Investment Weekly: A Series of Modest Betrayals

For the week ended August 21, 2026

Last week, America learned that a Fed staffer pointed out investors are receiving remarkably little extra compensation for owning stocks instead of bonds, and everyone immediately went back to talking about inflation. Very normal. Very fine.

- **The S&P 500 fell 1.43% and the Nasdaq lost 2.05% for the week.** The market keeps hearing "higher for longer" and has finally started asking follow-up questions. Utilities, industrials, and technology led the retreat, while health care and materials bucked the trend. Large caps beat small caps and value outperformed growth.
- **The Bloomberg U.S. Aggregate Bond Index inched down 0.1%.** Fixed income continues to answer the question, *"What if we could get stock-market disappointment, without all that unnecessary optimism?"*
- **The 10-year Treasury yield rose to 4.73% and the 30-year Treasury yield climbed to 5.27%.** If yields keep climbing like this, retirees may eventually stop pretending they own bonds strictly for diversification.
- **Gold rose 5.5%.** It's the investment equivalent of a flashlight in the kitchen drawer: you hope you won't need it, but you're glad it's there.
- **Crude oil rose 5.7% to about $87 per barrel.** Oil prices have the same energy as those old Nigerian prince scam emails, except there's no delete button. The ask just gets bigger every few months, and we're already on the hook.
- **The U.S. dollar weakened modestly** against the euro, pound, and yen.
- **The Fed's July meeting minutes (published on August 19) revealed something its July 29 statement conveniently skipped:** Fed staff told the Committee that the premium for owning stocks instead of bonds has shrunk to its thinnest margin since the dot-com bubble. This tidbit showed up in the minutes as a lone paragraph wedged between household debt vulnerabilities and a rundown of leverage at hedge funds and insurers, with no more visual weight than either.
- **Housing starts dropped 12.4% in July to 1.239 million,** well below expectations. America wants more homes, lower prices, and 3% mortgages—preferably in a walkable neighborhood with good schools. This order was placed sometime around 2020 and hasn't moved since; five years later, the tracking page still just says "received."
- **Pending home sales fell 2.3%,** versus expectations for a 0.3% increase. Buyers saw the asking price, calculated the mortgage payment, and returned to Zillow to admire homes as a form of digital fantasy sports.
- **Building permits rose 5.0% in July.** Builders are still planning projects. Actually building them is apparently a separate emotional journey.
- **Industrial production increased 0.2%,** slightly below expectations. U.S. factories are still expanding, just with the enthusiasm of someone attending a mandatory team-building event.
- **Import prices fell 0.4% and export prices declined 1.3%.** Inflation cooled further, giving Fed economists the sort of emotional lift most people experience after finding an extra French fry at the bottom of the bag.
- **Second-quarter earnings season's doing that thing where 85% of companies beat expectations**—which mostly means Wall Street analysts set the bar on the floor. S&P 500 profits are up 52% year over year, with tech and energy flexing, while health care hides in the bathroom after another rough quarter for biotech. Nvidia reports this week, and if AI bubble talk is loud now, wait till *that* number drops. Wall Street's gonna need a group hug and a sedative.

Market data

Index prices ($)	08/21/2026	12/31/2025
Dow Jones Industrial Average	53,277	48,063
S&P 500	7,674	6,846

Returns (%)	1wk	QTD	YTD	3mo
Equities				
S&P 500	-1.43	2.48	12.95	3.36
S&P Mid Cap 400	-2.46	-0.43	16.83	5.49
S&P Small Cap 600	-2.13	-0.65	23.10	8.42
Russell 1000	-1.39	2.42	12.99	3.87
Russell MidCap	-1.26	2.81	18.54	8.30
Russell 2000	-1.65	-0.08	22.48	6.46
Dow Jones Industrial Average	-0.85	2.00	11.96	6.36
NASDAQ Composite	-2.05	-0.06	13.07	-0.29
Fixed income				
Bloomberg U.S. Aggregate	-0.10	-0.96	-0.34	0.08
Bloomberg Global Aggregate	0.18	0.17	-0.04	0.57
Bloomberg High Yield Bond	-0.15	0.48	2.44	1.37
S&P / LSTA Senior Loan	0.20	2.05	2.48	1.71
JPM EMBI+ Emerging Markets Bond	-0.40	-0.78	2.80	1.05
S&P 500 sectors				
Technology	-3.18	0.50	20.35	2.17
Materials	2.34	5.47	18.10	7.26
Consumer discretionary	-0.22	1.44	0.66	-1.65
Health care	4.33	10.02	13.83	18.44
Utilities	-3.49	-5.70	1.55	-4.34
Consumer staples	-0.94	2.24	10.46	-0.65
Energy	2.94	20.38	44.05	8.57
Financials	-1.17	7.20	5.93	11.48
Industrials	-3.37	-2.74	16.86	5.96
Communication services	-1.45	-0.57	0.23	-8.95
Real Estate	-0.44	2.68	14.51	2.27
Equity style performance				
Large cap value	-0.56	6.09	23.34	10.02
Large cap growth	-2.33	-1.48	3.77	-1.70
Mid cap value	-0.86	4.49	22.86	9.55
Mid cap growth	-2.45	-1.88	5.26	4.41
Small cap value	-1.18	1.67	25.05	7.61
Small cap growth	-2.09	-1.70	20.10	5.37
International equities				
MSCI EAFE	-0.54	4.31	14.58	6.41
MSCI U.K.	1.30	6.68	13.31	6.01
MSCI Europe ex-U.K.	-0.05	3.46	12.71	7.15
MSCI Japan	-3.33	2.76	19.18	5.55
MSCI AC Asia ex-Japan	1.07	0.16	26.55	3.79
MSCI Emerging Markets	1.24	0.37	24.49	3.58
MSCI ACWI	-0.87	2.83	14.64	4.28

