

Fund Manager Commentary

As of 03-31-2026

Fund Highlights

- Primarily invests in income producing securities including corporate debt securities, mortgage-related securities, asset backed securities, government securities (both U.S. government securities and foreign sovereign debt), public equities and preferred stocks
- Invests at least 50% of the portfolio in investment-grade rated securities
- Expanded opportunity set provides the flexibility to react to market dislocations
- Broadly diversified by sector, resulting in multiple sources of return potential and low correlation to traditional asset classes
- Duration management is used as a risk mitigation tool; seeks to avoid taking large duration positions due to the difficulty in predicting interest rates
- Active management and security selection are focused on building a high conviction portfolio

Market Recap

The year began with a solid U.S. economic backdrop, as inflation continued to ease toward the Federal Reserve's (Fed) target and consumer spending remained resilient, supported by favorable fiscal dynamics. However, this constructive environment was quickly disrupted by geopolitical tensions, as conflict involving the U.S., Israel, and Iran drove a sharp spike in oil prices due to disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz. The resulting surge in energy costs, most visibly at the gas pump, raised concerns about broader inflationary pressures and renewed risks to global supply chains, with potential impacts likely to persist beyond the near term.

This environment has complicated the Fed's policy outlook, as higher energy-driven inflation has tempered expectations for rate cuts despite mixed labor market signals. Markets have remained relatively resilient, with equities stabilizing after initial volatility and ending the quarter modestly lower, while credit spreads widened slightly but remain historically tight. In rates, reduced expectations for easing pushed yields higher across the curve, with the 10-year Treasury ending near 4.3%.

Portfolio Review

The Touchstone Strategic Income Fund (Class A Shares, Load Waived) underperformed its benchmark, the Bloomberg U.S. Aggregate Bond Index, for the quarter ended March 31, 2026. Security selection was a positive contributor to relative performance, led by strong results across corporates, securitized assets, and emerging markets. Within corporates, an overweight to Energy, particularly Midstream, was the primary contributor. In securitized, exposure to non-agency sectors (asset backed securities (ABS), commercial mortgage backed securities (CMBS),

and residential mortgage backed securities (RMBS) added value, while in emerging markets, an overweight to Latin American corporates supported returns. In contrast, sector allocation modestly detracted, primarily due to an overweight to high yield corporates as spreads widened.

Interest rate positioning also detracted from performance. The Fund maintained a shorter duration than the benchmark and adjusted tactically throughout the quarter, but rising short-term rates outpaced longer-term increases, creating a headwind. While yield curve positioning contributed modestly and partially offset this impact, overall rate management lagged in a volatile environment.

Fund positioning remained relatively stable, with continued emphasis on bottom-up security selection and a gradual reduction in high yield exposure. Duration was actively managed, averaging 5.1 years and ending at 5.8 years, below the benchmark's 6.0 years. The Fund also increased exposure to real yields via Treasury Inflation Protected Securities and shifted curve positioning from a flattening bias early in the quarter to a steeper stance later, ultimately finishing with a neutral curve posture.

Outlook and Conclusion

The Fund maintains a modest overweight to risk at approximately 30% of its risk budget, reflecting still-expensive valuations and elevated macro uncertainty. Positioning emphasizes flexibility, allowing the team to add risk opportunistically as more attractive entry points emerge. Sector allocations were largely unchanged, with investment grade exposure focused on high-quality financials and utilities, securitized exposure tilted toward non-agency sectors (ABS, RMBS, CMBS), and emerging markets concentrated in lower-rated, Latin American opportunities.

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High yield exposure was modestly reduced, with a continued preference for higher-quality, diversified issuers while awaiting better valuations.

Duration was actively managed, increasing from approximately 5.0 years to 5.8 years over the quarter and averaging 5.1 years.

The Fund is currently targeting a 5.50–5.75 year range with a bias toward longer real yields, while maintaining a largely neutral yield curve position. Although rate volatility had been subdued, it reemerged late in the quarter, and the team expects continued shifts in rate expectations driven by economic data

and geopolitical developments, creating opportunities for tactical adjustments.

Overall, the Fund is positioned to navigate an environment of moderate growth and elevated uncertainty. A modest overweight to credit remains appropriate given tight spreads and macro risks, including trade policy, monetary policy, and geopolitical tensions. If conditions remain stable, the Fund should benefit from its higher spread exposure and security selection; if markets weaken, it retains flexibility to add risk at more attractive levels while using duration management to capitalize on interest rate volatility.



Fund Facts

Class	Inception Date	Symbol	CUSIP	Annual Fund Operating Expense Ratio	
				Total	Net
A Shares	11/01/93	TQPAX	89154M306	1.14%	0.96%
C Shares	03/31/94	TQPCX	89154M405	2.00%	1.69%
Y Shares	01/29/15	TQPYX	89154M504	0.91%	0.67%
Inst Shares	07/19/21	TQPIX	89154M603	0.89%	0.62%
Total Fund Assets \$302.4 Million					

Expense ratio is annualized. Data as of the current prospectus. Touchstone Advisors has contractually agreed to waive a portion of its fees and/or reimburse certain Fund expenses in order to limit certain annual fund operating expenses (excluding Acquired Fund Fees and Expenses and other expenses, if any) to 0.95% for Class A Shares, 1.68% for Class C Shares, 0.66% for Class Y Shares, and 0.61% for Class Inst Shares. These expense limitations will remain in effect until at least 01/29/27.

Share class availability differs by firm.

