reinvestment of dividends, distributions or other payments;
- a death or post-purchase disability of the beneficial owner of the account;
- minimum required distributions from retirement accounts;
- the return of excess contributions in retirement accounts; and
- redemptions initiated by a Fund.

In addition, the Emerging Markets Equity Index, Global Real Estate Index Fund, Global Sustainability Index Fund and the International Equity Index Fund impose a redemption fee on redemptions made within 30 calendar days of purchase subject to certain exceptions. For further information, please see “Redemption Fees” on page 37.

As described below and in “Redemption Fees” it should be noted that the Trust’s ability to monitor and limit the trading activity of shareholders investing in a Fund through an omnibus account of a financial intermediary may be significantly limited or absent where the intermediary maintains the underlying shareholder accounts.

Pursuant to the policy adopted by the Board of Trustees, the Trust has developed criteria that it uses to identify trading activity that may be excessive. The Trust reviews on a regular and periodic basis available information relating to the trading activity in the Funds in order to assess the likelihood that a Fund may be the target of excessive trading. As part of its excessive trading surveillance process, the Trust, on a periodic basis, examines transactions that exceed certain monetary thresholds or numerical limits within a period of time. If, in its judgment, the Trust detects excessive, short-term trading, whether or not the shareholder has made two round trips in a calendar quarter, the Trust may reject or restrict a purchase or exchange request and may further seek to close an investor’s account with a Fund. The Trust may modify its surveillance procedures and criteria from time to time without prior notice regarding the detection of excessive trading or to address specific circumstances. The Trust will apply the criteria in a manner that, in the Trust’s judgment, will be uniform.

Fund shares may be held through omnibus arrangements maintained by intermediaries such as broker-dealers, investment advisers, transfer agents, administrators and insurance companies. In addition, Fund shares may be held in omnibus 401(k) plans, retirement plans and other group accounts. Omnibus accounts include multiple investors and such accounts typically provide the Funds with a net purchase or redemption request on any given day where the purchases and redemptions of Fund shares by the investors are netted against one another. The identities of individual investors whose purchase and redemption orders are aggregated are not known by the Funds. While Northern Trust may monitor share turnover at the omnibus account level, a Fund’s ability to monitor and detect market timing by shareholders or apply any applicable redemption fee in these omnibus accounts is limited. The netting effect makes it more difficult to identify, locate and eliminate market timing activities. In addition, those investors who engage in market timing and other excessive trading activities may employ a variety of techniques to avoid detection. There can be no assurance that the Funds and Northern Trust will be able to identify all those who trade excessively or employ a market timing strategy, and curtail their trading in every instance.

If necessary, the Trust may prohibit additional purchases of Fund shares by a financial intermediary or by certain of the intermediary’s customers. Financial intermediaries may also monitor their customers’ trading activities in the Trust. Certain financial intermediaries may monitor their customers for excessive trading according to their own excessive trading policies. The Trust may rely on these financial intermediaries’ excessive trading policies in lieu of applying the Trust’s policies. The financial intermediaries’ excessive trading policies may differ from the Trust’s policies, and there is no assurance that the procedures used by financial intermediaries will be able to curtail excessive trading activity in the Trust.

**IN-KIND PURCHASES AND REDEMPTIONS.** The Trust reserves the right to accept payment for shares in the form of securities that are permissible investments for a Fund. The Trust also reserves the right to pay redemptions by a distribution “in-kind” of securities (instead of cash) from a Fund. See the SAI for further information about the terms of these purchases and redemptions.

**TELEPHONE TRANSACTIONS.** All calls may be recorded or monitored. The Transfer Agent has adopted procedures in an effort to establish reasonable safeguards against fraudulent telephone transactions. If reasonable measures are taken to verify that telephone instructions are genuine, the Trust and its service providers will not be responsible for any loss resulting from fraudulent or unauthorized instructions received over the telephone. In these circumstances, shareholders will bear the risk

of loss. During periods of unusual market activity, you may have trouble placing a request by telephone. In this event, consider sending your request in writing or follow the procedures found on pages 33 or 34 for initiating transactions by the Internet.

The proceeds of redemption orders received by telephone will be sent by check, wire or transfer according to proper instructions. All checks will be made payable to the shareholder of record and mailed only to the shareholder's address of record.

The Trust reserves the right to refuse a telephone redemption.

**MAKING CHANGES TO YOUR ACCOUNT INFORMATION.** You may make changes to wiring instructions only in writing. You may make changes to an address of record or certain other account information in writing or by telephone. Written instructions must be accompanied by a signature guarantee from an institution participating in the Stock Transfer Agency Medallion Program ("STAMP"), or other acceptable evidence of authority (if applicable). Additional requirements may be imposed. In accordance with SEC regulations, the Trust and Transfer Agent may charge a shareholder reasonable costs in locating a shareholder's current address.

**SIGNATURE GUARANTEES.** If a signature guarantee is required, it must be from an institution participating in STAMP, or other acceptable evidence of authority (if applicable) must be provided. Additional requirements may be imposed by the Trust. In addition to the situations described in this Prospectus, the Trust may require signature guarantees in other circumstances based on the amount of a redemption request or other factors.

**BUSINESS DAY.** A "Business Day" is each Monday through Friday when the New York Stock Exchange (the "Exchange") is open for business. For any given calendar year, the Funds will be closed on the following holidays or as observed: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Presidents' Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.

**GOOD ORDER.** A purchase, redemption or exchange request is considered to be "in good order" when all necessary information is provided and all required documents are properly completed, signed and delivered, including a completed Northern Funds Certification Form or other acceptable evidence of authority (if applicable). Requests must include the following:

- The account number (if issued) and Fund name;
- The amount of the transaction, in dollar amount or number of shares;
- For redemptions and exchanges (other than online, telephone or wire redemptions), the signature of all account owners exactly as they are registered on the account;

- Required signature guarantees, if applicable;
- Other supporting legal documents and certified resolutions that might be required in the case of estates, corporations, trusts and other entities or forms of ownership. Call 800-595-9111 for more information about documentation that may be required of these entities.

Additionally, a purchase order initiating the opening of an account will not be considered to be "in good order" unless the investor has provided all information required by the Trust's "Customer Identification Program" described below.

**CUSTOMER IDENTIFICATION PROGRAM.** Federal law requires the Trust to obtain, verify and record identifying information, which may include the name, residential or business street address, date of birth (for an individual), social security or taxpayer identification number or other identifying information for each investor who opens or reopens an account with the Trust. Applications without this information, or without an indication that a social security or taxpayer identification number has been applied for, may not be accepted. After acceptance, to the extent permitted by applicable law or the Trust's customer identification program, the Trust reserves the right to: (a) place limits on account transactions until the investor's identity is verified; (b) refuse an investment in the Trust; or (c) involuntarily redeem an investor's shares and close an account in the event that an investor's identity is not verified. The Trust and its agents will not be responsible for any loss in an investor's account resulting from an investor's delay in providing all required identifying information or from closing an account and redeeming an investor's shares when an investor's identity is not verified.

**EARLY CLOSINGS.** The Funds reserve the right to advance the time for accepting purchase, redemption or exchange orders for same Business Day credit when the Exchange closes early, trading on the Exchange is restricted, an emergency arises or as otherwise permitted by the SEC. In addition, the Board of Trustees of the Funds may, for any Business Day, decide to change the time as of which a Fund's NAV is calculated in response to new developments such as altered trading hours, or as otherwise permitted by the SEC.

**EMERGENCY OR UNUSUAL EVENTS.** In the event the Exchange does not open for business because of an emergency or unusual event, the Trust may, but is not required to, open one or more Funds for purchase, redemption and exchange transactions if the Federal Reserve wire payment system is open. To learn whether a Fund is open for business during an emergency situation or unusual event, please call 800-595-9111 or visit [northernfunds.com](http://northernfunds.com).

**FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES.** The Trust may authorize certain institutions acting as financial intermediaries (including banks, trust companies, brokers and investment advisers) to accept purchase, redemption and exchange orders from their customers on behalf of the Funds. These authorized intermediaries also may designate other intermediaries to accept such orders, if approved by the Trust. A Fund will be deemed to have received an order when the order is accepted by the authorized intermediary, and the order will be priced at the Fund's per share NAV next determined, provided that the authorized intermediary forwards the order (and payment for any purchase order) to the Transfer Agent on behalf of the Trust within agreed-upon time periods. If the order (or payment for any purchase order) is not received by the Transfer Agent within such time periods, the authorized intermediary may be liable for fees and losses and the transaction may be cancelled.

The Trust may enter into agreements with certain financial intermediaries, including affiliates of Northern Trust, that perform support and/or distribution services for their customers who own Fund shares ("Service Organizations"). These support services may include:

- assisting investors in processing purchase, exchange and redemption requests;
- processing dividend and distribution payments from the Funds;
- providing information to customers showing their positions in the Funds; and
- providing subaccounting with respect to Fund shares beneficially owned by customers or the information necessary for subaccounting.

In addition, Service Organizations may provide distribution services, such as the forwarding of sales literature and advertising to their customers, in connection with the distribution of Fund shares.

For their services, Service Organizations may receive fees from a Fund at annual rates of up to 0.25% of the average daily NAV of the shares covered by their agreements. Because these fees are paid out of the Funds' assets on an on-going basis, they will increase the cost of your investment in the Funds.

Northern Trust also may provide compensation to certain dealers and other financial intermediaries, including affiliates of Northern Trust, for marketing and distribution in connection with the Trust. Northern Trust may also sponsor informational meetings, seminars and other similar programs designed to market the Trust. The amount of such compensation and payments may be made on a one-time and/or periodic basis, and may represent all or a portion of the annual fees earned by

the Investment Adviser (after adjustments). The additional compensation and payments will be paid by Northern Trust or its affiliates and will not represent an additional expense to the Trust or its shareholders. Such payments may provide incentives for financial intermediaries to make shares of the Funds available to their customers, and may allow the Funds greater access to such parties and their customers than would be the case if no payments were paid.

Investors purchasing shares of a Fund through a financial intermediary should read their account agreements with the financial intermediary carefully. A financial intermediary's requirements may differ from those listed in this Prospectus. A financial intermediary also may impose account charges, such as asset allocation fees, account maintenance fees and other charges that will reduce the net return on an investment in a Fund. If an investor has agreed with a particular financial intermediary to maintain a minimum balance and the balance falls below this minimum, the investor may be required to redeem all or a portion of the investor's investment in a Fund.

Conflict of interest restrictions may apply to the receipt of compensation by a Service Organization or other financial intermediary in connection with the investment of fiduciary funds in Fund shares. Institutions, including banks regulated by the Comptroller of the Currency, Federal Reserve Board and state banking commissions, and investment advisers and other money managers subject to the jurisdiction of the SEC, the Department of Labor or state securities commissions, are urged to consult their legal counsel.

State securities laws regarding the registration of dealers may differ from federal law. As a result, Service Organizations and other financial intermediaries investing in the Funds on behalf of their customers may be required to register as dealers.

Agreements that contemplate the provision of distribution services by Service Organizations and other financial intermediaries are governed by a Distribution and Service Plan (the "Plan") that has been adopted by the Trust pursuant to Rule 12b-1 under the 1940 Act. Payments to Service Organizations and other financial intermediaries, including Northern Trust, under the Plan are not tied directly to their own out-of-pocket expenses and therefore may be used as they elect (for example, to defray their overhead expenses), and may exceed their direct and indirect costs. As of this date, the Plan has not been implemented with respect to the Funds. The Plan may be implemented at any time without further Board of Trustees approval. During the last fiscal year, the Funds did not pay any 12b-1 fees. The Funds do not expect to pay any 12b-1 fees during the current fiscal year. The maximum distribution fee is 0.25% of each Fund's average net assets under the Plan.

**PORTFOLIO HOLDINGS.** The Funds, or their duly authorized service providers, may publicly disclose holdings of all Funds in

accordance with regulatory requirements, such as periodic portfolio disclosure in filings with the SEC.

A complete schedule of each Fund's holdings, current as of month end, will be available on the Trust's Web site at [northernfunds.com](http://northernfunds.com) no earlier than ten (10) calendar days after the end of the respective period. The Funds will also publish their top ten holdings on their Web site, current as of month end, no earlier than ten (10) calendar days after the end of the month. This information will remain available on the Web site at least until the Funds file with the SEC their semiannual/annual shareholder report or quarterly portfolio holdings report that includes such period. The Funds may terminate or modify this policy at any time without further notice to shareholders.

A further description of the Trust's Policy on Disclosure of Portfolio Holdings is available in the SAI.

**SHAREHOLDER COMMUNICATIONS.** Shareholders of record will be provided each year with a semiannual report showing portfolio investments and other information as of September 30 and with an annual report containing audited financial statements as of March 31. If you have consented to the delivery of a single copy of shareholder reports, prospectuses, proxy statements or information statements to all shareholders who share the same mailing address with your account, you may revoke your consent at any time by contacting the Northern Funds Center by telephone at 800-595-9111 or by mail at Northern Funds, P.O. Box 75986, Chicago, IL 60675-5986. You also may send an e-mail to [northern-funds@ntrs.com](mailto:northern-funds@ntrs.com). The Funds will begin sending individual copies to you within 30 days after receipt of your revocation.

The Trust may reproduce this Prospectus in electronic format that may be available on the Internet. If you have received this Prospectus in electronic format you, or your representative, may contact the Transfer Agent for a free paper copy of this Prospectus by writing to the Northern Funds Center at P.O. Box 75986, Chicago, IL 60675-5986, calling 800-595-9111 or by sending an e-mail to: [northern-funds@ntrs.com](mailto:northern-funds@ntrs.com).

## DIVIDENDS AND DISTRIBUTIONS

### DIVIDENDS AND CAPITAL GAIN DISTRIBUTIONS OF EACH FUND ARE AUTOMATICALLY REINVESTED IN ADDITIONAL SHARES OF THE SAME FUND WITHOUT ANY SALES CHARGE.

You may, however, elect to have dividends or capital gain distributions (or both) paid in cash or reinvested in shares of another fund in the Trust at its NAV per share. If you would like to receive dividends or distributions in cash or have them reinvested in another Fund in the Trust, you must notify the Transfer Agent in writing. This election will become effective for distributions paid two days after its receipt by the Transfer Agent. Dividends and distributions only may be reinvested in a Fund in the Trust in which you maintain an account.