Source: FactSet.

VOYA® INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT

U.S. Economic Release Calendar

Date	Event
8/25/2026	S&P/Case-Shiller Home Prices (June); Consumer Confidence (August); New Home Sales (July); Building Permits (July)
8/26/2026	Core Personal Consumption Expenditures (July); Durable Goods Orders (July); Personal Income and Spending (July)
8/27/2026	Jobless Claims; Wholesale and Retail Inventories (July); Fed Chair Speech at Jackson Hole
8/28/2026	Consumer Sentiment (August)

Market data, cont'd

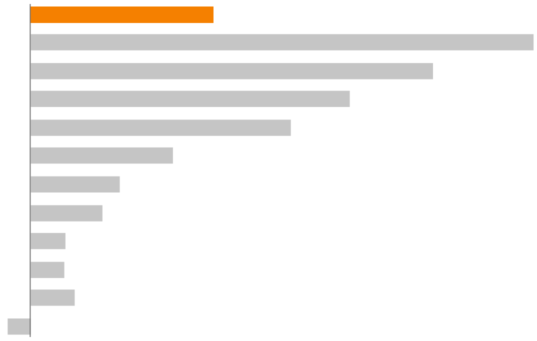
As of:	Last close	Prior week	Year end	3 mos ago
U.S. bond rates (%)				
U.S. federal funds target rate	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75
U.S. 2yr Treasury	4.23	4.17	3.48	4.06
U.S. 10yr Treasury	4.73	4.69	4.18	4.56
U.S. 20yr Treasury	5.26	5.25	4.79	5.09
U.S. 30yr Treasury	5.27	5.26	4.86	5.09
High yield (Merrill U.S. Corporates)	6.81	6.76	6.42	6.71
Consumer rates (%)				
30yr mortgage rate	6.72	6.76	6.25	6.50
Prime rate	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75
Commodities				
Gold (USD/oz)	$4,681	$4,437	$4,341	$4,543
Crude oil (USD/bbl)	$87.06	$82.40	$57.42	$96.35
Copper (LME $/mt)	$14,291	$14,545	$12,504	$13,427
Gasoline (USD/gal)	$4.33	$4.31	$3.10	$4.81
Exchange rates				
$ per €	1.17	1.16	1.17	1.16
$ per £	1.36	1.35	1.35	1.34
¥ per $	158.97	159.05	156.75	159.18
U.S. Dollar Index	98.80	99.67	98.32	99.26

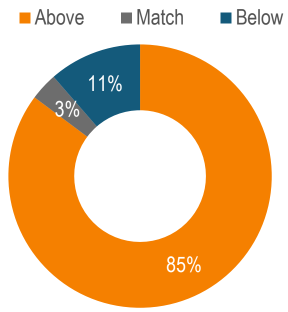
Source: FactSet.

