

# First Trust Vest SMID Rising Dividend Achievers Target Income ETF • SDVD

Interim Management Report of Fund Performance June 30, 2025



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# First Trust Vest SMID Rising Dividend Achievers Target Income ETF (the "First Trust ETF")

This interim management report of fund performance contains financial highlights but does not contain either the interim financial report or annual financial statements of the First Trust ETF. You can get a copy of the interim financial report or annual financial statements at your request, and at no cost, by calling 1-877-622-5552, by writing to us at FT Portfolios Canada Co., 40 King Street West, Suite 5102, Scotia Plaza, Box 312, Toronto, Ontario M5H 3Y2 or by visiting our web site at www.firsttrust.ca or SEDAR+ at www.sedarplus.com.

Securityholders may also contact us using one of these methods to request a copy of the investment fund's proxy voting policies and procedures, proxy voting disclosure record, or quarterly portfolio disclosure.

#### **Forward Looking Statements**

This document may contain forward-looking statements relating to anticipated future events, results, circumstances, performance or expectations that are not historical facts but instead represent beliefs regarding future events. By their nature, forward-looking statements are based on assumptions and are subject to inherent risks and uncertainties. There is significant risk that forward-looking statements will not prove to be accurate. Readers of this document should not place undue reliance on forward-looking statements as a number of factors could cause actual future results, conditions, actions or events to differ materially from the expectations, estimates or intentions expressed or implied in the forward-looking statements. These factors include but are not limited to market and general economic conditions, interest rates, foreign currency exchange rates, the extent of industry sector exposure, the performance of the securities of the issuers held in the portfolio and regulatory developments and the risks detailed in the First Trust ETF's prospectus. The Manager does not undertake and specifically disclaims any intention or obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.

### Investment Objective and Strategy

The fundamental investment objective of **First Trust Vest SMID Rising Dividend Achievers Target Income ETF** (the "First Trust ETF") is to provide Unitholders with current income with a secondary objective of providing capital appreciation by investing primarily in a portfolio of equity securities included in the Nasdaq US Small Mid Cap Rising Dividend Achievers™ Index as well as listed options on the Russell 2000® Index or exchange-traded funds that track the Russell 2000® Index.

To achieve its investment objectives, the First Trust ETF will invest all or substantially all of its assets in FT Vest SMID Rising Dividend Achievers Target Income ETF (the "Underlying Fund"). The Underlying Fund seeks to achieve its investment objectives by investing primarily in a portfolio of equity securities within the Index and by utilizing an option-strategy consisting of writing (selling) U.S. exchange-traded call options on the Russell 2000® Index or U.S.-listed ETFs that track the Russell 2000® Index. The Underlying Fund seeks to provide investors with a target income of approximately 8.0% (before fees and expenses) above the Russell 2000® Index annualized yield.

Although the First Trust ETF has two classes of units called "Units\*" and "Hedged Units", the First Trust ETF currently offers only Units on the Cboe CA with the symbol: SDVD.

\*The Hedged Units of the First Trust ETF were qualified for distribution by a prospectus dated October 7, 2024. As of the date of this management report of fund performance ("MRFP"), the First Trust ETF has not offered any Hedged Units to the public. No transactions or other activities have been undertaken by the First Trust ETF for the Hedged Units for the six-month period ended June 30, 2025. As such, no financial highlights or management discussion for the Units are included in this MRFP.

#### Risk

The risks associated with an investment in the First Trust ETF remain as discussed in the First Trust ETF's most recent prospectus. There have been no significant changes during the reporting period that affected the overall level of risk associated with the First Trust ETF.

### **Results of Operations**

#### General

The First Trust ETF's total net asset value as of June 30, 2025, was \$2,755,799 or \$18.37 per unit. The First Trust ETF's total net asset value as of December 31, 2024 was \$1,016,693 or \$20.33 per unit.

For the six-month period ended June 30, 2025, the First Trust ETF paid total cash distributions of \$0.7485 per unit. In addition, the First Trust ETF declared cash distributions of \$0.1225 per unit for record date of June 30, 2025, with payment date of July 8, 2025.

### Investment Performance

For the period ended June 30, 2025, the First Trust ETF returned -6.04% compared to the Russell 2000® Index (the benchmark) return of -6.82%. Unlike the benchmark, the First Trust ETF's return is net of fees and expenses.

The First Trust ETF's only holding, the Underlying Fund, held 184 equity securities as of June 30, 2025. The top ten equity holdings for the Underlying Fund accounted for 10.25% of the portfolio within the Underlying Fund.