Annualized Total Returns

	1Q26	YTD	1 Year	3 Year	5 Year	10 Year	Inception
Excluding Max Sales Charge							
A Shares	-0.09%	-0.09%	6.70%	7.50%	3.03%	3.93%	5.52%
C Shares	0.03%	0.03%	5.89%	6.80%	2.31%	3.22%	4.83%
Y Shares	-0.02%	-0.02%	7.00%	7.80%	3.31%	4.18%	5.60%
Inst Shares	0.30%	0.30%	7.10%	8.03%	3.40%	4.11%	5.58%
Benchmark	-0.05%	-0.05%	4.35%	3.63%	0.31%	1.70%	4.35%
Including Max Sales Charge							
A Shares	-3.34%	-3.34%	3.23%	6.32%	2.35%	3.59%	5.41%
C Shares	-0.96%	-0.96%	4.89%	6.80%	2.31%	3.22%	5.05%

Benchmark - Bloomberg U.S. Aggregate Bond Index

Max 3.25% sales charge for Class A Shares and 1% Contingent Deferred Sales Charge for Class C Shares held less than 1 year.

The Bloomberg U.S. Aggregate Bond Index is an unmanaged index comprised of U.S. investment grade, fixed rate bond market securities including government, government agency, corporate and mortgage backed securities between one and ten years.

The benchmark index mentioned is an unmanaged statistical composite of stock or bond market performance. Investing in an index is not possible. Index returns do not reflect any fees, expenses or sales charges.

Performance data quoted represents past performance, which is no guarantee of future results. The investment return and principal value of an investment in the Fund will fluctuate so that an investor's shares, when redeemed, may be worth more or less than their original cost. Current performance may be higher or lower than performance data given. **For performance information current to the most recent month-end, visit [TouchstoneInvestments.com/mutual-funds](https://www.touchstoneinvestments.com/mutual-funds).** From time to time, the investment advisor may waive some fees and/or reimburse expenses, which if not waived or reimbursed, will lower performance. Performance by share class will differ due to differences in class expenses. Returns assume reinvestment of all distributions. Returns are not annualized for periods less than one year.

The performance presented combines the performance of the oldest share class from the Fund's inception with the performance since the inception date of each share class.

Please consider the investment objectives, risks, charges and expenses of the Fund carefully before investing. The prospectus and the summary prospectus contain this and other information about the Fund. To obtain a prospectus or a summary prospectus, contact your financial professional or download and/or request one at [TouchstoneInvestments.com/resources](https://www.touchstoneinvestments.com/resources) or call Touchstone at 800.638.8194. Please read the prospectus and/or summary prospectus carefully before investing.

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A registered broker-dealer and member FINRA and SIPC

A member of Western & Southern Financial Group

Not FDIC Insured | No Bank Guarantee | May Lose Value

A Word About Risk

The Fund invests in fixed-income securities which can experience reduced liquidity during certain market events, lose their value as interest rates rise and are subject to credit risk which is the risk of deterioration in the financial condition of an issuer and/or general economic conditions that can cause the issuer to not make timely payments of principal and interest also causing the securities to decline in value and an investor can lose principal. When interest rates rise, the price of debt securities generally falls. Longer term securities are generally more volatile. The Fund invests in non-investment grade debt securities which are considered speculative with respect to the issuers' ability to make timely payments of interest and principal, may lack liquidity and has had more frequent and larger price changes than other debt securities. The Fund invests in mortgage-backed securities and asset-backed securities which are subject to the risks of prepayment, defaults, changing interest rates and at times, the financial condition of the issuer. The Fund invests in investment grade debt securities which may be downgraded by an NRSRO to below investment grade status. The Fund invests in U.S. government agency securities which are neither issued nor guaranteed by the U.S. Treasury and are not guaranteed against price movements due to changing interest rates. The Advisor engages a sub-advisor to make investment decisions for the Fund's portfolio; it may be unable to identify and retain a sub-advisor who achieves superior investment returns relative to other similar sub-advisors. Events in the U.S. and global financial markets, including actions taken to stimulate or stabilize economic growth may at times result in unusually high market volatility, which could negatively impact Fund performance and cause it to experience illiquidity, shareholder redemptions, or other potentially adverse effects. Banks and financial services companies could suffer losses if interest rates rise or economic conditions deteriorate. The Fund invests in equities which are subject to market volatility and loss. The Fund invests in preferred stocks which are relegated below bonds for payment should the issuer be liquidated. If interest rates rise, the fixed dividend on preferred stocks may be less attractive, causing their price to decline. The Fund invests in foreign securities which carry the associated risks of economic and political instability, market liquidity, currency volatility and accounting standards that differ from those of U.S. markets and may offer less protection to investors. The Fund invests in emerging markets securities which are more likely to experience turmoil or rapid changes in market or economic conditions than developed countries. The Fund invests in sovereign debt securities which are issued by foreign governments whose respective economies could have an important effect on their ability or willingness to service their debt which could affect the value of the securities. The Fund invests in derivatives such as futures contracts. Derivatives can be highly volatile, illiquid and difficult to value, subject to counterparty and leverage risks and there is risk that changes in the value of a derivative held by the Fund will not correlate with the Fund's other investments. Gains or losses from speculative positions in a derivative may be much greater than the original cost and potential losses may be substantial. The Fund invests in mortgage dollar rolls which involve increased risk and volatility, as the securities the Fund is required to repurchase may be worth less than the securities that the Fund originally held. The Fund may experience higher portfolio turnover which may lead to increased fund expenses, lower investment returns and higher short-term capital gains taxable to shareholders. The Fund invests in repurchase agreements which are considered loans by the Fund and may suffer a loss of principal and interest in the event of counterparty defaults. Current and future portfolio holdings are subject to change.



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