

Flourish Wealth Management

Quarterly Newsletter

October 2026

As we welcome the fall season and reflect on the past few months, we're reminded that change is a natural part of life, bringing new opportunities, unexpected challenges, and moments that encourage us to reflect on what matters most. With the final months of 2026 approaching, it's a wonderful time to reconnect with our priorities, celebrate the connections we've made, and look ahead with intention.

We have a few updates to share from the Flourish team! Last quarter, Jay and I had the opportunity to attend the Future Proof 2026 Conference in Huntington Beach, California, joining thousands of professionals from across the wealth management industry. It was an engaging opportunity to exchange ideas, explore emerging technologies, and connect with others who share our commitment to continually improving the client experience.

On a more personal note, September brought an unexpected and difficult loss with the passing of my father, Bob Shellenberger. I'm deeply grateful for the kindness, patience, and support I've received from our wonderful clients and the entire Flourish team during this time. Your thoughtfulness has meant more than words can express.

In this edition of our quarterly newsletter, we're exploring a theme that feels especially meaningful during times of change: financial resilience. Our featured article, *Building Financial Resilience: Strategies for Thriving in Uncertain Times*, discusses how thoughtful planning, flexibility, and an understanding of your personal values can help you navigate life's transitions while keeping your

3rd Quarter | 2026

long-term priorities in focus. You'll also find Jay's third-quarter market commentary, where he shares insights into recent stock and bond market performance, the impact of rising interest rates and persistent inflation, and the importance of maintaining a long-term perspective amid market fluctuations.

As always, thank you for being part of the Flourish community and for allowing us to be part of your financial journey. We hope you enjoy this edition and find a few meaningful takeaways to carry with you into the months ahead.



Sincerely,

Kathy Longo, CFP®, CAP®, CDFA®

QUARTERLY ARTICLE

Building Financial Resilience: Strategies for Thriving in Uncertain Times

By: Kathy Longo, CFP®, CAP®, CDFA®

President and Founder

Life rarely unfolds exactly as we expect. Careers evolve, markets fluctuate, families grow and change, and priorities shift over time. While we can't predict every challenge or opportunity, thoughtful financial resilience strategies may help us respond with greater clarity when life takes an unexpected turn. Rather than trying to eliminate uncertainty, financial planning can help create the flexibility to adapt while keeping your long-term priorities in focus.

Financial resilience is about more than preparing for difficult moments. It's also about creating a financial life that supports the experiences, relationships, and

aspirations that matter most to you. Whether you're navigating a career transition, approaching retirement, caring for loved ones, or simply thinking about the future, resilience comes from understanding your resources and thoughtfully adapting as life evolves.

Resilience Begins with Understanding Your Financial Picture

When uncertainty arises, it's natural to focus on what feels outside your control. Markets may move unexpectedly. Economic conditions may change. Personal circumstances can shift quickly. During these moments, it can be helpful to return to what you do know.

Do you have a clear understanding of your income, expenses, savings, investments, insurance coverage, and long-term goals? Have your priorities changed over the past few years? Are your financial decisions continuing to reflect the life you're building today?

These questions aren't about finding perfect answers. They're opportunities to better understand where you are today so future decisions can be made with greater intention.

Taking time to periodically review your overall financial picture may reveal areas that deserve attention while also highlighting strengths you've already built over time.

Financial Resilience Strategies That Support Flexibility

Many people associate resilience with simply having enough savings to handle unexpected expenses. While maintaining an emergency fund is certainly an important consideration, resilience often extends much further than a single account balance.

Thoughtful financial resilience strategies may include:

- Maintaining an appropriate cash reserve for unexpected needs
- Reviewing insurance coverage as your life changes
- [Diversifying](#) investments based on your personal goals and risk tolerance

Flourish Wealth Management

- Periodically revisiting retirement and education savings plans
- Updating [beneficiary designations](#) and estate planning documents when appropriate
- Coordinating tax planning with your broader financial strategy

Each of these areas contributes to a financial foundation that may provide additional flexibility when circumstances change. The goal isn't to prepare for every possible scenario. It's to create a plan that can evolve alongside your life.

Your Relationship with Money Matters

Financial decisions are rarely based only on numbers. Past experiences, family conversations, personal values, and emotional responses often influence how we approach money.

For example, someone who experienced financial hardship earlier in life may naturally prioritize saving. Another person may value flexibility after spending years in a demanding career. Neither perspective is inherently right or wrong. Understanding what shapes your decisions can make it easier to evaluate whether those habits continue to support your current priorities.

This is one reason financial resilience strategies involve both practical planning and personal reflection. As your life changes, your relationship with money may change as well.

What matters most to you today? Has your definition of financial success evolved? Does your current financial plan still reflect the future you're working toward?

Taking time to consider these questions may lead to more intentional decisions that align with both your financial resources and your personal values.