Dividend and capital gain distributions that are returned to a Fund as undeliverable will be reinvested into your account

upon return receipt at the Fund's then current NAV. Also, future distributions will be reinvested until the Fund receives valid delivery instructions.

The following table summarizes the general distribution policies for each of the Funds. A Fund may, in some years, pay additional dividends or make additional distributions to the extent necessary for the Fund to avoid incurring unnecessary tax liabilities or for other reasons.

| Fund                          | Dividends, if any,<br>Declared and Paid | Capital Gains, if any,<br>Declared and Paid |
|-------------------------------|---|---|
| EMERGING MARKETS EQUITY INDEX | Annually                                | Annually                                    |
| GLOBAL REAL ESTATE INDEX      | Quarterly                               | Annually                                    |
| GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY INDEX   | Annually                                | Annually                                    |
| INTERNATIONAL EQUITY INDEX    | Annually                                | Annually                                    |
| MID CAP INDEX                 | Annually                                | Annually                                    |
| SMALL CAP INDEX               | Annually                                | Annually                                    |
| STOCK INDEX                   | Quarterly                               | Annually                                    |

## TAX CONSIDERATIONS

The following is a summary of certain tax considerations that may be relevant to an investor in a Fund. The discussions of the federal tax consequences in this Prospectus and the SAI are based on the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the “Code”) and the regulations issued under it, and court decisions and administrative interpretations, as in effect on the date of this Prospectus. Future legislative or administrative changes or court decisions may significantly alter the statements included herein, and any such changes or decisions may be retroactive. Except where otherwise indicated, the discussion relates to shareholders who are individual United States citizens or residents and is based on current tax law. You should consult your tax advisor for further information regarding federal, state, local and/or foreign tax consequences relevant to your specific situation.

**DISTRIBUTIONS.** Each Fund intends to qualify as a regulated investment company for federal tax purposes, and to distribute to shareholders substantially all of its net investment income and net capital gain each year. Except as otherwise noted below, you will generally be subject to federal income tax on a Fund’s distributions to you, regardless of whether they are paid in cash or reinvested in Fund shares. For federal income tax purposes, Fund distributions attributable to short-term capital gains and net investment income are taxable to you as ordinary income. Distributions attributable to net capital gain (the excess of net long-term capital gains over net short-term capital losses) of a Fund generally are taxable to you as long-term capital gains. This is true no matter how long you own your Fund shares. The maximum long-term capital gain rate applicable to individuals, estates and trusts is currently 15%. However, currently a sunset provision provides that the 15% long-term capital gain rate will increase to 20% for taxable years beginning after December 31, 2012. Every year, the Trust will send you information detailing the amount of ordinary income and capital gains distributed to your account for the previous year.

Distributions of “qualifying dividends” will also generally be taxable to you at long-term capital gain rates, as long as certain requirements are met. In general, if 95% or more of the gross income of a Fund (other than net capital gain) consists of dividends received from domestic corporations or “qualified” foreign corporations (“qualifying dividends”) and when certain other requirements are met, then all distributions paid by the Fund to individual shareholders will be treated as qualifying dividends. But if less than 95% of the gross income of a Fund (other than net capital gain) consists of qualifying dividends, then distributions paid by the Fund to individual shareholders will be qualifying dividends only to the extent they are derived from qualifying dividends earned by the Fund. For the lower rates to apply, you must have owned your Fund shares for at least 61 days during the 121-day period beginning on the date that is 60 days before the Fund’s ex-dividend date (and the

Fund will need to have met a similar holding period requirement with respect to the shares of the corporation paying the qualifying dividend). The amount of a Fund’s distributions that qualify for this favorable treatment may be reduced as a result of a high portfolio turnover rate or investments in debt securities or “non-qualified” foreign corporations. This lower rate for “qualifying dividends” is also currently scheduled to expire after 2012. For taxable years beginning after December 31, 2012, “qualifying dividends” will be taxed at ordinary income rates.

To the extent that a Fund invests a portion of its assets in entities that qualify as REITs for U.S. federal income tax purposes or foreign corporations that are not “qualified” foreign corporations, distributions attributable to the dividends from those entities will generally not constitute “qualifying dividends” for purposes of the 15% rate. Accordingly, investors in the Fund should anticipate that all or a portion of the dividends they receive may be taxable at the higher rates generally applicable to ordinary income.

A portion of distributions paid by a Fund to shareholders who are corporations may also qualify for the dividends-received deduction for corporations, subject to certain holding period requirements and debt financing limitations. The amount of the dividends qualifying for this deduction may, however, be reduced by a high portfolio turnover rate or by investments in debt securities or foreign corporations.

Distributions from each Fund will generally be taxable to you in the year in which they are paid, with one exception. Dividends and distributions declared by a Fund in October, November or December and paid in January of the following year are taxed as though they were paid on December 31.

You should note that if you buy shares of a Fund shortly before it makes a distribution, the distribution will be fully taxable to you even though, as an economic matter, it simply represents a return of a portion of your investment. This adverse tax result is known as “buying into a dividend.”

**FOREIGN TAXES.** The Funds may be subject to foreign withholding taxes with respect to dividends or interest received from sources in foreign countries. If at the close of the taxable year more than 50% in value of a Fund’s assets consists of stock or securities in foreign corporations such Fund will be eligible to make an election to treat a proportionate amount of those taxes as constituting a distribution to each shareholder, which would allow you either (1) to credit that proportionate amount of taxes against U.S. Federal income tax liability as a foreign tax credit or (2) to take that amount as an itemized deduction. The Funds not eligible to make this election and eligible Funds that do not make the election will be entitled to deduct such taxes in computing the amounts they are required to distribute.

**SALES AND EXCHANGES.** The sale, exchange, or redemption of Fund shares is a taxable event on which a gain or loss may be recognized. For federal income tax purposes, an exchange of shares of one Fund for shares of another Fund is considered the same as a sale. The amount of gain or loss is based on the difference between your tax basis in the Fund shares and the amount you receive for them upon disposition. Generally, you will recognize long-term capital gain or loss if you have held your Fund shares for over twelve months at the time you dispose of them. Gains and losses on shares held for twelve months or less will generally constitute short-term capital gains, except that a loss on shares held six months or less will be recharacterized as a long-term capital loss to the extent of any capital gains distributions that you have received on the shares. A loss realized on a sale or exchange of Fund shares may be disallowed under the so-called “wash sale” rules to the extent the shares disposed of are replaced with other shares of that same Fund within a period of 61 days beginning 30 days before and ending 30 days after the shares are disposed of, such as pursuant to a dividend reinvestment in shares of the Fund. If disallowed, the loss will be reflected in an adjustment to the basis of the shares acquired.

**IRAS AND OTHER TAX-QUALIFIED PLANS.** The one major exception to the preceding tax principles is that distributions on, and sales, exchanges and redemptions of, shares held in an IRA or other tax-qualified plan will not be currently taxable unless shares are acquired with borrowed funds.

**BACKUP WITHHOLDING.** The Trust will be required in certain cases to withhold and remit to the U.S. Treasury 28% of the dividends and gross sales proceeds paid to any shareholder (i) who had provided either an incorrect tax identification number or no number at all, (ii) who is subject to backup withholding by the Internal Revenue Service for failure to report the receipt of taxable interest or dividend income properly, or (iii) who has failed to certify to the Trust, when required to do so, that he or she is not subject to backup withholding or that he or she is an “exempt recipient.”

**U.S. TAX TREATMENT OF FOREIGN SHAREHOLDERS.**

Nonresident aliens, foreign corporations and other foreign investors in the Funds will generally be exempt from U.S. federal income tax on Fund distributions attributable to net capital gains. The exemption may not apply, however, if the investment in a Fund is connected to a trade or business of the foreign investor in the United States or if the foreign investor is present in the United States for 183 days or more in a year and certain other conditions are met.

Fund distributions attributable to other categories of Fund income, such as dividends from companies whose securities are held by a Fund, will generally be subject to a 30% withholding tax when paid to foreign shareholders. For taxable years of the

Fund beginning before January 1, 2012, interest-related dividends and short-term capital gain dividends are generally exempt from withholding tax. The withholding tax may, however, be reduced (and, in some cases, eliminated) under an applicable tax treaty between the United States and a shareholder’s country of residence or incorporation, provided that the shareholder furnishes the Fund with a properly completed Form W-8BEN to establish entitlement for these treaty benefits.

A foreign investor will generally not be subject to U.S. tax on gains realized on sales or exchanges of Fund shares unless the investment in the Fund is connected to a trade or business of the investor in the United States or if the investor is present in the United States for 183 days or more in a year and certain other conditions are met.

All foreign investors should consult their own tax advisors regarding the tax consequences in their country of residence of an investment in a Fund.

**STATE AND LOCAL TAXES.** You may also be subject to state and local taxes on income and gain attributable to your ownership of Fund shares. State income taxes may not apply, however, to the portions of a Fund’s distributions, if any, that are attributable to interest earned by the Fund on U.S. government securities. You should consult your tax advisor regarding the tax status of distributions in your state and locality.

**CONSULT YOUR TAX PROFESSIONAL.** Your investment in the Funds could have additional tax consequences. You should consult your tax professional for information regarding all tax consequences applicable to your investments in a Fund. More tax information relating to the Funds is also provided in the SAI. This short summary is not intended as a substitute for careful tax planning.

The REIT investments of a Fund often do not provide complete tax information to the Fund until after the calendar year-end. Consequently, because of the delay, it may be necessary for the Fund to request permission to extend the deadline for issuance of Forms 1099-DIV beyond January 31. Also, under current provisions of the Code, distributions attributable to operating income of REITs in which the Fund invests are not eligible for favorable tax treatment as long-term capital gains and will be taxable to you as ordinary income.

## SECURITIES, TECHNIQUES AND RISKS

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON INVESTMENT OBJECTIVES, PRINCIPAL INVESTMENT STRATEGIES AND RELATED RISKS

All investments carry some degree of risk that will affect the value of a Fund's investments, its investment performance and the price of its shares. As a result, loss of money is a risk of investing in each Fund.

This section takes a closer look at some of the Funds' principal investment strategies and related risks.

**INVESTMENT OBJECTIVES.** A Fund's investment objective may be changed by the Trust's Board of Trustees without shareholder approval. Shareholders will, however, be notified of any changes. Any such change may result in a Fund having an investment objective different from the objective that the shareholder considered appropriate at the time of investment in the Fund.

**EQUITY SECURITIES.** "Equity securities" include common stocks, preferred stocks, investment companies including exchange-traded funds ("ETFs"), interests in real estate investment trusts ("REITs"), convertible securities, equity interests in trusts, partnerships, joint ventures, limited liability companies and similar enterprises, warrants, stock purchase rights and synthetic and derivative instruments that have economic characteristics similar to equity securities.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** Each of the Funds invests primarily in equity securities.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** Investing in equity securities involves market risk. Market risk is the risk that the value of the securities in which a Fund invests may go up or down in response to the prospects of individual issuers and/or general economic conditions. Securities markets may experience great short-term volatility and may fall sharply at times. Different markets may behave differently from each other and a foreign market may move in the opposite direction from the U.S. market. Stock prices have historically risen and fallen in periodic cycles. In general, the values of equity investments fluctuate in response to the activities of individual companies and in response to general market and economic conditions. Price changes may be temporary or last for extended periods. Accordingly, the values of the equity investments that a Fund holds may decline over short or extended periods. This volatility means that the value of your investment in the Funds may increase or decrease. You could lose money over short periods due to fluctuation in a Fund's NAV in response to market movements, and over longer periods during market downturns.

Over the past several years, stock markets have experienced substantial price volatility. Growth stocks are generally more sensitive to market movements than other types of stocks and

their stock prices may therefore be more volatile and present a higher degree of risk of loss. Value stocks, on the other hand, may fall out of favor with investors and underperform growth stocks during any given period.

**FOREIGN INVESTMENTS.** Foreign securities include direct investments in non-U.S. dollar-denominated securities traded primarily outside of the United States and dollar-denominated securities of foreign issuers. Foreign securities also include indirect investments such as American Depositary Receipts ("ADRs"), European Depositary Receipts ("EDRs") and Global Depositary Receipts ("GDRs"). ADRs are U.S. dollar-denominated receipts representing shares of foreign-based corporations. ADRs are receipts that are traded in the U.S., and entitle the holder to all dividend and capital gain distributions that are paid out on the underlying foreign shares. EDRs and GDRs are receipts that often trade on foreign exchanges. They represent ownership in an underlying foreign or U.S. security and generally are denominated in a foreign currency. Foreign government obligations may include debt obligations of supranational entities, including international organizations (such as the European Coal and Steel Community and The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, also known as the World Bank) and international banking institutions and related government agencies.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** The Emerging Markets Equity Index, Global Real Estate Index, Global Sustainability Index and International Equity Index Funds intend to invest a substantial portion of their total assets in foreign securities. Although it invests primarily in the securities of U.S. issuers, the Mid Cap Index Fund is permitted to invest up to 25% of its total assets in foreign securities including ADRs, EDRs and GDRs. This Fund also may invest in foreign time deposits and other short-term instruments.

The Global Real Estate Index, Global Sustainability Index and International Equity Index Funds may invest more than 25% of their total assets in the securities of issuers located in a single foreign country (or in the case of the Global Real Estate Index, Global Sustainability Index and International Equity Index Funds, a single geographic region) having securities markets that are highly developed, liquid and subject to extensive regulation. Such regions may include, but are not limited to North America, Pacific Asia and Europe. Additionally, the International Equity Index Fund may invest up to 25% of its total assets in emerging markets.

The Emerging Markets Equity Index Fund intends to invest a substantial portion of its total assets in foreign countries that are considered emerging markets and may invest more than 25% of its assets in securities of issuers located in a single foreign country that is considered an emerging market. Such countries may include, but are not limited to, South Korea, Taiwan, Brazil, Mexico, Hong Kong, South Africa and China.