The Underlying Fund performed roughly in line with the benchmark during the period. Overweight positions in Industrials and Financials contributed positively to performance, along with an underweight in Health Care. Stock selection within the Financials sector also contributed positively to performance. An overweight position in Consumer Discretionary and stock selection within Materials detracted from performance.

The Underlying Fund's top five stocks by contribution to return were Curtiss-Wright Corporation, Woodward, Inc., Comfort Systems USA, Inc., Northern Trust Corporation, and Perdoceo Education Corporation. The Underlying Fund's bottom five stocks by contribution to return were Steven Madden, Ltd., SM Energy Company, Robert Half Inc., Winnebago Industries, Inc., and Cactus, Inc.

The First Trust's ETF's exposure to the U.S. dollar detracted from its absolute performance during the period, as the U.S. dollar depreciated 5.31% against the Canadian dollar from December 31, 2024, to June 30, 2025.

### **Recent Developments**

U.S. small and mid-cap stocks finished the period lower following a volatile first half but rebounded sharply from lows amid optimism the U.S. will reach trade deals with its largest trading partners and the U.S. Federal Reserve will cut interest rates in the year's second half. The Russell 2000® Index returned -1.79% during the period, including dividends. However, the U.S. dollar depreciated sharply relative to the Canadian dollar, meaning the index returned -6.82% over the same period measured in Canadian dollars. The market sold off sharply in April after U.S. President Donald Trump announced wide-ranging tariffs, igniting a global trade war. The selloff briefly sent U.S. small and mid-cap stocks into a bear market. However, the market reversed as tariff tensions eased and inflation trended lower, helping to sustain expectations for rate cuts in the year's second half. So far, the U.S. Federal Reserve has held off on cutting interest rates this year on concerns that tariffs will rekindle inflation. Overall, the Russell 2000® Index finished the period trading at a 19.4 P/E multiple with a 1.50% dividend yield, similar to where it stood at the end of 2024. Corporate earnings growth was modest amid small and mid-caps during the period.

### **Related Party Transactions**

FT Portfolios Canada Co. is the Manager of the First Trust ETF and is a Canadian affiliate of First Trust Advisors L.P., the investment advisor (the "Advisor") of the First Trust ETF. Also, First Trust Capital Partners, LLC, an affiliate of the Manager, owns a 44.3% ownership interest (49.3% voting) in VestGroup Inc., the holding company of Vest Financial LLC, the sub-advisor to the First Trust ETF.

Pursuant to terms of the declaration of trust of the First Trust ETF, the Manager provides or arranges for all management, administrative and other services required by the First Trust ETF. The Manager receives a management fee from the First Trust ETF. For further details, please see "Management Fees".

The Manager has retained the Advisor to provide certain services to the First Trust ETF pursuant to an investment advisory agreement. The Advisor receives advisory fees from the Manager out of the management fee.

### Financial Highlights

The following tables show selected key financial information about the First Trust ETF and are intended to help you understand the First Trust ETF's financial performance for the six-month period ended June 30, 2025, and for the period ended December 31, 2024. This information is derived from the First Trust ETF's unaudited interim and audited annual financial statements.

### Net Asset Value per Unit

SDVD	2025	2024 <sup>(a)</sup>
Net asset value, beginning of period (1)	\$20.33	\$20.00 <sup>(b)</sup>
Increase (Decrease) from operations:		
Total revenue	0.66	0.30
Total expenses	(0.09)	(0.06)
Realized gains (losses) for the period	(4.99)	-
Unrealized gains (losses) for the period	(1.26)	0.36
Total increase (decrease) from operations <sup>(2)</sup>	\$(5.68)	\$0.60
Distributions:		
From income (excluding dividends)	(0.74)	(0.17)
From dividends	-	-
From capital gains	-	(80.0)
Return of capital	-	(0.09)
Total annual distributions <sup>(3)</sup>	\$(0.74)	\$(0.34)
Net asset value, end of period (4)	\$18.37	\$20.33

- (a) December 31, 2024 does not relate to the full year as the First Trust ETF commenced operations on November 5, 2024.
- (b) Seed capital
- (1) This information is provided as at June 30, 2025 and December 31, 2024 and is prepared under IFRS® Accounting Standards as issued by the International Accounting Standards Board ("IASB").
- (2) Net asset value and distributions are based on the actual number of units outstanding at the relevant time. The increase/decrease from operations is based on the weighted average number of units outstanding over the period.
- (3) Distributions were paid in cash or reinvested in additional units of the First Trust ETF, or both. Non-cash distributions are reinvested in additional units of the First Trust ETF and subsequently consolidated. Neither the number of units held by the unitholder, nor the net asset per unit of the First Trust ETF change as a result of any non-cash distributions.
- (4) This table is not intended to be a reconciliation of beginning to ending net asset value per unit.