SEE ALSO: [Investing with Intention: Aligning Your Portfolio with Your Long-Term Goals and Values](#)

3rd Quarter | 2026

Flourish Wealth Management

3rd Quarter | 2026

Small Decisions Often Create Lasting Momentum

Building resilience doesn't usually happen through one major financial decision. More often, it develops through consistent actions taken over time.

You might begin by increasing retirement contributions after a salary increase. Perhaps you decide to revisit your estate documents following a family milestone. Maybe you schedule an annual review of your financial plan or update your investment strategy as your goals evolve.

Individually, these decisions may seem relatively small. Together, they can strengthen your ability to adapt as circumstances change.

Life rarely stays the same for long. Careers develop, families expand, retirement draws closer, and new opportunities emerge. A financial plan that is revisited regularly may be more capable of reflecting those changing priorities than one that remains untouched for years.

SEE ALSO: [The Value of Making Thoughtful and Informed Choices in Your Financial Strategy](#).

Planning for the Chapter Ahead

Uncertainty often encourages us to think about what could go wrong. While preparing for challenges has value, it's equally worthwhile to consider what you're preparing for.

What experiences would you like your financial resources to support? How do your values influence the decisions you're making today? What opportunities would you like to create for yourself, your family, or your community?

These questions move financial planning beyond reacting to uncertainty and toward building a life that reflects your priorities.

Resilience isn't simply about weathering difficult seasons. It's also about maintaining the flexibility to pursue meaningful opportunities as they arise.

Looking Forward with Intention

Life's uncertainties are part of every financial journey, but they don't have to define it. Thoughtful financial resilience strategies can help you understand your options, adapt as circumstances change, and reconnect your financial decisions with what matters most to you. As your priorities evolve, your financial plan can evolve alongside them, supporting the next chapter you're writing for yourself and those you care about.

If you're thinking about how your current financial picture aligns with your long-term goals, the Flourish team would be glad to [help you explore your options](#). Together, we can discuss financial resilience strategies, review how your priorities may have changed over time, and consider how your financial resources can continue supporting the life you're working toward.

MARKET COMMENTARY

Quarter 3 | 2026



By: Jay E. Pluimer, AIF®, CIMA®
Director of Investments

Stock and Bond markets diverged during the third quarter as interest rates rose faster and higher than market expectations. US Large Cap Stocks gained a little over 2% and International Stocks were up slightly, while Bonds declined more than 3.5% and now have negative year-to-date returns in 2026. The bond market drop reflects higher interest rates, which are responding to stubborn inflation and slowing economic growth in the US (bond prices move in the opposite direction of interest rates). The Federal Reserve raised its short-term interest rate by 25 basis points during the quarter and has signaled that additional increases are possible later in 2026 and in 2027. Inflation remains stubborn, with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) at 3.4% in August 2026. There is still no formal agreement to end the War in Iran, where periodic hostilities have

continued without a return to full-scale war. Higher rates also weighed on US Small Cap Stocks, which fell more than 7% because many smaller companies rely more heavily on borrowing and are more sensitive to changing economic conditions. Market volatility has been elevated ahead of the midterm elections in early November, but we have a cautiously optimistic outlook because markets have usually recovered once an area of uncertainty is resolved.

Bond investors face a trade-off in the current environment: prices fall in the short term as rates rise, while newly issued bonds offer higher income. The 10-year US Treasury yield rose by more than half a percentage point during the quarter and ended September at 5.1%, above its brief peak of about 5% in October 2023 and the highest level since before the Global Financial Crisis in 2007. That increase was larger than the Fed's 0.25% rate hike because longer-term yields reflect expectations for additional increases in the future, along with inflation and growth concerns. Higher rates can slow economic growth by raising borrowing costs for households and businesses, and estimates cited by market analysts suggest a drag of 0.5% or more on gross domestic product (GDP) growth. Consumer spending has remained strong throughout 2026, but bank deposits are rising as families take advantage of higher interest rates. Despite recent losses, Bonds continue to play two roles in diversified portfolios: income that becomes more attractive as yields rise, and diversification that can reduce risk in some environments. US Stock indexes, including the S&P 500 and the tech-heavy Nasdaq, reached all-time highs during the quarter. In periods like this, patience matters most – we are closely monitoring inflation, Federal Reserve policy, and Treasury yields while proactively rebalancing client portfolios to Target Allocations instead of reacting to short-term market moves.

For more information on investments and the markets, you can reference our [Quarterly Market Review](#).

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Conclusion

As we move into the final months of the year, we hope you'll take a moment to reflect on how far you've come and what you're looking forward to in the year ahead. Life is full of changes, and we're grateful for the opportunity to walk alongside you through its many chapters. Thank you for your continued trust, kindness, and connection. From all of us at Flourish, we wish you and your loved ones a wonderful fall season and a meaningful close to 2026!



Sincerely,

Kathy Longo, CFP®, CAP®, CDFA®
and the Flourish Team

3rd Quarter | 2026