GENERAL. Foreign securities involve special risks and costs, which are considered by the Investment Adviser in evaluating the creditworthiness of issuers and making investment decisions for the Funds. Foreign securities fluctuate in price because of political, financial, social and economic events in foreign countries. A foreign security could also lose value because of more or less stringent foreign securities regulations and less stringent accounting and disclosure standards. In addition, foreign markets may have greater volatility than domestic markets and foreign securities may be less liquid and harder to value than domestic securities.

Foreign securities, and in particular foreign debt securities, are sensitive to changes in interest rates. In addition, investment in the securities of foreign governments involves the risk that foreign governments may default on their obligations or may otherwise not respect the integrity of their obligations. The performance of investments in securities denominated in a foreign currency also will depend, in part, on the strength of the foreign currency against the U.S. dollar and the interest rate environment in the country issuing the currency. Absent other events which otherwise could affect the value of a foreign security (such as a change in the political climate or an issuer's credit quality), appreciation in the value of the foreign currency generally results in an increase in value of a foreign currency-denominated security in terms of U.S. dollars. A decline in the value of the foreign currency relative to the U.S. dollar generally results in a decrease in value of a foreign currency-denominated security. Additionally, many countries throughout the world are dependent on a healthy U.S. economy and are adversely affected when the U.S. economy weakens or its markets decline. For example, the recent decline in the U.S. subprime mortgage market quickly spread throughout global credit markets, triggering a liquidity crisis that affected fixed-income and equity markets around the world.

Investment in foreign securities may involve higher costs than investment in U.S. securities, including higher transaction and custody costs as well as the imposition of additional taxes by foreign governments. Foreign investments also may involve risks associated with the level of currency exchange rates, less complete financial information about the issuers, less market liquidity, more market volatility and political instability. Future political and economic developments, the possible imposition of withholding taxes on dividend income, the possible seizure or nationalization of foreign holdings, the possible establishment of exchange controls or freezes on the convertibility of currency, or the adoption of other governmental restrictions might adversely affect an investment in foreign securities. Additionally, foreign banks and foreign branches of domestic banks may be subject to less stringent reserve requirements and to different accounting, auditing and recordkeeping requirements.

While the Funds' investments may, if permitted, be denominated in foreign currencies, the portfolio securities and other assets held by the Funds are valued in U.S. dollars. Price fluctuations may occur in the dollar value of foreign securities because of changing currency exchange rates or, in the case of hedged positions, because the U.S. dollar declines in value relative to the currency hedged. Currency exchange rates may fluctuate significantly over short periods of time causing a Fund's NAV to fluctuate as well. Currency exchange rates can be affected unpredictably by the intervention or the failure to intervene by U.S. or foreign governments or central banks, or by currency controls or political developments in the U.S. or abroad. To the extent that a Fund is invested in foreign securities while also maintaining currency positions, it may be exposed to greater combined risk. The Funds' respective net currency positions may expose them to risks independent of their securities positions.

A Fund's assets may be concentrated in countries located in the same geographic region. This concentration will subject the Fund to risks associated with that particular region, such as general and local economic, political and social conditions. The Emerging Markets Equity Index, Global Real Estate Index, Global Sustainability Index and International Equity Index Funds may invest more than 25% of its total assets in the securities of issuers located in a single country, and such an investment will subject a Fund to increased foreign securities risk with respect to the particular country.

On January 1, 1999, the European Economic and Monetary Union ("EMU") introduced a new single currency called the euro. The euro has replaced the national currencies of many European countries.

The European Central Bank has control over each member country's monetary policies. Therefore, the member countries no longer control their own monetary policies by directing independent interest rates for their currencies. The national governments of the participating countries, however, have retained the authority to set tax and spending policies and public debt levels.

The change to the euro as a single currency is relatively new and untested. The elimination of the currency risk among EMU countries has affected the economic environment and behavior of investors, particularly in European markets, but the long-term impact of those changes on currency values or on the business or financial condition of European countries and issuers cannot fully be assessed at this time. In addition, the introduction of the euro presents other unique uncertainties, including the fluctuation of the euro relative to non-euro currencies; whether the interest rate, tax and labor regimes of European countries participating in the euro will converge over time; and whether the conversion of the currencies of other

countries that now are or may in the future become members of the European Union (“EU”) will have an impact on the euro. Also, it is possible that the euro could be abandoned in the future by countries that have already adopted its use. These or other events, including political and economic developments, could cause market disruptions, and could affect adversely the values of securities held by the Funds. Because of the number of countries using this single currency, a significant portion of the assets held by certain Funds may be denominated in the euro.

Additional risks are involved when a Fund, such as the Emerging Markets Equity Index Fund, invests in countries with emerging economies or securities markets. These countries generally are located in the Asia and Pacific regions, the Middle East, Eastern Europe, Central and South America and Africa. Political and economic structures in many of these countries may be undergoing significant evolution and rapid development, and these countries may lack the social, political and economic stability characteristics of developed countries. In general, the securities markets of these countries are less liquid, are especially subject to greater price volatility, have smaller market capitalizations, have less government regulation and are not subject to as frequent accounting, financial and other reporting requirements as the securities markets of more developed countries as has historically been the case. As a result the risks presented by investments in these countries are heightened. These countries also have problems with securities registration and custody. Additionally, settlement procedures in emerging countries are frequently less developed and reliable than those in the United States, and may involve the Fund’s delivery of securities before receipt of payment for their sale. Settlement or registration problems may make it more difficult for a Fund to value its portfolio securities and could cause the Fund to miss attractive investment opportunities, to have a portion of its assets uninvested or to incur losses due to the failure of a counterparty to pay for securities the Fund has delivered or the Fund’s inability to complete its contractual obligations. A Fund’s purchase and sale of portfolio securities in certain emerging countries may be constrained by limitations relating to daily changes in the prices of listed securities, periodic trading or settlement volume and/or limitations on aggregate holdings of foreign investors. Such limitations may be computed based on the aggregate trading volume or holdings of the Fund, the investment adviser, its affiliates and their respective clients and other service providers. A Fund may not be able to sell securities in circumstances where price, trading or settlement volume limitations have been reached. As a result of these and other risks, investments in these countries generally present a greater risk of loss to a Fund.

Investments in some emerging countries, such as those located in Asia, may be restricted or controlled. In some countries,

direct investments in securities may be prohibited and required to be made through investment funds controlled by such countries. These limitations may increase transaction costs and adversely affect a security’s liquidity, price, and the rights of a Fund in connection with the security.

Unanticipated political, economic or social developments may affect the value of a Fund’s investments in emerging market countries and the availability to the Fund of additional investments in these countries. Some of these countries may have in the past failed to recognize private property rights and may have at times nationalized or expropriated the assets of private companies. There have been occasional limitations on the movements of funds and other assets between different countries. The small size and inexperience of the securities markets in certain of such countries and the limited volume of trading in securities in those countries may make a Fund’s investments in such countries illiquid and more volatile than investments in Japan or most Western European countries, and a Fund may be required to establish special custodial or other arrangements before making certain investments in those countries. There may be little financial or accounting information available with respect to issuers located in certain of such countries, and it may be difficult as a result to assess the value or prospects of an investment in such issuers.

Many emerging countries are subject to rapid currency devaluations and high inflation and/or economic recession and significant debt levels. These economic factors can have a material adverse affect on these countries’ economies and their securities markets. Moreover, many emerging countries’ economies are based on only a few industries and/or are heavily dependent on global trade. Therefore, they may be negatively affected by declining commodity prices, factors affecting their trading markets and partners, exchange controls and other trade barriers, currency valuations and other protectionist measures.

From time to time, certain of the companies in which a Fund may invest may operate in, or have dealings with, countries subject to sanctions or embargoes imposed by the U.S. government and the United Nations and/or countries identified by the U.S. government as state sponsors of terrorism. A company may suffer damage to its reputation if it is identified as a company which operates in, or has dealings with, countries subject to sanctions or embargoes imposed by the U.S. government and the United Nations and/or countries identified by the U.S. government as state sponsors of terrorism. As an investor in such companies, a Fund will be indirectly subject to those risks.

Many emerging countries also impose withholding or other taxes on foreign investments, which may be substantial and result in lower Fund returns.

The creditworthiness of firms used by a Fund to effect securities transactions in emerging countries may not be as strong as in some developed countries. As a result, a Fund could be subject to a greater risk of loss on its securities transactions if a firm defaults on its responsibilities.

A Fund's ability to manage its foreign currency may be restricted in emerging countries. As a result, a significant portion of a Fund's currency exposure in these countries may not be covered.

The recent decline in the U.S. economy as a result of the subprime crisis may have a disproportionately more adverse effect on economies of emerging markets.

**INITIAL PUBLIC OFFERINGS.** An IPO is a company's first offering of stock to the public.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** At times, the Funds, to a moderate extent, may invest in IPOs.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** An IPO presents the risk that the market value of IPO shares will fluctuate considerably due to factors such as the absence of a prior public market, unseasoned trading, the small number of shares available for trading and limited information about the issuer. The purchase of IPO shares may involve high transaction costs. IPO shares are subject to market risk and liquidity risk. When a Fund's asset base is small, a significant portion of the Fund's performance could be attributable to investments in IPOs because such investments would have a magnified impact on the Fund. As the Fund's assets grow, the effect of the Fund's investments in IPOs on the Fund's performance probably will decline, which could reduce the Fund's performance. Because of the price volatility of IPO shares, a Fund may choose to hold IPO shares for a very short period of time. This may increase the turnover of a portfolio and may lead to increased expenses to the Fund, such as commissions and transaction costs. By selling IPO shares, the Fund may realize taxable gains it subsequently will distribute to shareholders. In addition, the market for IPO shares can be speculative and/or inactive for extended periods of time. There is no assurance that the Fund will be able to obtain allocable portions of IPO shares. The limited number of shares available for trading in some IPOs may make it more difficult for the Fund to buy or sell significant amounts of shares without an unfavorable impact on prevailing prices. Investors in IPO shares can be affected by substantial dilution in the value of their shares, by sales of additional shares and by concentration of control in existing management and principal shareholders. The Funds' investments in IPO shares may include the securities of "unseasoned" companies (companies with less than three years of continuous operations), which present risks considerably greater than common stocks of more established companies. These companies may have limited operating

histories and their prospects for profitability may be uncertain. These companies may be involved in new and evolving businesses and may be vulnerable to competition and changes in technology, markets and economic conditions. They may be more dependent on key managers and third parties and may have limited product lines.

**SMALL CAP INVESTMENTS.** Investments in small capitalization companies involve greater risk and more abrupt or erratic price movements than investments in larger capitalization stocks. Among the reasons for the greater price volatility of these investments are the less certain growth or earnings prospects of smaller firms and the lower degree of liquidity in the markets for such securities. Small capitalization companies may be thinly traded and may have to be sold at a discount from current market prices or in small lots over an extended period of time. In addition, these securities are subject to the risk that during certain periods the liquidity of particular issuers or industries, or all securities in particular investment categories, will shrink or disappear suddenly and without warning as a result of adverse economic or market conditions, or adverse investor perceptions whether or not accurate. Because of the lack of sufficient market liquidity, a Fund may incur losses because it will be required to effect sales at a disadvantageous time and only then at a substantial drop in price. Small capitalization companies include "unseasoned" issuers that do not have an established financial history; often have limited product lines, markets or financial resources; may depend on or use a few key personnel for management or upon a small or inexperienced management group; and may be susceptible to losses and risks of bankruptcy. Small capitalization companies may be operating at a loss or have significant variations in operating results; may be engaged in a rapidly changing business with products subject to a substantial risk of obsolescence; may require substantial additional capital to support their operations, to finance expansion or to maintain their competitive position; and may have substantial borrowings or may otherwise have a weak financial condition. In addition, these companies may face intense competition, including competition from companies with greater financial resources, more extensive development, manufacturing, marketing, and other capabilities, and a larger number of qualified managerial and technical personnel. Transaction costs for small capitalization investments are often higher than those of larger capitalization companies. Investments in small capitalization companies may be more difficult to price precisely than other types of securities because of their characteristics and lower trading volumes. As a result, their performance can be more volatile and they can face a greater risk of business failure, which could increase the volatility of the Fund's investments.

Securities of small companies may lack sufficient market liquidity to enable a Fund to effect sales at an advantageous time or without a substantial drop in price.

**TRACKING RISK.** The Funds seek to track the performance of their respective benchmark indices.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** Under normal market conditions, the Investment Adviser expects that the quarterly performance of the Funds, before expenses, will track the performance of their respective benchmarks within a 0.95 correlation coefficient.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** The Funds are subject to the risk of tracking variance. Tracking variance may result from share purchases and redemptions, transaction costs, expenses and other factors. Tracking variance may prevent a Fund from achieving its investment objective.

**SPECIAL RISKS AND CONSIDERATIONS APPLICABLE TO THE GLOBAL REAL ESTATE INDEX FUND.**

**REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT TRUSTS.** REITs are pooled investment vehicles that invest primarily in either real estate or real estate related loans.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** The Global Real Estate Index Fund invests a substantial amount of its assets in REITs. The other Funds also may invest in REITs to the extent consistent with their respective investment objectives and strategies.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** The value of a REIT is affected by changes in the value of the properties owned by the REIT or securing mortgage loans held by the REIT. REITs are dependent upon cash flow from their investments to repay financing costs and the ability of a REIT's manager. REITs are also subject to risks generally associated with investments in real estate. These risks include: changes in the value of real estate properties and difficulties in valuing and trading real estate; risks related to general and local economic conditions; overbuilding and increased competition; increases in property taxes and operating expenses; changes in zoning laws; casualty and condemnation losses; variations in rental income; changes in the appeal of property to tenants; tenant bankruptcies and other credit problems; and changes in interest rates. To the extent that assets underlying a REIT are concentrated geographically, by property type or in certain other respects, these risks may be heightened. A Fund will indirectly bear its proportionate share of any expenses, including management fees, paid by a REIT in which it invests.

