

Christian Science cuts 125 headquarters jobs: Worst financial situation in a decade

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Faced with its worst financial situation in a decade, the Boston-based First Church of Christ, Scientist has undertaken a series of painful belt-tightening measures, including the elimination of 125 jobs over the past two months.

To close a deficit reported at \$8 million, church leaders have installed a new financial chief and slashed news budgets at the *Christian Science Monitor*. They have also stopped all tours of the mother church and at two houses where founder Mary Baker Eddy once lived.

Cutbacks became necessary in the aftermath of two major capital investment projects. One endeavor spent \$55 million to renovate sprawling church grounds in Boston's prestigious Back Bay section. Another steered \$50 million to renovations, construction and programming at the new, four-story Mary Baker Eddy Library, which opened in 2002.

In a statement on April 5, church treasurer Walter Jones defended recent capital investments. These initiatives "represent a profound strategic investment in the church and the community," Jones wrote in a letter to the editor of the *Boston Globe*.
-Religion News Service