2Q26 S&P 500 earnings dashboard

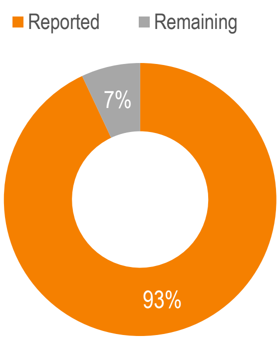
Growth rates

S&P 500	**51.9%**
Energy	142.7%
Comm. service	114.2%
Consumer disc.	90.4%
Technology	73.8%
Materials	40.3%
Financials	25.3%
Industrials	20.2%
Utilities	9.7%
Real estate	9.6%
Consumer staples	12.3%
Health care	-6.7%





	Above	Match	Below
S&P 500	**85%**	**3%**	**11%**
Consumer disc.	79%	9%	12%
Consumer staples	78%	7%	15%
Energy	91%	0%	10%
Financials	87%	3%	11%
Health care	96%	4%	0%
Industrials	88%	3%	10%
Materials	84%	0%	16%
Real estate	76%	7%	17%
Technology	95%	0%	5%
Comm. service	76%	0%	24%
Utilities	65%	7%	29%

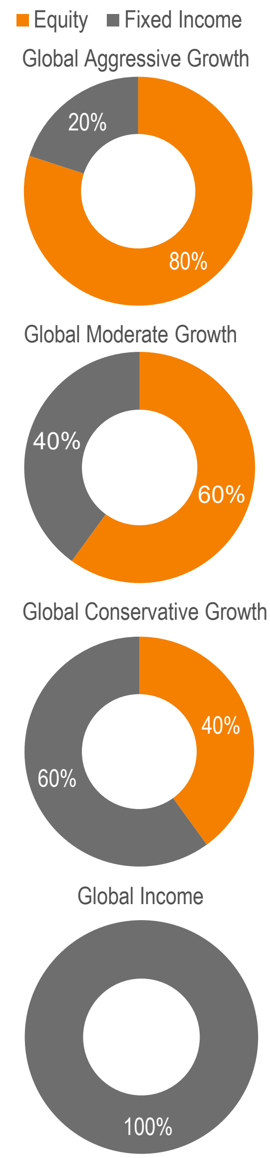


	Reported	Remaining
S&P 500	465	35
Comm. service	21	0
Consumer disc.	43	4
Consumer staples	27	7
Energy	21	0
Financials	75	1
Health care	55	4
Industrials	80	3
Materials	25	0
Real estate	29	1
Technology	58	15
Utilities	31	0

As of 08/21/26. Source: London Stock Exchange Group, Institutional Brokers' Estimate System. Above, Match and Below are showing the percentage of constituents that beat, matched or missed analyst expectations on the day of reporting.

Voya Global Perspectives Market Models positioning

Base positioning



Source: Voya IM.

Principal Risks
All investing involves risks of fluctuating prices and the uncertainties of rates of return and yield. **Asset Allocation**: The success of the model depends on the Adviser's or Sub-Adviser's skill in allocating model assets between the asset classes and in choosing investments within those categories. There is a risk that the model may allocate assets to an asset class that underperforms other asset classes. **Investment Model**: The model invests based on a proprietary model managed by the manager. The manager's proprietary model may not adequately address existing or unforeseen market factors or the interplay between such factors. **Other Investment Companies**: The main risk of investing in other investment companies, including exchange-traded funds, is the risk that the value of the securities underlying an investment company might decrease. Because the model or an underlying fund may invest in other investment companies, you will pay a proportionate share of the expenses of those other investment companies (including management fees, administration fees, and custodial fees) in addition to the expenses of the model and a proportionate share of the expenses of each underlying fund. **Interest Rate**: With bonds and other fixed-rate debt instruments, a rise in interest rates generally causes values to fall; conversely, values generally rise as interest rates fall. The higher the credit quality of the instrument, and the longer its maturity or duration, the more sensitive it is likely to be to interest rate risk**. Foreign Investments / Developing and Emerging Markets**: Investing in foreign (non-U.S.) securities may result in the model or the underlying funds experiencing more rapid and extreme changes in value than a model that invests exclusively in securities of U.S. companies due to smaller markets different reporting, accounting and auditing standards; nationalization, expropriation, or confiscatory taxation; foreign currency fluctuations, currency blockage or replacement; potential for default on sovereign debt; or political changes or diplomatic developments. Other risks of the model include but are not limited to **Credit, High-Yield Securities Investments, Call, Company, Currency, Liquidity, Market, Market Capitalization, Real Estate Companies and Real Estate Investment Trusts, U.S. Government Securities and Obligations. An investment in the model is not a bank deposit and is not insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Federal Reserve Board or any other government agency.**

Index definitions

Bloomberg Global Aggregate Bond Index measures a wide range of global government, government-related, corporate and securitized fixed-income investments, all with maturities greater than one year.

Bloomberg High Yield Bond Index tracks the performance of below investment grade U.S. dollar-denominated corporate bonds publicly issued in the U.S. domestic market.