REITs are subject to a highly technical and complex set of provisions in the Code. It is possible that the Fund may invest in a real estate company that purports to be a REIT and that the company could fail to qualify as a REIT. In the event of any such unexpected failure to qualify as a REIT, the company would be subject to corporate-level taxation, significantly

reducing the return to the Fund on its investment in such company. REITs could possibly fail to qualify for tax free pass-through of income under the Code, or to maintain their exemptions from registration under the 1940 Act. The above factors may also adversely affect a borrower's or a lessee's ability to meet its obligations to the REIT. In the event of a default by a borrower or lessee, the REIT may experience delays in enforcing its rights as a mortgagee or lessor and may incur substantial costs associated with protecting its investments.

Equity REITs may be affected by changes in the value of the underlying property owned by the REITs. Mortgage REITs may be affected by the quality of any credit extended. REITs are dependent upon management skill, may not be diversified, and are subject to heavy cash flow dependency, default by borrowers and self-liquidation. REITs are also subject to the possibilities of failing to qualify for tax free pass-through of income and failing to maintain their exemptions from investment company registration.

In addition, the value of such securities may fluctuate in response to the market's perception of the creditworthiness of the issuers of mortgage-related securities owned by the Fund. Because investments in mortgage-related securities are interest sensitive, the ability of the issuer to reinvest or to reinvest favorably in underlying mortgages may be limited by government regulation or tax policy. For example, action by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System to limit the growth of the nation's money supply may cause interest rates to rise and thereby reduce the volume of new residential mortgages. Additionally, although mortgages and mortgage-related securities are generally supported by some form of government or private guarantees and/or insurance, there is no assurance that private guarantors or insurers will be able to meet their obligation.

REITs (especially mortgage REITs) are also subject to interest rate risks. When interest rates decline, the value of a REIT's investment in fixed rate obligations can be expected to rise. Conversely, when interest rates rise, the value of a REIT's investment in fixed rate obligations can be expected to decline. In contrast, as interest rates on adjustable rate mortgage loans are reset periodically, yields on a REIT's investments in such loans will gradually align themselves to reflect changes in market interest rates, causing the value of such investments to fluctuate less dramatically in response to interest rate fluctuations than would investments in fixed rate obligations.

The REIT investments of a Fund often do not provide complete tax information to the Fund until after the calendar year-end. Consequently, because of the delay, it may be necessary for the Fund to request permission to extend the deadline for issuance of Forms 1099-DIV beyond January 31. Also, under current provisions of the Code, distributions attributable to operating

income of REITs in which the Fund invests are not eligible for favorable tax treatment as long-term capital gains and will be taxable to you as ordinary income.

**REAL ESTATE SECURITIES.** The Global Real Estate Index Fund's concentration in real estate securities presents special risk considerations.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** The Global Real Estate Index Fund invests principally in companies that are engaged in real estate activities, including owning, trading or developing income-producing real estate. The other Funds may invest in real estate securities to the extent consistent with their investment objectives and strategies.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** The performance of real estate securities may be significantly impacted by the performance of real estate markets. Property values may fall due to increasing vacancies or declining rents resulting from economic, legal, cultural or technological developments. The price of real estate company shares also may drop because of the failure of borrowers to pay their loans and poor management. Many real estate companies utilize leverage, which increases investment risk and could adversely affect a company's operations and market value in periods of rising interest rates as well as risks normally associated with debt financing. Real property investments are subject to varying degrees of risk. The yields available from investments in real estate depend on the amount of income and capital appreciation generated by the related properties. Income and real estate values may also be adversely affected by such factors as applicable domestic and foreign laws (e.g., Americans with Disabilities Act and tax laws), interest rate levels and the availability of financing. If the properties do not generate sufficient income to meet operating expenses, including, where applicable, debt service, ground lease payments, tenant improvements, third-party leasing commissions and other capital expenditures, the income and ability of the real estate company to make payments of any interest and principal on its debt securities will be adversely affected. In addition, real property may be subject to the quality of credit extended and defaults by borrowers and tenants. The performance of the economy in each of the countries and regions in which the real estate owned by a Fund is located affects occupancy, market rental rates and expenses and, consequently, has an impact on the income from such properties and their underlying values. The financial results of major local employers also may have an impact on the cash flow and value of certain properties. In addition, real estate investments are relatively illiquid and, therefore, the ability of real estate companies to vary their portfolios promptly in response to changes in economic or other conditions is limited. A real estate company such as a REIT may also have joint venture investments in certain of its properties and, consequently, its ability to control decisions relating to such properties may be limited.

## ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTION OF SECURITIES AND COMMON INVESTMENT TECHNIQUES

This section explores various other investment securities and techniques that the Investment Adviser may use.

**ASSET-BACKED SECURITIES.** Asset-backed securities are sponsored by entities such as government agencies, banks, financial companies and commercial or industrial companies. Asset-backed securities represent participations in, or are secured by and payable from, pools of assets such as mortgages, automobile loans, credit card receivables and other financial assets. In effect, these securities "pass through" the monthly payments that individual borrowers make on their mortgages or other assets net of any fees paid to the issuers. Examples of these include guaranteed mortgage pass-through certificates, CMOs and real estate mortgage investment conduits ("REMICs"). Examples of asset-backed securities also include collateralized debt obligations ("CDOs"), which include collateralized bond obligations ("CBOs"), collateralized loan obligations ("CLOs") and other similarly structured securities. A CBO is a trust typically collateralized by a pool that is backed by a diversified pool of high risk, below-investment grade fixed-income securities. A CLO is a trust typically collateralized by a pool of loans that may include, among others, domestic and foreign senior secured loans; senior unsecured loans; and other subordinate corporate loans, including loans that may be rated below-investment grade or equivalent unrated loans.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** To the extent consistent with their respective investment objectives and strategies, the Funds may purchase these and other types of asset-backed securities. The Funds also may invest to a moderate extent in CDOs. Such securities are subject to the same quality requirements as the other types of fixed-income securities held by a Fund.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** In addition to credit and market risk, asset-backed securities may involve prepayment risk because the underlying assets (loans) may be prepaid at any time. Prepayment (or call) risk is the risk that an issuer will exercise its right to pay principal on an obligation held by a Fund (such as a mortgage or other asset-backed security) earlier than expected. This may happen during a period of declining interest rates. Under these circumstances, a Fund may be unable to recoup all of its initial investment and will suffer from having to reinvest in lower yielding securities. The loss of higher yielding securities and the reinvestment at lower interest rates can reduce the Fund's income, total return and share price.

The value of these securities also may change because of actual or perceived changes in the creditworthiness of the originator, the service agent, the financial institution providing the credit support or the counterparty. Credit supports generally apply

only to a fraction of a security's value. Like other fixed-income securities, when interest rates rise, the value of an asset-backed security generally will decline. However, when interest rates decline, the value of an asset-backed security with prepayment features may not increase as much as that of other fixed-income securities. In addition, non-mortgage asset-backed securities involve certain risks not presented by mortgage-backed securities. Primarily, these securities do not have the benefit of the same security interest in the underlying collateral. Credit card receivables generally are unsecured, and the debtors are entitled to the protection of a number of state and federal consumer credit laws. Automobile receivables are subject to the risk that the trustee for the holders of the automobile receivables may not have an effective security interest in all of the obligations backing the receivables. If the issuer of the security has no security interest in the related collateral, there is the risk that a Fund could lose money if the issuer defaults. CBOs and CLOs are generally offered in tranches that vary in risk and yield. Both CBOs and CLOs can experience substantial losses due to actual defaults of the underlying collateral, increased sensitivity to defaults due to collateral default and disappearance of junior tranches that protect the more senior tranches, market anticipation of defaults and aversion to CBO or CLO securities as a class. As a result of the economic recession that commenced in the United States in 2008, there is a heightened risk that the receivables and loans underlying the asset-backed securities purchased by the Funds may suffer greater levels of default than were historically experienced. In addition to prepayment risk, investments in mortgage-backed securities comprised of subprime mortgages and investments in other asset-backed securities of underperforming assets may be subject to a higher degree of credit risk, valuation risk, and liquidity risk. Recently, delinquencies, defaults and losses on residential mortgage loans have increased substantially and may continue to increase, which may affect the performance of the mortgage-backed securities in which the Funds invest. The recent and unprecedented disruption in the residential mortgage-backed securities market (and in particular, the "subprime" residential mortgage market), the broader mortgage-backed securities market and the asset-backed securities market have resulted in downward price pressures and increasing foreclosures and defaults in residential and commercial real estate. Concerns over inflation, energy costs, geopolitical issues, the availability and cost of credit, the mortgage market and a declining real estate market have contributed to increased volatility and diminished expectations for the economy and markets going forward, and have contributed to dramatic declines in the housing market, with falling home prices and increasing foreclosures and unemployment, and significant asset write-downs by financial institutions. These conditions have prompted a number of financial institutions to seek additional capital, to merge with

other institutions and, in some cases, to fail. The continuation or worsening of this general economic downturn may lead to further declines in income from, or the value of, real estate, including the real estate which secures the mortgage-backed securities held by certain of the Funds. Additionally, a lack of credit availability, higher mortgage rates and decreases in the value of real property have occurred and may continue to occur or worsen, and potentially prevent borrowers from refinancing their mortgages, which may increase the likelihood of default on their mortgage loans. These economic conditions also may adversely affect the amount of proceeds the holder of a mortgage loan or mortgage-backed securities (including the mortgage-backed securities in which certain of the Funds may invest) would realize in the event of a foreclosure or other exercise of remedies. Moreover, even if such mortgage-backed securities are performing as anticipated, the value of such securities in the secondary market may nevertheless fall or continue to fall as a result of deterioration in general market conditions for such mortgage-backed securities or other asset-backed or structured products. Trading activity associated with market indices also may drive spreads on those indices wider than spreads on mortgage-backed securities, thereby resulting in a decrease in value of such mortgage-backed securities, including the mortgage-backed securities owned by the Funds.

**BORROWINGS AND REVERSE REPURCHASE AGREEMENTS.** The Funds may borrow money and enter into reverse repurchase agreements. Reverse repurchase agreements involve the sale of securities held by a Fund subject to the Fund's agreement to repurchase them at a mutually agreed upon date and price (including interest).

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** Each Fund may borrow and enter into reverse repurchase agreements in amounts not exceeding one-fourth of the value of its total assets (including the amount borrowed). The Funds may enter into reverse repurchase agreements when the investment management team expects that the interest income to be earned from the investment of the transaction proceeds will be greater than the related interest expense.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** Borrowings and reverse repurchase agreements involve leveraging. If the securities held by the Funds decline in value while these transactions are outstanding, the NAV of the Funds' outstanding shares will decline in value by proportionately more than the decline in value of the securities. In addition, reverse repurchase agreements involve the risks that (a) the interest income earned by a Fund (from the investment of the proceeds) will be less than the interest expense of the transaction; (b) the market value of the securities sold by a Fund will decline below the price the Fund is obligated to pay to repurchase the securities; and (c) the securities may not be returned to the Fund.

**CONVERTIBLE SECURITIES.** A convertible security is a bond or preferred stock that may be converted (exchanged) into the common stock of the issuing company within a specified time period for a specified number of shares. Convertible securities offer a way to participate in the capital appreciation of the common stock into which the securities are convertible, while earning higher current income than is available from the common stock.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** The Funds may each acquire convertible securities. Except for the Global Real Estate Index Fund, convertible securities will be rated “investment grade” at the time of purchase. The Global Real Estate Index Fund intends to invest in convertible securities rated “investment grade” at the time of purchase except that the Fund may purchase up to 15% of its total assets, measured at the time of purchase, in convertible securities rated BB or below when the Investment Adviser determines that such securities are desirable in light of the Fund’s investment objective and portfolio mix.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** The price of a convertible security normally will vary in some proportion to changes in the price of the underlying common stock because of either a conversion or exercise feature. However, the value of a convertible security may not increase or decrease as rapidly as the underlying common stock. Additionally, a convertible security normally also will provide income and therefore is subject to interest rate risk. While convertible securities generally offer lower interest or dividend yields than non-convertible fixed-income securities of similar quality, their value tends to increase as the market value of the underlying stock increases and to decrease when the value of the underlying stock decreases. Also, a Fund may be forced to convert a security before it would otherwise choose, which may have an adverse effect on the Fund’s return and its ability to achieve its investment objective.

**CUSTODIAL RECEIPTS.** Custodial receipts are participations in trusts that hold U.S. government, bank, corporate or other obligations. They entitle the holder to future interest payments or principal payments or both on securities held by the custodian.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** To the extent consistent with their respective investment objectives and strategies, the Funds may invest a portion of their assets in custodial receipts.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** Like other stripped securities (which are described below), custodial receipts may be subject to greater price volatility than ordinary debt obligations because of the way in which their principal and interest are returned to investors.

**EQUITY SWAPS.** Equity swaps allow the parties to the swap agreement to exchange components of return on one equity

investment (e.g., a basket of equity securities or an index) for a component of return on another non-equity or equity investment, including an exchange of differential rates of return.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** The Funds may invest in equity swaps. Equity swaps may be used to invest in a market without owning or taking physical custody of securities in circumstances where direct investment may be restricted for legal reasons or is otherwise impractical. Equity swaps also may be used for other purposes, such as hedging or seeking to increase total return.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** Equity swaps are derivative instruments and their values can be very volatile. To the extent that the investment management team does not accurately analyze and predict the potential relative fluctuation on the components swapped with the other party, a Fund may suffer a loss, which is potentially unlimited. The value of some components of an equity swap (such as the dividends on a common stock) also may be sensitive to changes in interest rates. Furthermore, during the period a swap is outstanding, a Fund may suffer a loss if the counterparty defaults. Because equity swaps normally are illiquid, a Fund may not be able to terminate its obligations when desired.

**DERIVATIVES.** The Funds may purchase certain “derivative” instruments for hedging or speculative purposes. A derivative is a financial instrument whose value is derived from, or based upon, the performance of underlying assets, interest or currency exchange rates, or other indices and may be leveraged. Derivatives include futures contracts, options, interest rate and currency swaps, equity swaps, forward currency contracts and structured securities (including collateralized mortgage obligations (“CMOs”) and other types of asset-backed securities, “stripped” securities and various floating rate instruments, including leveraged “inverse floaters”).

