

# THE Armstrong REPORT

SUMMER 2026  
Dedicated to growing  
and protecting your wealth.



## FIRM UPDATE

Reginald A.T. Armstrong, CPWA®  
Founder

Happy 250th Birthday, America!

She may not be perfect, but she is still the best experiment in governance conceived by man.

## ECONOMY

The economy continues to prove its strength, even in the face of higher oil prices for much of the past quarter. Manufacturing has been in growth territory for the entire year, marking the first time that has happened in four years. Non-manufacturing has continued to be in growth mode. Despite higher gas prices, retail sales have continued to rise, with a greater proportion, of course, allocated to energy consumption. Very importantly, corporate earnings for the first quarter were extremely strong. At the end of May, for example, the S&P 500 was up about 9% while earnings estimates were up 14% (CNBC, Globe & Mail, June 2026).

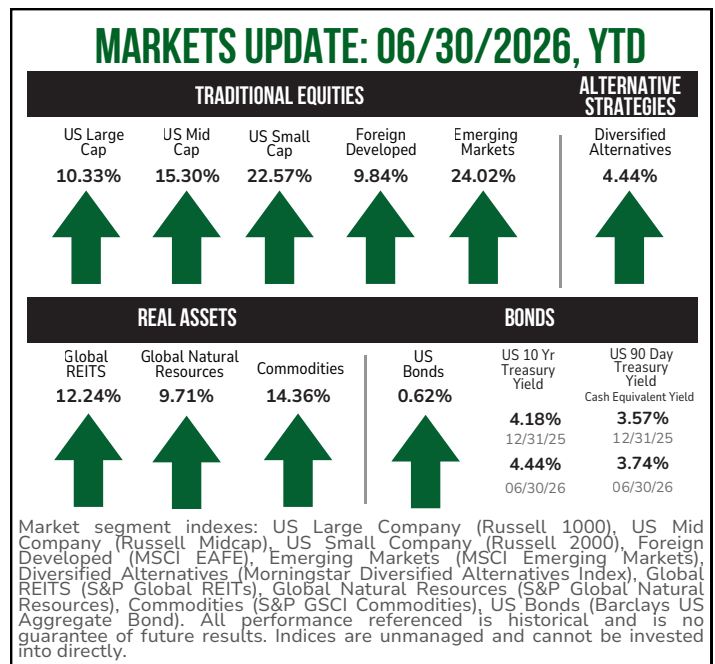
## MARKETS

As of today, when I am writing this (June 25, 2026), the quarter is finishing nicely positive for global markets, powered by a blowout May. Bonds are modestly positive, while gold and bitcoin had a very rough quarter. Volatility picked up in June, despite better geopolitical news. Keep in mind, midterm election years are normally quite volatile. We remain cautiously optimistic that equity markets can finish in the black for the year.

## FIRM

On June 15th we welcomed Kristen Myers as our fourth client wealth manager. Except for Rhonda who retired, and Jason, I hired everyone we currently have in their 20s. Now only one is in their late 30s. The rest of us are more mature. Kristen adds breadth to our service offering to clients due to her unique set of skills and background (more on her on page three), and she adds depth, enabling us to continue to guide and manage clients through multiple generations. In the short-term, you will see her in some client meetings as she is learning what makes us unique. In about a month, she will begin a 4-5 month stint of scheduling reviews for Lee, Matt, and I as a way of meeting clients by phone while learning how we do things here. Please welcome Kristen when you meet or speak with her.

The opinions in this material are for general information only and are not intended to provide specific advice or recommendation for any individual. All performance referenced is historical and is no guarantee of future results.



# TAX-SMART PHILANTHROPY

Americans are tremendously generous. We give because we believe in the organizations and causes we support. It is nice, however, to get a tax break on that giving. Let's discuss how to be tax-smart in giving to charity.

First, a quick update from the IRS for 2026 regarding charitable giving:

- Non-itemizers now can deduct \$1000 per taxpayer in cash donations (not stock or property)
- Itemizers now have a 0.5% Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) floor on charitable deductions. For example, a high-income individual with \$500,000 of AGI can only deduct contributions above \$2500.
- The tax benefit of any deduction is capped at 35% for those in the top 37% tax bracket.

Let's now go over some key techniques on giving to charity.

If you have **low-cost-basis stock**, instead of selling the stock and donating cash, give the actual stock. This way you don't pay capital gains and neither does the charity. More of your money goes to charity.

If you are at least 70½, and have an IRA, consider doing a **Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD)**. You can only donate to 501(c)(3) organizations, not Donor Advised Funds or Foundations. The distribution goes directly from your IRA to the charity (401ks do not qualify for this). The QCD doesn't raise your AGI nor does it affect your Medicare premiums. Also, if you take the QCD first, it

counts towards your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD). The limit you can do in QCDs in 2026 is \$111,000.