Bloomberg U.S. Aggregate Index is a bond market index composed of U.S. securities in Treasury, Government-Related, Corporate, and Securitized sectors that are of investment-grade quality or better, have at least one year to maturity, and have an outstanding par value of at least $250 million.

Dow Jones Industrial Average is a price-weighted average computed from the stock prices of 30 of the largest and most widely held public companies in the U.S., adjusted to reflect stock splits and stock dividends.

FTSE EPRA / NAREIT Global Real Estate Index represents general performance trends of the equity securities of real estate companies involved in the ownership, disposition and development of income-producing properties worldwide.

JPMorgan Emerging Markets Bond Index Plus (EMBI+) tracks total returns for traded foreign currency denominated debt instruments in the emerging markets which meet minimum criteria for face value outstanding and market trading liquidity.

MSCI ACWI Index is a free float-adjusted market capitalization weighted index designed to provide a broad measure of equity-market performance throughout the world, capturing large and mid cap representation across 23 Developed Markets (DM) and 26 Emerging Markets (EM) countries.

MSCI EAFE Index is a free float-adjusted market capitalization weighted index designed to measure developed markets' equity performance, excluding the U.S. & Canada, for 21 countries.

MSCI Europe ex-U.K. Index is a free float-adjusted market capitalization weighted index designed to measure equity performance of the 15 developed European markets except the U.K..

MSCI U.K. Index is a free float-adjusted market capitalization weighted index designed to measure equity performance of listed common stocks in the U.K..

MSCI Asia ex-Japan Index is a free float-adjusted market capitalization weighted index designed to measure equity performance of the 15 developed Asian markets except Japan.

MSCI Japan Index is a free float-adjusted market capitalization weighted index designed to measure equity performance of listed common stocks in Japan.

MSCI Emerging Markets Index is a free float-adjusted market capitalization index that measures emerging market equity performance of 23 countries.

Municipal Bond Index is a bond index that includes investment-grade, tax-exempt fixed-rate bonds with long-term maturities (greater than two years) selected from issues larger than $50 million.

NASDAQ Composite Index is a market capitalization weighted index of the performance of domestic and international common stocks listed on the Nasdaq Stock Market including over 2,800 securities.

Large Growth: Russell 1000 Growth Index measures the large-cap growth segment of the U.S. equity market including Russell 1000 companies with higher price-to-book ratios and forecasted growth.

Large Value: Russell 1000 Value Index measures the large-cap value segment of the U.S. equity market including Russell 1000 companies with lower price-to-book ratios and lower expected growth.

Midcap Growth: Russell MidCap Growth Index measures the performance of the mid-cap growth segment of the U.S. equity market including Russell Midcap Index companies with higher price-to-book ratios and forecasted growth.

Midcap Value: Russell MidCap Value Index measures the performance of the mid-cap growth segment of the U.S. equity market including Russell Midcap Index companies with lower price-to-book ratios and forecasted growth.

Small Cap Growth: Russell 2000 Growth Index measures the performance of small-cap growth stocks in the U.S. equity market including Russell 2000 companies with higher price-to-value ratios and forecasted growth.

Small Cap Value: Russell 2000 Value Index measures the performance of small-cap growth stocks in the U.S. equity market including Russell 2000 companies with lower price-to-value ratios and forecasted growth.

S&P 500 Index is a widely regarded as the best single gauge of the U.S. equities market, including 500 leading companies in major industries of the U.S. economy.

S&P 500 Sectors are defined as the GICS (Global Industry Classification Standard) sectors which provide standardized industry definitions consisting of 10 sectors, 24 industry groups, and 67 industries.

The S&P MidCap 400 includes 400 companies and represents almost 6% of the U.S. markets. To be eligible for inclusion in the index, a company should be a U.S. company, have a market cap between USD 3.3 billion to USD 11.8 billion, maintain a public float of at least 10% of its shares outstanding, and its most recent quarter's earnings and the sum of its trailing four consecutive quarters' earnings must be positive. The index implements changes on an as-needed basis.

The S&P SmallCap 600 includes 600 companies and represents almost 3% of the U.S. market. To be eligible for inclusion in the index, a company should be a U.S. company, have a market cap between USD 750 million to USD 3.3 billion, maintain a public float of at least 10% of its shares outstanding, and its most recent quarter's earnings and the sum of its trailing four consecutive quarters' earnings must be positive. The index implements changes on an as-needed basis.

The Russell 1000 Index measures the performance of the large-cap segment of the U.S. equity market and includes approximately 1,000 of the largest securities based on market capitalization and representing approximately 92% of the U.S. market.

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