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** Under normal market conditions, a Fund may to a moderate extent invest in derivative securities including structured securities, options, futures, swaps, and interest rate caps and floors if the potential risks and rewards are consistent with the Fund’s objective, strategies and overall risk profile. In unusual circumstances, including times of increased market volatility, a Fund may make more significant investments in derivatives. A Fund may use derivatives for hedging purposes to offset a potential loss in one position by establishing an interest in an opposite position. The Funds also may use derivatives for speculative purposes to invest for potential income or capital gain. Each Fund may invest more than 5% of its assets in derivative instruments for non-hedging purposes (i.e. for potential income or gain).

**SPECIAL RISKS.** An investment in derivatives can be more sensitive to changes in interest rates and sudden fluctuations in market prices than conventional securities. Investments in

derivative instruments, which may be leveraged, may result in losses exceeding the amounts invested. A Fund's losses may be greater if it invests in derivatives than if it invests only in conventional securities. Engaging in derivative transactions involves special risks, including (a) market risk that the Fund's derivatives position will lose value; (b) credit risk that the counterparty to the transaction will default; (c) leveraging risk that the value of the derivative instrument will decline more than the value of the assets on which it is based; (d) illiquidity risk that a Fund will be unable to sell its position because of lack of market depth or disruption; (e) pricing risk that the value of a derivative instrument will be difficult to determine; and (f) operations risk that loss will occur as a result of inadequate systems or human error. Many types of derivatives have been developed recently and have not been tested over complete market cycles. For these reasons, a Fund may suffer a loss whether or not the analysis of the Investment Adviser is accurate.

In order to secure its obligations in connection with derivative contracts or special transactions, a Fund will either own the underlying assets, enter into offsetting transactions or set aside cash or readily marketable securities. This requirement may cause the Fund to miss favorable trading opportunities, due to a lack of sufficient cash or readily marketable securities. This requirement may also cause the Fund to realize losses on offsetting or terminated derivative contracts or special transactions.

**EXCHANGE RATE-RELATED SECURITIES.** Exchange rate-related securities represent certain foreign debt obligations whose principal values are linked to a foreign currency but which are repaid in U.S. dollars.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** Each of the Funds may invest in exchange rate-related securities.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** The principal payable on an exchange rate-related security is subject to currency risk. In addition, the potential illiquidity and high volatility of the foreign exchange market may make exchange rate-related securities difficult to sell prior to maturity at an appropriate price.

**FORWARD CURRENCY EXCHANGE CONTRACTS.** A forward currency exchange contract is an obligation to exchange one currency for another on a future date at a specified exchange rate.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** Each of the Funds (other than the Small Cap Index and Stock Index Funds) may enter into forward currency exchange contracts for hedging purposes and to help reduce the risks and volatility caused by changes in foreign currency exchange rates. The Funds also may enter into these contracts for speculative purposes (i.e., to increase total return) or for cross-hedging purposes. Foreign currency exchange

contracts will be used at the discretion of the investment management team, and no Fund is required to hedge its foreign currency positions. It is expected that the Global Real Estate Index Fund, the Global Sustainability Index Fund and the International Equity Index Fund will enter into forward currency exchange contracts.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** Forward foreign currency contracts are privately negotiated transactions, and can have substantial price volatility. As a result, they offer less protection against default by the other party than is available for instruments traded on an exchange. When used for hedging purposes, they tend to limit any potential gain that may be realized if the value of a Fund's foreign holdings increases because of currency fluctuations. When used for speculative purposes, forward currency exchange contracts may result in additional losses that are not otherwise related to changes in the value of the securities held by a Fund. The institutions that deal in forward currency contracts are not required to continue to make markets in the currencies they trade and these markets can experience periods of illiquidity.

**FUTURES CONTRACTS AND RELATED OPTIONS.** A futures contract is a type of derivative instrument that obligates the holder to buy or sell a specified financial instrument or currency in the future at an agreed upon price. For example, a futures contract may obligate a Fund, at maturity, to take or make delivery of certain domestic or foreign securities, the cash value of a securities index or a stated quantity of a foreign currency. When a Fund purchases an option on a futures contract, it has the right to assume a position as a purchaser or seller of a futures contract at a specified exercise price during the option period. When a Fund sells an option on a futures contract, it becomes obligated to purchase or sell a futures contract if the option is exercised.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** To the extent consistent with its investment objective and strategies, each Fund may invest in futures contracts and options on futures contracts on domestic or foreign exchanges or boards of trade. These investments may be used for hedging purposes, to seek to increase total return, to maintain liquidity to meet potential shareholder redemptions, to invest cash balances or dividends or to minimize trading costs. It is expected that the Global Real Estate Index Fund will enter into exchange-traded equity index and REIT-related futures contracts among other types of futures contracts.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** Futures contracts and options present the following risks: imperfect correlation between the change in market value of a Fund's securities and the price of futures contracts and options; the possible inability to close a futures contract when desired; losses due to unanticipated market movements which potentially are unlimited; and the possible inability of the investment management team to correctly

predict the direction of securities prices, interest rates, currency exchange rates and other economic factors. Futures markets are highly volatile and the use of futures may increase the volatility of a Fund's NAV. As a result of the low margin deposits normally required in futures trading, a relatively small price movement in a futures contract may result in substantial losses to a Fund. Futures contracts and options on futures may be illiquid, and exchanges may limit fluctuations in futures contract prices during a single day. Foreign exchanges or boards of trade generally do not offer the same protections as U.S. exchanges.

**ILLIQUID OR RESTRICTED SECURITIES.** Illiquid securities include repurchase agreements and time deposits with notice/termination dates of more than seven days, certain variable amount master demand notes that cannot be called within seven days, certain insurance funding agreements (see "Insurance Funding Agreements" below), certain unlisted over-the-counter options and other securities that are traded in the U.S. but are subject to trading restrictions because they are not registered under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the "1933 Act"), and both foreign and domestic securities that are not readily marketable.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** Each Fund may invest up to 15% of its net assets in securities that are illiquid. If otherwise consistent with their investment objectives and strategies, the Funds may purchase commercial paper issued pursuant to Section 4(2) of the 1933 Act and securities that are not registered under the 1933 Act but can be sold to "qualified institutional buyers" in accordance with Rule 144A under the 1933 Act ("Rule 144A Securities"). These securities will not be considered illiquid so long as the Investment Adviser determines, under guidelines approved by the Trust's Board of Trustees, that an adequate trading market exists.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** Because illiquid and restricted securities may be difficult to sell at an acceptable price, they may be subject to greater volatility and may result in a loss to a Fund. The practice of investing in Rule 144A Securities could increase the level of a Fund's illiquidity during any period that qualified institutional buyers become uninterested in purchasing these securities. Securities purchased by a Fund that are liquid at the time of purchase may subsequently become illiquid due to events relating to the issuer of the securities, market events, economic conditions and/or investor perception.

**INSURANCE FUNDING AGREEMENTS.** An insurance funding agreement ("IFA") is an agreement that requires a Fund to make cash contributions to a deposit fund of an insurance company's general account. The insurance company then credits interest to the Fund for a set time period.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** The Funds may invest in IFAs issued by insurance companies that meet quality and credit standards established by the Investment Adviser.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** IFAs are not insured by a government agency—they are backed only by the insurance company that issues them. As a result, they are subject to default risk of the non-governmental issuer. In addition, the transfer of IFAs may be restricted and an active secondary market in IFAs currently does not exist. This means that it may be difficult or impossible to sell an IFA at an appropriate price.

**INTEREST RATE SWAPS, CURRENCY SWAPS, TOTAL RATE OF RETURN SWAPS, CREDIT SWAPS, AND INTEREST RATE FLOORS, CAPS AND COLLARS.** Interest rate and currency swaps are contracts that obligate a Fund and another party to exchange their rights to pay or receive interest or specified amounts of currency, respectively. Interest rate floors entitle the purchasers to receive interest payments if a specified index falls below a predetermined interest rate. Interest rate caps entitle the purchasers to receive interest payments if a specified index exceeds a predetermined interest rate. An interest rate collar is a combination of a cap and a floor that preserves a certain return within a predetermined range of interest rates. Total rate of return swaps are contracts that obligate a party to pay or receive interest in exchange for the payment by the other party of the total return generated by a security, a basket of securities, an index or an index component. Credit swaps are contracts involving the receipt of floating or fixed rate payments in exchange for assuming potential credit losses of an underlying security. Credit swaps give one party to a transaction the right to dispose of or acquire an asset (or group of assets) or, in the case of credit default swaps, the right to receive or make a payment from the other party, upon the occurrence of specific credit events.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** To the extent consistent with their respective investment objectives and strategies, the Funds may enter into swap transactions and transactions involving interest rate floors, caps and collars for hedging purposes or to seek to increase total return.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** The use of swaps and interest rate floors, caps and collars is a highly specialized activity that involves investment techniques and risks different from those associated with ordinary portfolio securities transactions. Like other derivative securities, these instruments can be highly volatile. If the Investment Adviser is incorrect in its forecasts of market values, interest rates and currency exchange rates, the investment performance of a Fund would be less favorable than it would have been if these instruments were not used. Because these instruments normally are illiquid, a Fund may not be able to terminate its obligations when desired. In addition, if a Fund is obligated to pay the return under the terms of a total rate of return swap, Fund losses due to unanticipated market movements potentially are unlimited. A Fund also may suffer a loss if the other party to a transaction defaults. Credit default swaps involve special risks in addition to those mentioned

above because they are difficult to value, are highly susceptible to liquidity and credit risk, and generally pay a return to the party that has paid the premium only in the event of an actual default by the issuer of the underlying obligation (as opposed to a credit downgrade or other indication of financial difficulty).

**INVESTMENT COMPANIES.** Affiliated and unaffiliated investment companies include, but are not limited to, money market funds, index funds, “country funds” (i.e., funds that invest primarily in issuers located in a specific foreign country or region), iShares<sup>®</sup>, S&P’s Depository Receipts<sup>®</sup> (“SPDRs”) and other ETFs. Other investment companies in which the Funds may invest include other funds for which the Investment Adviser or any of its affiliates serve as investment advisers.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** To the extent consistent with their respective investment objectives and strategies, the Funds may invest in securities issued by other affiliated or unaffiliated investment companies. Investments by a Fund in other investment companies, including ETFs, will be subject to the limitations of the 1940 Act except as permitted by SEC orders. The Funds may rely on SEC orders that permit them to invest in certain ETFs beyond the limits contained in the 1940 Act, subject to certain terms and conditions. Although the Funds do not expect to do so in the foreseeable future, each Fund is authorized to invest substantially all of its assets in a single open-end investment company or series thereof that has substantially the same investment objective, strategies and fundamental restrictions as the Fund.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** As a shareholder of another investment company, a Fund would be subject to the same risks as any other investor in that company. It would also bear a proportionate share of any fees and expenses paid by that company. These expenses would be in addition to the advisory and other fees paid directly by the Fund. A Fund’s investment in an ETF involves other considerations. In particular, shares of ETFs are listed and traded on securities exchanges and in over-the-counter markets, and the purchase and sale of these shares involve transaction fees and commissions. In addition, shares of an ETF are issued in “creation units” and are not redeemable individually except upon termination of the ETF. To redeem, a Fund must accumulate enough shares of an ETF to reconstitute a creation unit. The liquidity of a small holding of an ETF, therefore, will depend upon the existence of a secondary market. Also, even though the market price of an ETF is derived from the securities it owns, such price at any given time may be at, below or above the ETF’s NAV.

**INVESTMENT GRADE SECURITIES.** A security is considered investment grade if, at the time of purchase, it is rated:

- BBB or higher by S&P;
- Baa3 or higher by Moody’s Investors Service, Inc. (“Moody’s”);

- BBB or higher by Fitch Ratings (“Fitch”); or
- BBB or higher by Dominion Bond Rating Service Limited (“Dominion”).

A security will be considered investment grade if it receives one of the above ratings, or a comparable rating from another organization that is recognized as a Nationally Recognized Statistical Rating Organization (“NRSRO”), even if it receives a lower rating from other rating organizations. An unrated security also may be considered investment grade if the Investment Adviser determines that the security is comparable in quality to a security that has been rated investment grade.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** The Funds invest in fixed-income and convertible securities to the extent consistent with their respective investment objectives and strategies. Except as stated in the next section entitled “Non-Investment Grade Securities,” fixed-income and convertible securities purchased by the Funds generally will be investment grade.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** Although securities rated BBB by S&P, Dominion or Fitch, or Baa3 by Moody’s are considered investment grade, they have certain speculative characteristics. Therefore, they may be subject to a higher risk of default than obligations with higher ratings. Subsequent to its purchase by a Fund, a rated security may cease to be rated or its rating may be reduced below the minimum rating required for purchase by the Fund and may be in default. The Investment Adviser will consider such an event in determining whether the Fund should continue to hold the security.

**NON-INVESTMENT GRADE SECURITIES.** Non-investment grade fixed-income and convertible securities (sometimes referred to as “junk bonds”) generally are rated BB or below by S&P, Dominion or Fitch, or Ba or below by Moody’s (or have received a comparable rating from another NRSRO), or, if unrated, are determined to be of comparable quality by the Investment Adviser.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** The Global Real Estate Index Fund may invest up to 15% of its total assets, measured at the time of purchase, in non-investment grade fixed-income and convertible securities, when the investment management team determines that such securities are desirable in light of the Fund’s investment objective and portfolio mix.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** Non-investment grade fixed-income and convertible securities are considered predominantly speculative by traditional investment standards. The market value of these low-rated securities tends to be more sensitive to individual corporate developments and changes in interest rates and economic conditions than higher-rated securities. In addition, they generally present a higher degree of credit risk. Issuers of low-rated securities are often highly leveraged, so their ability to repay their debt during an economic downturn or periods of

rising interest rates may be impaired. The risk of loss due to default by these issuers also is greater because low-rated securities generally are unsecured and often are subordinated to the rights of other creditors of the issuers of such securities. Investment by the Fund in defaulted securities poses additional risk of loss should nonpayment of principal and interest continue in respect of such securities. Even if such securities are held to maturity, recovery by the Fund of its initial investment and any anticipated income or appreciation will be uncertain. The Fund also may incur additional expenses in seeking recovery on defaulted securities.