**Donor Advised Funds (DAFs)** are charitable funds that can receive irrevocable charitable gifts and allow you to retain control over when and to which organizations donations are made. You can donate and get the entire deduction the same year, while deciding later who gets monies and how much. Funds are usually invested professionally. It is also a great tool for involving family members in philanthropy. It is less expensive and cumbersome than a private foundation.

Of course, you can always give cash, but the techniques listed above are superior most of the time.

Finally, for some individuals, using **charitable trusts** can be an ideal tool. For example, a Charitable Remainder Trust can get you a deduction on your gift, an income stream for life, and a gift to charity all in one. A Charitable Lead Trust the charity gets the income stream now while the donor or family gets the remainder. It can be a way to transfer wealth to heirs efficiently. Of course, with the estate tax exclusion being \$15 million, not everyone will need this technique. Keep in mind that charitable trusts are complex instruments. For these, and in fact for all I have reviewed above, please consult with your tax and estate advisors. Contact your wealth manager if you would like personalized advice on tax-smart philanthropy.

Source: IRS



## TRUMP ACCOUNTS

On Independence Day, July 4th, not only did we celebrate the 250th anniversary of the founding of this great country, but children born as of January 1, 2025, became eligible for a \$1,000 Trump Account.

To find out more and sign up if appropriate, go to: <https://trumpaccounts.gov/>. At some point later you will be able to transfer to a bank or brokerage account. We are still waiting for guidance from LPL. Except for the \$1000 free money, for most parents a 529 is likely a better vehicle.

Please contact your wealth manager for individualized advice.

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Lighthouse Ministries	\$10,000
St. Anthony – Run for the Heroes	\$1,000
Manna House – Singing for Suppers	\$500
Knight of Columbus Golf Tournament	\$250

## ON A SAD NOTE

Doris Gardner, Andrea Kelly and Don Sheeley have passed away. Please keep their families in your prayers.



## ARMSTRONG WELCOMES NEW ADVISOR

Introducing the newest member of your Armstrong Wealth Team—Kristen Myers! We are so excited to have her on board. She joins Regi, Lee, and Matt as a financial advisor in our firm. She adds greater depth and breadth to our firm’s capabilities, thereby enabling us to serve you even better. Here’s a little about her:

Kristen Myers joins Armstrong Wealth from First Citizens, where she worked as a Senior Premier Relationship Banker building full financial relationships with mass affluent clients. A Clemson graduate with degrees in Communications and Management, she spent nearly a decade at Raines Co. in Florence, holding leadership roles across development, investor relations, investment analysis, and underwriting before her interest in financial planning drew her into wealth management.

At Armstrong Wealth, Kristen looks forward to strengthening current client relationships and helping new clients build toward their financial goals. She lives in Florence with her husband, Baker, and their two daughters, Emma and Claire.

She is an active member of First Presbyterian Church, a recent Leadership Florence graduate, a member of the Florence Rotary Club, and serves on the board of the CAREHouse. Outside of work, she enjoys time with family, golf, traveling, and anything on the water.

She’s only been with us a few weeks, so she is drinking through a firehose. I know she is eager to meet each of you sometime soon.



## THE VALUE OF A FINANCIAL ADVISOR

A financial advisor's value goes well beyond picking investments—in fact, research consistently shows that behavioral coaching and planning often matter more than portfolio selection itself.

### BEHAVIORAL COACHING

The biggest value driver is often keeping investors from sabotaging themselves. An advisor acts as an emotional circuit-breaker, helping clients stick to a plan.

### TAX EFFICIENCY

This is one of the more measurable value-adds. Over decades, smart tax management strategies can meaningfully compound.

### ASSET ALLOCATION & REBALANCING

Systematic rebalancing—selling winners and buying underperformers to maintain target allocations—is a discipline most individual investors struggle to do consistently.

### WITHDRAWAL STRATEGY IN RETIREMENT

Advisors help sequence withdrawals across taxable, tax-deferred, and tax-free accounts, manage required minimum distributions, and structure income to minimize taxes.

### TIME SAVINGS & COMPLEXITY MANAGEMENT

For many, the value is simply not having to become an expert in tax law, estate planning, insurance products, and market analysis. Outsourcing this complexity to a professional frees up time and mental energy.

## SAVE THE DATE

**JULY 23**

Tiered Cash Management

**AUGUST 27**

What is Thematic Investing?

**SEPTEMBER 24**

Where do Markets Stand with the Midterms Five Weeks Out?

Always on a Thursday  
at 4:30 pm Eastern



Armstrong Wealth  
MANAGEMENT GROUP



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