### Ratios and Supplemental Data

SDVD	2025	2024
Net asset value (000's)	\$2,756	\$1,017
Number of units outstanding	150,000	50,000
Management expense ratio (1)	1.01%	1.02%
Management expense ratio before waivers or absorption	1.02%	1.03%
Trading expense ratio <sup>(2)</sup>	0.00%	0.28%
Portfolio turnover rate <sup>(3)</sup>	180.91%	0.00%

<sup>(1)</sup> Management expense ratio is based on total expenses (excluding commissions and other portfolio transaction costs) for the stated period, including the First Trust ETF's proportionate share of the MER of the Underlying Fund in which the First Trust ETF has invested, and is expressed as an annualized percentage of daily average net asset value during the period.

<sup>(2)</sup> The trading expense ratio represents total commissions and other portfolio transaction costs expressed as an annualized percentage of daily average net asset value during the period. This includes the First Trust ETF's proportionate share of the commissions of Underlying Fund in which the First Trust ETF has invested.

<sup>(3)</sup> The First Trust ETF's portfolio turnover rate indicates how actively the First Trust ETF's portfolio advisor manages its portfolio investments. A portfolio turnover rate of 100% is equivalent to the First Trust ETF buying and selling all of the securities in its portfolio once in the course of the period. The higher a First Trust ETF's portfolio turnover rate in a period, the greater the trading cost payable by the First Trust ETF in the period, and the greater the chance of an investor receiving taxable capital gains in the period. There is not necessarily a relationship between high turnover rate and the performance of a First Trust ETF.

### **Management Fees**

The First Trust ETF will pay the Manager a management fee of 0.15% based on the average daily NAV of the First Trust ETF. The management fee, plus applicable taxes including HST, will be accrued daily and paid monthly in arrears. The Manager may, from time to time in its discretion, waive all or a portion of the management fee charged at any given time.

The First Trust ETF's management fee will also bear the management fee of the Underlying Fund.

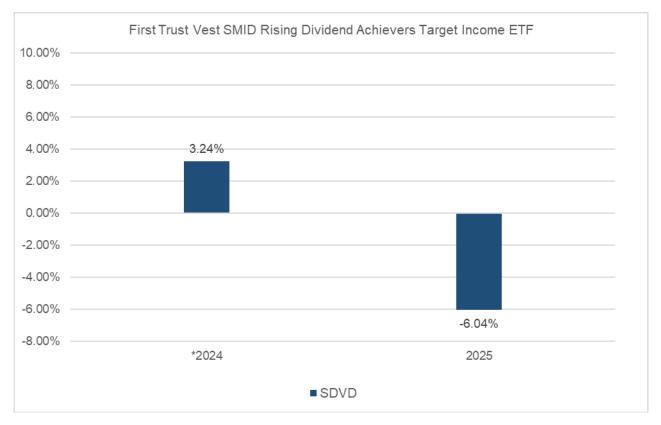
#### **Past Performance**

#### General

The past performance information shown assumes that all distributions made by the First Trust ETF in the periods shown were reinvested in additional securities of the First Trust ETF. The performance information does not take into account sales, redemption, distribution or other optional charges that would have reduced returns or performance. How the First Trust ETF has performed in the past does not necessarily indicate how it will perform in the future.

## Year by Year Returns

The bar chart below shows the First Trust ETF's performance for the six-month period ended June 30, 2025, and for the period from commencement of operations to December 31, 2024 and illustrates how the investment fund's performance has changed for the period.



\*First Trust ETF Commencement: November 5, 2024

## **Summary of Investment Portfolio**

The table below sets out the percentage (based on total net asset value) of the First Trust ETF's holdings as at June 30, 2025. This summary of portfolio holdings may change due to ongoing portfolio transactions of the First Trust ETF. Daily and quarterly updates are available at www.firsttrust.ca.

Holdings	% of ETF Total Net Asset Value
FT Vest SMID Rising Dividend Achievers Target Income ETF	99.70%
Cash and Cash Equivalents	0.79%
Other Assets, Less Liabilities	-0.49%
Total	100.00%

#### Portfolio Breakdown

The table below sets out the percentage (based on total net asset value) of the First Trust ETF's portfolio as at June 30, 2025.

Breakdown	% of ETF Total Net Asset Value
Exchange-Traded Fund	99.70%
Cash and Cash Equivalents	0.79%
Other Assets, Less Liabilities	-0.49%
Total	100.00%







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