The secondary market for lower quality securities is concentrated in relatively few market makers and is dominated by institutional investors. Accordingly, the secondary market for such securities is not as liquid as, and is more volatile than, the secondary market for higher quality securities. In addition, market trading volume for these securities generally is lower and the secondary market for such securities could contract under adverse market or economic conditions, independent of any specific adverse changes in the condition of a particular issuer. These factors may have an adverse effect on the market price and the Fund's ability to dispose of particular portfolio investments. A less developed secondary market also may make it more difficult for the Fund to obtain precise valuations of such securities in its portfolio.

Investments in lower quality securities, whether rated or unrated, will be more dependent on the Investment Adviser's credit analysis than would be the case with investments in higher quality securities.

**OPTIONS.** An option is a type of derivative instrument that gives the holder the right (but not the obligation) to buy (a "call") or sell (a "put") an asset in the future at an agreed upon price prior to the expiration date of the option.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** To the extent consistent with its investment objective and strategies, each Fund may write (sell) covered call options, buy put options, buy call options and write secured put options for hedging (or cross-hedging) purposes or to earn additional income. Options may relate to particular securities, foreign or domestic securities indices, financial instruments or foreign currencies. A Fund will not purchase put and call options in an amount that exceeds 5% of its net assets at the time of purchase. The total value of a Fund's assets subject to options written by the Fund will not be greater than 25% of its net assets at the time the option is written. A Fund may "cover" a call option by owning the security underlying the option or through other means. Put options written by a Fund are "secured" if the Fund maintains liquid assets in a segregated account in an amount at least equal to the exercise price of the option up until the expiration date.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** Options trading is a highly specialized activity that involves investment techniques and risks different from those associated with ordinary Fund securities transactions. The value of options can be highly volatile, and their use can result in loss if the investment management team is incorrect in its expectation of price fluctuations. The successful use of options for hedging purposes also depends in part on the ability of the investment management team to predict future price fluctuations and the degree of correlation between the options and securities markets.

Each Fund will invest and trade in unlisted over-the-counter options only with firms deemed creditworthy by the Investment Adviser. However, unlisted options are not subject to the protections afforded purchasers of listed options by the Options Clearing Corporation, which performs the obligations of its members which fail to perform them in connection with the purchase or sale of options.

**PORTFOLIO TURNOVER.** The Investment Adviser will not consider the portfolio turnover rate a limiting factor in making investment decisions for certain Funds. A high portfolio turnover rate (100% or more) is likely to involve higher brokerage commissions and other transaction costs, which could reduce a Fund's return. It also may result in higher short-term capital gains that are taxable to shareholders. See "Financial Highlights" for the Funds' historical portfolio turnover rates.

**PREFERRED STOCK.** Preferred stocks are securities that represent an ownership interest providing the holder with claims on the issuer's earnings and assets before common stock owners but after bond owners.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** Each Fund may invest in preferred stocks.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** Unlike most debt securities, the obligations of an issuer of preferred stock, including dividend and other payment obligations, typically may not be accelerated by the holders of such preferred stock on the occurrence of an event of default or other non-compliance by the issuer of the preferred stock.

**REPURCHASE AGREEMENTS.** Repurchase agreements involve the purchase of securities by a Fund subject to the seller's agreement to repurchase them at a mutually agreed upon date and price.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** To the extent consistent with its investment objective and strategies, each Fund may enter into repurchase agreements with financial institutions such as banks and broker-dealers that are deemed to be creditworthy by the Investment Adviser. Although the securities subject to a repurchase agreement may have maturities exceeding one year, settlement of the agreement will never occur more than one year after a Fund acquires the securities.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** In the event of a default, a Fund will suffer a loss to the extent that the proceeds from the sale of the underlying securities and other collateral are less than the repurchase price and the Fund's costs associated with delay and enforcement of the repurchase agreement. In addition, in the event of bankruptcy, a Fund could suffer additional losses if a court determines that the Fund's interest in the collateral is unenforceable by the Fund.

With respect to collateral received in repurchase transactions or other investments, a Fund may have significant exposure to the financial services and mortgage markets. Such exposure, depending on market conditions, could have a negative impact on the Fund, including minimizing the value of any collateral.

**SHORT SALES AGAINST-THE-BOX.** A short sale against-the-box is a short sale such that at all times when the short position is open the seller owns or has the right to obtain, at no added cost, an equal amount of securities identical to those sold short.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** To the extent consistent with their investment objectives and strategies, the Funds may make short sales against-the-box.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** If a Fund sells securities short against-the-box, it may protect itself from loss if the price of the securities declines in the future, but will lose the opportunity to profit on such securities if the price rises. If a Fund effects a short sale of securities at a time when it has an unrealized gain on the securities, it may be required to recognize that gain as if it actually had sold the securities (as a "constructive sale") on the date it effects the short sale. However, such constructive sale treatment may not apply if the Fund closes out the short position with securities other than the appreciated securities held at the time of the short sale and if certain other conditions are satisfied. Uncertainty regarding the tax consequences of effecting short sales may limit the extent to which a Fund may effect short sales.

**STRIPPED SECURITIES.** These securities are issued by the U.S. government (or an agency, instrumentality or a sponsored enterprise), foreign governments, banks and other issuers. They entitle the holder to receive either interest payments or principal payments that have been "stripped" from a debt obligation. These obligations include stripped mortgage-backed securities, which are derivative multi-class mortgage securities.

The Treasury Department has facilitated transfers of ownership of zero coupon securities by accounting separately for the beneficial ownership of particular interest coupon and principal payments on Treasury securities through the Federal Reserve book-entry record-keeping system. The Federal Reserve program as established by the Treasury Department is known as "Separate Trading of Registered Interest and Principal of Securities" or "STRIPS." Under the STRIPS program, a Fund

will be able to have its beneficial ownership of zero coupon securities recorded directly in the book-entry record-keeping system in lieu of having to hold certificates or other evidences of ownership of the underlying U.S. Treasury securities.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** To the extent consistent with their respective investment objectives and strategies, the Funds may purchase stripped securities, including securities registered in the STRIPS program.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** Stripped securities are very sensitive to changes in interest rates and to the rate of principal prepayments. A rapid or unexpected change in either interest rates or principal prepayments could depress the price of stripped securities held by the Funds and adversely affect a Fund's total return.

**STRUCTURED SECURITIES.** The value of such securities is determined by reference to changes in the value of specific currencies, interest rates, commodities, securities, indices or other financial indicators (the "Reference") or the relative change in two or more References. The interest rate or the principal amount payable upon maturity or redemption may be increased or decreased depending upon changes in the applicable Reference. Examples of structured securities include, but are not limited to, debt obligations, where the principal repayment at maturity is determined by the value of a specified security or securities index.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** Each Fund may invest in structured securities to the extent consistent with its investment objective and strategies.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** The terms of some structured securities may provide that in certain circumstances no principal is due at maturity and, therefore, a Fund could suffer a total loss of its investment. Structured securities may be positively or negatively indexed, so that appreciation of the Reference may produce an increase or decrease in the interest rate or value of the security at maturity. In addition, changes in the interest rates or the value of the security at maturity may be a multiple of changes in the value of the Reference. Consequently, structured securities may entail a greater degree of market risk than other types of securities. Structured securities also may be more volatile, less liquid and more difficult to accurately price than less complex securities due to their derivative nature.

**TEMPORARY INVESTMENTS.** The Funds temporarily may hold cash and/or invest in short-term obligations including U.S. government obligations, high quality money market instruments (including commercial paper and obligations of foreign and domestic banks such as certificates of deposit, bank and deposit notes, bankers' acceptances and fixed time deposits), and repurchase agreements with maturities of 13 months or less.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** A Fund temporarily may hold cash or invest all or any portion of its assets in short-term obligations pending investment or to meet anticipated redemption requests. The Investment Adviser may, however, choose not to make such temporary investments even in very volatile or adverse conditions.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** A Fund may not achieve its investment objective when it holds cash or invests its assets in short-term obligations or otherwise makes temporary investments. A Fund also may miss investment opportunities and have a lower total return during these periods.

**UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT OBLIGATIONS.** These instruments include U.S. Treasury obligations, such as bills, notes and bonds, which generally differ only in terms of their interest rates, maturities and time of issuance. They also include obligations issued or guaranteed by the U.S. government or by its agencies, instrumentalities or sponsored enterprises. Securities guaranteed as to principal and interest by the U.S. government or by its agencies, instrumentalities or sponsored enterprises are deemed to include (a) securities for which the payment of principal and interest is backed by an irrevocable letter of credit issued by the U.S. government or by an agency, instrumentality or sponsored enterprise thereof, (b) securities of private issuers guaranteed as to principal and interest by the U.S. government, its agencies and instrumentalities pursuant to the FDIC Debt Guarantee Program, and (c) participations in loans made to foreign governments or their agencies that are so guaranteed.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** To the extent consistent with its investment objective and strategies, each Fund may invest in a variety of U.S. Treasury obligations and in obligations issued or guaranteed by the U.S. government or by its agencies, instrumentalities or sponsored enterprises.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** Not all U.S. government obligations carry the same credit support. Although many U.S. government securities in which the Funds may invest, such as those issued by the Federal National Mortgage Association (“Fannie Mae”), Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation (“Freddie Mac”) and the Federal Home Loan Banks may be chartered or sponsored by Acts of Congress, their securities are neither issued nor guaranteed by the U.S. Treasury and, therefore, are not backed by the full faith and credit of the United States. Some, such as those of the Government National Mortgage Association (“Ginnie Mae”), are supported by the full faith and credit of the U.S. Treasury. Other obligations, such as those of the Federal Home Loan Banks, are supported by the right of the issuer to borrow from the U.S. Treasury; and others are supported by the discretionary authority of the U.S. government to purchase the agency’s obligations. Still others are supported only by the credit of the instrumentality or

sponsored enterprise. The maximum potential liability of the issuers of some U.S. government securities held by a Fund may greatly exceed their current resources, including their legal right to support from the U.S. Treasury. It is possible that these issuers will not have the funds to meet payment obligations in the future. No assurance can be given that the U.S. government would provide financial support to its agencies, instrumentalities or sponsored enterprises if it is not obligated to do so by law. In addition, the secondary market for certain participations in loans made to foreign governments or their agencies may be limited.

An agency of the U.S. government has placed Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac into conservatorship, a statutory process with the objective of returning the entities to normal business operations. It is unclear what effect this conservatorship will have on the securities issued or guaranteed by Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac.

To the extent a Fund invests in debt instruments or securities of non-U.S. government entities that are backed by the full faith and credit of the United States, pursuant to the FDIC Debt Guarantee Program or other similar programs, there is a possibility that the guarantee provided under the Debt Guarantee Program or other similar programs may be discontinued or modified at a later date.

**VARIABLE AND FLOATING RATE INSTRUMENTS.** Variable and floating rate instruments have interest rates that periodically are adjusted either at set intervals or that float at a margin tied to a specified index rate. These instruments include variable amount master demand notes, long-term variable and floating rate bonds (sometimes referred to as “Put Bonds”) where the Fund obtains at the time of purchase the right to put the bond back to the issuer or a third party at par at a specified date and leveraged inverse floating rate instruments (“inverse floaters”). An inverse floater is leveraged to the extent that its interest rate varies by an amount that exceeds the amount of the variation in the index rate of interest. Some variable and floating rate instruments have interest rates that periodically are adjusted as a result of changes in inflation rates.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** Each Fund may invest in variable and floating rate instruments to the extent consistent with its investment objective and strategies.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** The market values of inverse floaters are subject to greater volatility than other variable and floating rate instruments due to their higher degree of leverage. Because there is no active secondary market for certain variable and floating rate instruments, they may be more difficult to sell if the issuer defaults on its payment obligations or during periods when the Funds are not entitled to exercise their demand rights. As a result, the Funds could suffer a loss with respect to these

instruments. In addition, variable and floating rate instruments are subject to changes in value based on changes in market interest rates or changes in the issuer's or guarantor's creditworthiness.

**WARRANTS.** A warrant represents the right to purchase a security at a predetermined price for a specified period of time.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** To the extent consistent with its investment objective and strategies, each Fund may invest in warrants and similar rights. A Fund also may purchase bonds that are issued in tandem with warrants.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** Warrants are derivative instruments that present risks similar to options.

**WHEN-ISSUED SECURITIES, DELAYED DELIVERY TRANSACTIONS AND FORWARD COMMITMENTS.** A purchase of "when-issued" securities refers to a transaction made conditionally because the securities, although authorized, have not yet been issued. A delayed delivery or forward commitment transaction involves a contract to purchase or sell securities for a fixed price at a future date beyond the customary settlement period.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** To the extent consistent with its investment objective and strategies, each Fund may purchase or sell securities on a when-issued, delayed delivery or forward commitment basis. Although the Funds generally would purchase securities in these transactions with the intention of acquiring the securities, the Funds may dispose of such securities prior to settlement if the investment management team deems it appropriate to do so.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** Purchasing securities on a when-issued, delayed delivery or forward commitment basis involves the risk that the value of the securities may decrease by the time they actually are issued or delivered. Conversely, selling securities in these transactions involves the risk that the value of the securities may increase by the time they actually are issued or delivered. These transactions also involve the risk that the counterparty may fail to deliver the security or cash on the settlement date.

**ZERO COUPON, PAY-IN-KIND AND CAPITAL APPRECIATION BONDS.** These are securities issued at a discount from their face value because interest payments typically are postponed until maturity. Interest payments on pay-in-kind securities are payable by the delivery of additional securities. The amount of the discount rate varies depending on factors such as the time remaining until maturity, prevailing interest rates, a security's liquidity and the issuer's credit quality. These securities also may take the form of debt securities that have been stripped of their interest payments.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY.** Each Fund may invest in zero coupon, pay-in-kind and capital appreciation bonds to the extent consistent with its investment objective and strategies.

**SPECIAL RISKS.** The market prices of zero coupon, pay-in-kind and capital appreciation bonds generally are more volatile than the market prices of interest-bearing securities and are likely to respond to a greater degree to changes in interest rates than interest-bearing securities having similar maturities and credit quality. A Fund's investments in zero coupon, pay-in-kind and capital appreciation bonds may require the Fund to sell some of its Fund securities to generate sufficient cash to satisfy certain income distribution requirements.

Additionally, the Funds may purchase other types of securities or instruments similar to those described in these sections if otherwise consistent with the Funds' investment objectives and strategies. You should carefully consider the risks discussed in these sections before investing in a Fund.

The Funds may invest in other securities and are subject to further restrictions and risks that are described in the SAI. Additional information about the Funds, their investments and related risks can also be found in "Investment Objectives and Strategies" in the SAI.

## DISCLAIMERS

The Emerging Markets Equity Index Fund and Global Sustainability Index Fund are not sponsored, endorsed, sold or promoted by MSCI, nor does MSCI guarantee the accuracy and/or completeness of the MSCI Emerging Markets Index, the MSCI EAFE Index or the MSCI World ESG Index or any data included therein. MSCI makes no warranty, express or implied, as to the results to be obtained by the Funds, owners of the Funds, any person or by any entity from the use of the MSCI Emerging Markets Index, MSCI EAFE Index or MSCI World ESG Index or any data included therein. MSCI makes no express or implied warranties and expressly disclaims all such warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose or use with respect to the MSCI Emerging Markets Index, MSCI EAFE Index or MSCI World ESG Index or any data included therein. The SAI contains a more detailed description of the limited relationship MSCI has with Northern Trust and the Emerging Markets Equity Index Fund and Global Sustainability Index Fund.

The Global Real Estate Index Fund is not sponsored, endorsed, sold or promoted by FTSE, EPRA or NAREIT, nor do FTSE, EPRA or NAREIT guarantee the accuracy and/or completeness of the FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Index or any data included therein. FTSE, EPRA and NAREIT make no warranty, express or implied, as to the results to be obtained by any Fund, owners of any Fund, any person or any entity from the use of the FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Index or any data included therein. FTSE, EPRA and NAREIT make no express or implied warranties and expressly disclaim all such warranties of merchantability or

fitness for a particular purpose or use with respect to the FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Index or any data included therein. The SAI contains a more detailed description of the limited relationships FTSE, EPRA and NAREIT have with Northern Trust and the Global Real Estate Index Fund.

The Mid Cap Index Fund and Stock Index Fund are not sponsored, endorsed, sold or promoted by S&P, nor does S&P guarantee the accuracy and/or completeness of the S&P 500 Index or S&P MidCap 400 Index, or any data included therein. S&P makes no warranty, express or implied, as to the results to be obtained by any Fund, owners of any Fund, any person or by any entity from the use of the S&P 500 Index or S&P MidCap 400 Index or any data included therein. S&P makes no express or implied warranties and expressly disclaims all such

warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose or use with respect to the S&P 500 Index or S&P MidCap 400 Index or any data included therein.

The Small Cap Index Fund is not sponsored, endorsed, sold or promoted by Frank Russell Company (“Russell”), nor does Russell guarantee the accuracy and/or completeness of the Russell 2000 Index or any data included therein. Russell makes no warranty, express or implied, as to the results to be obtained by any Fund, owners of any Fund, any person or by any entity from the use of the Russell 2000 Index or any data included therein. Russell makes no express or implied warranties and expressly disclaims all such warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose or use with respect to the Russell 2000 Index or any data included therein.

**FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS**

**THE FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS TABLES ARE INTENDED TO HELP YOU UNDERSTAND A FUND'S FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE FOR THE PAST FIVE YEARS (OR, IF SHORTER, THE PERIOD OF THE FUND'S OPERATION).**

Certain information reflects the financial results for a single Fund share. The total returns in the tables represent the rate that an investor would have earned or lost on an investment in a Fund for a share held for the entire period (assuming reinvestment of all dividends and distributions). This information has been derived from financial statements that have been audited by Deloitte & Touche LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, whose report, along with the Funds' financial statements, is included in the Funds' annual report, which is available upon request and without charge.

## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

FOR THE FISCAL YEARS OR PERIOD ENDED MARCH 31,

EMERGING MARKETS EQUITY INDEX FUND<sup>(1)</sup>

| Selected per share data                                  | 2011                 | 2010          | 2009            | 2008           | 2007 <sup>(2)</sup> |
|--|----------------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------------|
| <b>Net Asset Value, Beginning of Period</b>              | <b>\$11.31</b>       | <b>\$6.46</b> | <b>\$12.92</b>  | <b>\$11.11</b> | <b>\$10.00</b>      |
| INCOME (LOSS) FROM INVESTMENT OPERATIONS:                |                      |               |                 |                |                     |
| Net investment income                                    | 0.15                 | 0.07          | 0.26            | 0.19           | 0.09                |
| Net realized and unrealized gains (losses)               | 1.80                 | 4.90          | (6.41)          | 2.09           | 1.08                |
| Total from Investment Operations                         | 1.95                 | 4.97          | (6.15)          | 2.28           | 1.17                |
| LESS DISTRIBUTIONS PAID:                                 |                      |               |                 |                |                     |
| From net investment income <sup>(3)</sup>                | (0.20)               | (0.12)        | (0.20)          | (0.22)         | (0.06)              |
| From net realized gains                                  | —                    | —             | (0.11)          | (0.25)         | —                   |
| Total Distributions Paid                                 | (0.20)               | (0.12)        | (0.31)          | (0.47)         | (0.06)              |
| Net Asset Value, End of Period                           | \$13.06              | \$11.31       | \$6.46          | \$12.92        | \$11.11             |
| <b>Total Return<sup>(4)</sup></b>                        | <b>17.24%</b>        | <b>77.02%</b> | <b>(47.60)%</b> | <b>20.17%</b>  | <b>11.74%</b>       |
| SUPPLEMENTAL DATA AND RATIOS:                            |                      |               |                 |                |                     |
| Net assets, in thousands, end of period                  | \$1,614,849          | \$1,368,577   | \$307,832       | \$686,989      | \$451,651           |
| Ratio to average net assets of: <sup>(5)</sup>           |                      |               |                 |                |                     |
| Expenses, net of reimbursements and credits              | 0.72% <sup>(6)</sup> | 0.72%         | 0.76%           | 0.72%          | 0.77%               |
| Expenses, before reimbursements and credits              | 0.72%                | 0.72%         | 0.76%           | 0.72%          | 0.77%               |
| Net investment income, net of reimbursements and credits | 1.38% <sup>(6)</sup> | 1.07%         | 2.14%           | 1.45%          | 1.23%               |
| Net investment income, before reimbursements and credits | 1.38%                | 1.07%         | 2.14%           | 1.45%          | 1.23%               |
| Portfolio Turnover Rate                                  | 40.61%               | 13.07%        | 29.68%          | 11.32%         | 16.23%              |

(1) Formerly known as Emerging Markets Equity Fund.

(2) Commenced investment operations on April 25, 2006.

(3) Distributions to shareholders from net investment income include amounts relating to foreign currency transactions which are treated as ordinary income for federal income tax purposes.

(4) Assumes investment at net asset value at the beginning of the period, reinvestment of all dividends and distributions, and a complete redemption of the investment at net asset value at the end of the period. Total return is not annualized for periods less than one year.

(5) Annualized for periods less than one year.

(6) The net expenses and net investment income ratios include additional reimbursements of advisory fees incurred in connection with the investment of uninvested cash in affiliated money market funds of approximately \$8,000, which represents less than 0.005% of average net assets for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2011. Absent the additional reimbursements, net investment income and reimbursements would have been decreased by a corresponding amount.

## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

## GLOBAL REAL ESTATE INDEX FUND

| Selected per share data                                  | 2011                 | 2010          | 2009            | 2008            | 2007 <sup>(1)</sup> |
|--|----------------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| <b>Net Asset Value, Beginning of Period</b>              | <b>\$7.37</b>        | <b>\$4.14</b> | <b>\$10.17</b>  | <b>\$12.79</b>  | <b>\$10.00</b>      |
| INCOME (LOSS) FROM INVESTMENT OPERATIONS:                |                      |               |                 |                 |                     |
| Net investment income                                    | 0.17                 | 0.17          | 0.34            | 0.29            | 0.15                |
| Net realized and unrealized gains (losses)               | 1.10                 | 3.23          | (6.08)          | (2.58)          | 2.77                |
| Total from Investment Operations                         | 1.27                 | 3.40          | (5.74)          | (2.29)          | 2.92                |
| LESS DISTRIBUTIONS PAID:                                 |                      |               |                 |                 |                     |
| From net investment income <sup>(2)</sup>                | (0.17)               | (0.17)        | (0.28)          | (0.25)          | (0.12)              |
| From net realized gains                                  | —                    | —             | (0.01)          | (0.08)          | (0.01)              |
| Total Distributions Paid                                 | (0.17)               | (0.17)        | (0.29)          | (0.33)          | (0.13)              |
| Net Asset Value, End of Period                           | \$8.47               | \$7.37        | \$4.14          | \$10.17         | \$12.79             |
| <b>Total Return<sup>(3)</sup></b>                        | <b>17.52%</b>        | <b>82.69%</b> | <b>(57.38)%</b> | <b>(18.01)%</b> | <b>29.35%</b>       |
| SUPPLEMENTAL DATA AND RATIOS:                            |                      |               |                 |                 |                     |
| Net assets, in thousands, end of period                  | \$651,181            | \$496,724     | \$235,067       | \$1,050,642     | \$783,787           |
| Ratio to average net assets of: <sup>(4)</sup>           |                      |               |                 |                 |                     |
| Expenses, net of reimbursements and credits              | 0.65% <sup>(5)</sup> | 0.65%         | 0.65%           | 0.65%           | 0.65%               |
| Expenses, before reimbursements and credits              | 0.74%                | 0.75%         | 0.74%           | 0.72%           | 0.77%               |
| Net investment income, net of reimbursements and credits | 2.01% <sup>(5)</sup> | 2.64%         | 3.74%           | 2.73%           | 2.27%               |
| Net investment income, before reimbursements and credits | 1.92%                | 2.54%         | 3.65%           | 2.66%           | 2.15%               |
| Portfolio Turnover Rate                                  | 4.56%                | 21.50%        | 38.23%          | 25.48%          | 8.42%               |

(1) Commenced investment operations on July 26, 2006.

(2) Distributions to shareholders from net investment income include amounts relating to foreign currency transactions which are treated as ordinary income for federal income tax purposes.

(3) Assumes investment at net asset value at the beginning of the period, reinvestment of all dividends and distributions, and a complete redemption of the investment at net asset value at the end of the period. Total return is not annualized for periods less than one year.

(4) Annualized for periods less than one year.

(5) The net expenses and net investment income ratios include additional reimbursements of advisory fees incurred in connection with the investment of uninvested cash in affiliated money market funds of approximately \$13,000, which represents less than 0.005% of average net assets for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2011. Absent the additional reimbursements, net investment income and reimbursements would have been decreased by a corresponding amount.

FOR THE FISCAL YEARS OR PERIOD ENDED MARCH 31,

## GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY INDEX FUND

| Selected per share data                                  | 2011                 | 2010          | 2009            | 2008 <sup>(1)</sup>  |
|--|----------------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| <b>Net Asset Value, Beginning of Period</b>              | <b>\$8.53</b>        | <b>\$5.62</b> | <b>\$9.98</b>   | <b>\$10.00</b>       |
| INCOME (LOSS) FROM INVESTMENT OPERATIONS:                |                      |               |                 |                      |
| Net investment income                                    | 0.14                 | 0.12          | 0.09            | 0.02                 |
| Net realized and unrealized gains (losses)               | 0.83                 | 2.91          | (4.36)          | (0.04)               |
| Total from Investment Operations                         | 0.97                 | 3.03          | (4.27)          | (0.02)               |
| LESS DISTRIBUTIONS PAID:                                 |                      |               |                 |                      |
| From net investment income <sup>(2)</sup>                | (0.13)               | (0.12)        | (0.09)          | —                    |
| Total Distributions Paid                                 | (0.13)               | (0.12)        | (0.09)          | —                    |
| Net Asset Value, End of Period                           | \$9.37               | \$8.53        | \$5.62          | \$9.98               |
| <b>Total Return<sup>(3)</sup></b>                        | <b>11.49%</b>        | <b>53.91%</b> | <b>(42.89)%</b> | <b>(0.20)%</b>       |
| SUPPLEMENTAL DATA AND RATIOS:                            |                      |               |                 |                      |
| Net assets, in thousands, end of period                  | \$99,201             | \$72,981      | \$33,738        | \$21,216             |
| Ratio to average net assets of: <sup>(4)</sup>           |                      |               |                 |                      |
| Expenses, net of reimbursements and credits              | 0.65% <sup>(5)</sup> | 0.65%         | 0.65%           | 0.65%                |
| Expenses, before reimbursements and credits              | 0.91%                | 1.01%         | 1.23%           | 3.84% <sup>(6)</sup> |
| Net investment income, net of reimbursements and credits | 1.72% <sup>(5)</sup> | 1.80%         | 2.35%           | 3.66% <sup>(6)</sup> |
| Net investment income, before reimbursements and credits | 1.46%                | 1.44%         | 1.77%           | 0.47% <sup>(6)</sup> |
| Portfolio Turnover Rate                                  | 28.77%               | 7.36%         | 17.55%          | 0.33%                |

(1) Commenced investment operations on March 5, 2008.

(2) Distributions to shareholders from net investment income include amounts relating to foreign currency transactions which are treated as ordinary income for federal income tax purposes.

(3) Assumes investment at net asset value at the beginning of the period, reinvestment of all dividends and distributions, and a complete redemption of the investment at net asset value at the end of the period. Total return is not annualized for periods less than one year.

(4) Annualized for periods less than one year.

(5) The net expenses and net investment income ratios include additional reimbursements of advisory fees incurred in connection with the investment of uninvested cash in affiliated money market funds of approximately \$4,000, which represents less than 0.005% of average net assets for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2011. Absent the additional reimbursements, net investment income and reimbursements would have been decreased by a corresponding amount.

(6) As the Fund commenced investment operations on March 5, 2008, annualized gross expenses and net investment income ratios may not be reflective of amounts that an investor should expect on an annual basis prospectively.

## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

## INTERNATIONAL EQUITY INDEX FUND

| Selected per share data                                  | 2011                 | 2010          | 2009            | 2008           | 2007           |
|--|----------------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Net Asset Value, Beginning of Year</b>                | <b>\$10.09</b>       | <b>\$6.70</b> | <b>\$13.02</b>  | <b>\$13.92</b> | <b>\$12.04</b> |
| INCOME (LOSS) FROM INVESTMENT OPERATIONS:                |                      |               |                 |                |                |
| Net investment income                                    | 0.23                 | 0.19          | 0.29            | 0.36           | 0.35           |
| Net realized and unrealized gains (losses)               | 0.77                 | 3.39          | (6.31)          | (0.76)         | 2.04           |
| Total from Investment Operations                         | 1.00                 | 3.58          | (6.02)          | (0.40)         | 2.39           |
| LESS DISTRIBUTIONS PAID:                                 |                      |               |                 |                |                |
| From net investment income <sup>(1)</sup>                | (0.21)               | (0.19)        | (0.30)          | (0.34)         | (0.32)         |
| From net realized gains                                  | —                    | —             | —               | (0.16)         | (0.19)         |
| Total Distributions Paid                                 | (0.21)               | (0.19)        | (0.30)          | (0.50)         | (0.51)         |
| Net Asset Value, End of Year                             | \$10.88              | \$10.09       | \$6.70          | \$13.02        | \$13.92        |
| <b>Total Return<sup>(2)</sup></b>                        | <b>9.96%</b>         | <b>53.57%</b> | <b>(46.49)%</b> | <b>(3.10)%</b> | <b>20.05%</b>  |
| SUPPLEMENTAL DATA AND RATIOS:                            |                      |               |                 |                |                |
| Net assets, in thousands, end of year                    | \$1,693,014          | \$1,538,065   | \$828,342       | \$1,672,952    | \$1,499,877    |
| Ratio to average net assets of:                          |                      |               |                 |                |                |
| Expenses, net of reimbursements and credits              | 0.45% <sup>(3)</sup> | 0.45%         | 0.45%           | 0.45%          | 0.45%          |
| Expenses, before reimbursements and credits              | 0.62%                | 0.61%         | 0.62%           | 0.62%          | 0.63%          |
| Net investment income, net of reimbursements and credits | 2.32% <sup>(3)</sup> | 2.37%         | 3.16%           | 2.27%          | 2.31%          |
| Net investment income, before reimbursements and credits | 2.15%                | 2.21%         | 2.99%           | 2.10%          | 2.13%          |
| Portfolio Turnover Rate                                  | 8.41%                | 13.38%        | 20.29%          | 7.18%          | 7.49%          |

- (1) Distributions to shareholders from net investment income include amounts relating to foreign currency transactions which are treated as ordinary income for federal income tax purposes.
- (2) Assumes investment at net asset value at the beginning of the year, reinvestment of all dividends and distributions, and a complete redemption of the investment at net asset value at the end of the year.
- (3) The net expenses and net investment income ratios include additional reimbursements of advisory fees incurred in connection with the investment of uninvested cash in affiliated money market funds of approximately \$34,000, which represents less than 0.005% of average net assets for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2011. Absent the additional reimbursements, net investment income and reimbursements would have been decreased by a corresponding amount.

FOR THE FISCAL YEARS ENDED MARCH 31,

## MID CAP INDEX FUND

| Selected per share data                                  | 2011                 | 2010          | 2009            | 2008           | 2007           |
|--|----------------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Net Asset Value, Beginning of Year</b>                | <b>\$10.42</b>       | <b>\$6.44</b> | <b>\$10.86</b>  | <b>\$12.41</b> | <b>\$11.94</b> |
| INCOME (LOSS) FROM INVESTMENT OPERATIONS:                |                      |               |                 |                |                |
| Net investment income                                    | 0.10                 | 0.12          | 0.15            | 0.16           | 0.20           |
| Net realized and unrealized gains (losses)               | 2.65                 | 3.98          | (4.08)          | (1.00)         | 0.75           |
| Total from Investment Operations                         | 2.75                 | 4.10          | (3.93)          | (0.84)         | 0.95           |
| LESS DISTRIBUTIONS PAID:                                 |                      |               |                 |                |                |
| From net investment income                               | (0.10)               | (0.12)        | (0.13)          | (0.12)         | (0.14)         |
| From net realized gains                                  | —                    | —             | (0.36)          | (0.59)         | (0.34)         |
| Total Distributions Paid                                 | (0.10)               | (0.12)        | (0.49)          | (0.71)         | (0.48)         |
| Net Asset Value, End of Year                             | \$13.07              | \$10.42       | \$6.44          | \$10.86        | \$12.41        |
| <b>Total Return<sup>(1)</sup></b>                        | <b>26.46%</b>        | <b>63.81%</b> | <b>(36.39)%</b> | <b>(7.23)%</b> | <b>8.15%</b>   |
| SUPPLEMENTAL DATA AND RATIOS:                            |                      |               |                 |                |                |
| Net assets, in thousands, end of year                    | \$519,014            | \$325,342     | \$203,248       | \$366,855      | \$315,551      |
| Ratio to average net assets of:                          |                      |               |                 |                |                |
| Expenses, net of reimbursements and credits              | 0.29% <sup>(2)</sup> | 0.30%         | 0.30%           | 0.30%          | 0.30%          |
| Expenses, before reimbursements and credits              | 0.53%                | 0.52%         | 0.51%           | 0.51%          | 0.52%          |
| Net investment income, net of reimbursements and credits | 1.02% <sup>(2)</sup> | 1.29%         | 1.49%           | 1.03%          | 1.38%          |
| Net investment income, before reimbursements and credits | 0.78%                | 1.07%         | 1.28%           | 0.82%          | 1.16%          |
| Portfolio Turnover Rate                                  | 13.01%               | 29.69%        | 36.66%          | 21.73%         | 23.20%         |

(1) Assumes investment at net asset value at the beginning of the year, reinvestment of all dividends and distributions, and a complete redemption of the investment at net asset value at the end of the year.

(2) The net expenses and net investment income ratios include additional reimbursements of advisory fees incurred in connection with the investment of uninvested cash in affiliated money market funds of approximately \$21,000, which represents 0.01% of average net assets for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2011. Absent the additional reimbursements, net investment income and reimbursements would have been decreased by a corresponding amount.

## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

## SMALL CAP INDEX FUND

| Selected per share data   | 2011                 | 2010          | 2009            | 2008            | 2007           |
|---|----------------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <b>Net Asset Value, Beginning of Year</b>                         | <b>\$7.46</b>        | <b>\$4.63</b> | <b>\$8.60</b>   | <b>\$10.93</b>  | <b>\$11.98</b> |
| INCOME (LOSS) FROM INVESTMENT OPERATIONS:                         |                      |               |                 |                 |                |
| Net investment income   | 0.06                 | 0.06          | 0.10            | 0.13            | 0.10           |
| Net realized and unrealized gains (losses)                        | 1.82                 | 2.83          | (3.24)          | (1.51)          | 0.52           |
| Total from Investment Operations                                  | 1.88                 | 2.89          | (3.14)          | (1.38)          | 0.62           |
| LESS DISTRIBUTIONS PAID:  |                      |               |                 |                 |                |
| From net investment income  | (0.06)               | (0.06)        | (0.10)          | (0.13)          | (0.09)         |
| From net realized gains   | —                    | —             | (0.73)          | (0.82)          | (1.58)         |
| Total Distributions Paid  | (0.06)               | (0.06)        | (0.83)          | (0.95)          | (1.67)         |
| Net Asset Value, End of Year                                      | \$9.28               | \$7.46        | \$4.63          | \$8.60          | \$10.93        |
| <b>Total Return<sup>(1)</sup></b>                                 | <b>25.29%</b>        | <b>62.55%</b> | <b>(37.67)%</b> | <b>(13.36)%</b> | <b>5.51%</b>   |
| SUPPLEMENTAL DATA AND RATIOS:                                     |                      |               |                 |                 |                |
| Net assets, in thousands, end of year                             | \$442,254            | \$273,798     | \$154,988       | \$293,464       | \$372,679      |
| Ratio to average net assets of:                                   |                      |               |                 |                 |                |
| Expenses, net of waivers, reimbursements and credits              | 0.34% <sup>(2)</sup> | 0.35%         | 0.35%           | 0.35%           | 0.35%          |
| Expenses, before waivers, reimbursements and credits              | 0.55%                | 0.54%         | 0.54%           | 0.51%           | 0.57%          |
| Net investment income, net of waivers, reimbursements and credits | 0.85% <sup>(2)</sup> | 0.94%         | 1.21%           | 1.12%           | 0.70%          |
| Net investment income, before waivers, reimbursements and credits | 0.64%                | 0.75%         | 1.02%           | 0.96%           | 0.48%          |
| Portfolio Turnover Rate   | 13.55%               | 21.34%        | 29.57%          | 19.38%          | 21.77%         |

(1) Assumes investment at net asset value at the beginning of the year, reinvestment of all dividends and distributions, and a complete redemption of the investment at net asset value at the end of the year.

(2) The net expenses and net investment income ratios include additional reimbursements of advisory fees incurred in connection with the investment of uninvested cash in affiliated money market funds of approximately \$26,000, which represents 0.01% of average net assets for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2011. Absent the additional reimbursements, net investment income and reimbursements would have been decreased by a corresponding amount.

## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

FOR THE FISCAL YEARS ENDED MARCH 31,

## STOCK INDEX FUND

| Selected per share data   | 2011                 | 2010          | 2009            | 2008           | 2007           |
|---|----------------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Net Asset Value, Beginning of Year</b>                         | <b>\$14.47</b>       | <b>\$9.85</b> | <b>\$16.33</b>  | <b>\$17.53</b> | <b>\$15.98</b> |
| INCOME (LOSS) FROM INVESTMENT OPERATIONS:                         |                      |               |                 |                |                |
| Net investment income   | 0.26                 | 0.23          | 0.29            | 0.31           | 0.29           |
| Net realized and unrealized gains (losses)                        | 1.94                 | 4.62          | (6.48)          | (1.21)         | 1.54           |
| Total from Investment Operations                                  | 2.20                 | 4.85          | (6.19)          | (0.90)         | 1.83           |
| LESS DISTRIBUTIONS PAID:  |                      |               |                 |                |                |
| From net investment income  | (0.26)               | (0.23)        | (0.29)          | (0.30)         | (0.28)         |
| Total Distributions Paid  | (0.26)               | (0.23)        | (0.29)          | (0.30)         | (0.28)         |
| Net Asset Value, End of Year                                      | \$16.41              | \$14.47       | \$9.85          | \$16.33        | \$17.53        |
| <b>Total Return<sup>(1)</sup></b>                                 | <b>15.40%</b>        | <b>49.46%</b> | <b>(38.25)%</b> | <b>(5.27)%</b> | <b>11.57%</b>  |
| SUPPLEMENTAL DATA AND RATIOS:                                     |                      |               |                 |                |                |
| Net assets, in thousands, end of year                             | \$2,233,947          | \$1,526,494   | \$855,009       | \$1,103,216    | \$636,236      |
| Ratio to average net assets of:                                   |                      |               |                 |                |                |
| Expenses, net of waivers, reimbursements and credits              | 0.24% <sup>(2)</sup> | 0.25%         | 0.25%           | 0.25%          | 0.25%          |
| Expenses, before waivers, reimbursements and credits              | 0.39%                | 0.39%         | 0.39%           | 0.41%          | 0.41%          |
| Net investment income, net of waivers, reimbursements and credits | 1.85% <sup>(2)</sup> | 1.84%         | 2.25%           | 1.84%          | 1.76%          |
| Net investment income, before waivers, reimbursements and credits | 1.70%                | 1.70%         | 2.11%           | 1.68%          | 1.60%          |
| Portfolio Turnover Rate   | 4.35%                | 11.85%        | 4.22%           | 4.57%          | 3.25%          |

(1) Assumes investment at net asset value at the beginning of the year, reinvestment of all dividends and distributions, and a complete redemption of the investment at net asset value at the end of the year.

(2) The net expenses and net investment income ratios include additional reimbursements of advisory fees incurred in connection with the investment of uninvested cash in affiliated money market funds of approximately \$113,000, which represents 0.01% of average net assets for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2011. Absent the additional reimbursements, net investment income and reimbursements would have been decreased by a corresponding amount.

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

**FOR MORE INFORMATION****ANNUAL/SEMIANNUAL REPORTS AND STATEMENT OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Additional information about the Funds' investments is available in the Funds' annual and semiannual reports to shareholders. In the Funds' annual report, you will find a discussion of the market conditions and investment strategies that significantly affected the Funds' performance during their last fiscal year.

Additional information about the Funds and their policies also is available in the Funds' SAI. The SAI is incorporated by reference into this Prospectus (and is legally considered part of this Prospectus).

The Funds' annual and semiannual reports and the SAI are available free upon request by calling the Northern Funds Center at 800-595-9111 or by sending an email request to: [northern-funds@ntrs.com](mailto:northern-funds@ntrs.com). The SAI and other information are available from a financial intermediary (such as a broker-dealer or bank) through which the Funds' shares may be purchased or sold.

**TO OBTAIN OTHER INFORMATION AND FOR SHAREHOLDER INQUIRIES:****BY TELEPHONE**

Call 800-595-9111

**BY MAIL**

Northern Funds  
P.O. Box 75986  
Chicago, IL 60675-5986

**ON THE INTERNET**

The Funds' documents are available online and may be downloaded from:

- The EDGAR Database on the SEC's Web site at [sec.gov](http://sec.gov) (text-only).
- Northern Funds' Web site at [northernfunds.com](http://northernfunds.com).

You may review and obtain copies of Northern Funds' documents by visiting the SEC's Public Reference Room in Washington, D.C. You also may obtain copies of Northern Funds' documents by sending your request and a duplicating fee to the SEC's Public Reference Section, Washington, D.C. 20549-1520 or by electronic request to: [publicinfo@sec.gov](mailto:publicinfo@sec.gov). Information on the operation of the Public Reference Room may be obtained by calling the SEC at 202-551-8090.