

EAGLE FOCUS

weekly

September 21, 2026

MARKET PERFORMANCE RECAP

WEEK ENDING
September 18, 2026

INDEX	LAST FRIDAY'S CLOSE	% CHANGE YTD
S&P 500	7650.5	11.76%
Dow Jones Industrial Average	51682.64	7.53%
Nasdaq Composite	26522.54	14.11%
S&P MidCap 400	3650.73	10.46%
Russell 2000	2866.61	15.25%

The Federal Reserve raised interest rates by 0.25 percentage point on Wednesday, marking its first rate hike in more than three years, and signaled that another increase could follow. Fed Chair Kevin Warsh said the economy and labor market remain strong, but persistent inflation and Middle East tensions prompted the unanimous decision to bring the benchmark rate to 3.75%-4.0%. Policymakers emphasized that inflation remains above their 2% target and said tighter policy is needed to help restore price stability. (Source: CNBC)



Retail sales shot up a bigger-than-expected 1.2% in August, the most in five months, rebounding strongly from the 0.5% decline in the previous month. Some of the swing was due to seasonal factors, such as Amazon Prime Day shifting into June this year, which weighed on July sales. But beyond that, the jump in August shows strong back-to-school spending and generally a resilient consumer, despite higher gasoline prices and other affordability challenges. (Source: Ned Davis Research)

Homebuilder confidence fell to a one-year low in September as high mortgage rates discouraged potential buyers, according to the National Association of Home Builders. As demand softened, 38% of builders cut home prices, the highest share in eight months, while two-thirds offered incentives such as mortgage-rate buydowns and upgrades to attract buyers. The data highlights growing affordability challenges despite continued construction activity. (Source: MarketWatch)

The U.S. poverty rate fell to a record low of 10.2% in 2025, while median household income rose 2.6% to an all-time high of \$87,460, according to the Census Bureau. The number of people living in poverty declined to 34.5 million, marking the second straight annual decrease, and the child poverty rate also reached a record low of 13.4%. Meanwhile, 7.9% of Americans remained uninsured, a figure that was largely unchanged from the previous year. (Source: Reuters)

Housing starts fell 2.6% in August to a below-consensus 1.275 million unit annual rate, near the low end of their range since mid-2022. This was the fourth decline in the past five months, as construction activity has remained under downward pressure from high/rising mortgage rates, construction material prices, and labor costs. The latest drop was led by the multifamily sector and was relatively widespread across geographies. (Source: Ned Davis Research)

Applications for unemployment benefits fell to 196,000 last week from 206,000, marking the

lowest level since mid-July and signaling that layoffs remain limited. The four-week moving average also declined to 203,250, while claims came in below economists' expectations of 207,500. The data suggests the labor market remains resilient, with jobless claims continuing to hover near historically low levels. (Source: AP News)

U.S. factory output unexpectedly declined 0.3% in August, snapping a seven-month streak of gains, though manufacturing activity continues to benefit from investment tied to the artificial intelligence boom. The drop followed a 0.2% increase in July and contrasted with economists' expectations for a 0.3% rise. Despite the monthly decline, factory production remained 0.9% higher than a year earlier. (Source: Reuters)

Private equity firms are moving down market in search of better value, fueling a surge in smaller acquisitions. In Q2, U.S. PE deals valued between \$25 million and \$100 million climbed 56% in volume and 71% in value to \$16 billion, making it the only middle-market segment to post meaningful growth. Meanwhile, larger deal categories weakened, with upper-middle-market transactions falling sharply, highlighting a shift toward smaller deals. (Source: Pitchbook)

People with student loan debt often prioritize loan payments over retirement savings, leaving them with significantly smaller 401(k) balances. According to EBRI, workers in their 40s with student debt have median retirement savings about 45% lower than their



debt-free peers, largely because many reduce or stop retirement contributions while repaying loans. (Source: Yahoo Finance)

Older Americans are more confident managing their current finances than planning for the future, according to a Gallup and Edward Jones study.

While 54% of baby boomers said they are confident meeting their financial needs today, only 37% felt confident about their future finances, highlighting a broader gap in long-term financial confidence across generations. (Source: Barron's)

The SEC unveiled a five-year exemption that will allow platforms to trade blockchain-based, or tokenized, stocks and other securities, a move aimed at integrating digital assets more deeply into traditional markets.

The exemption eases certain exchange and dealer-registration requirements while requiring platforms to obtain issuer approval before listing tokenized versions of stocks. Supporters say tokenized securities could enable 24/7 trading, faster settlement, lower costs, and broader investor access. (Source: Reuters)

Financial advisors remained cautiously optimistic in August, with the economy confidence index slipping to 102 from 105 in July, while stock market sentiment held steady at 108.

Both readings remained above 100, indicating a positive outlook, though the share of advisors who viewed current economic conditions positively fell to 34%, down from 50% the previous month and the lowest level in five months. (Source: Wealth Management)

More taxpayers are applying to the IRS's offer in compromise program, but far fewer are being approved.

The IRS accepted about 5,500 settlements in fiscal 2025, down 57% from roughly 12,700 in 2023, even as applications rose 29% to nearly 38,800. The program allows eligible taxpayers to settle tax debts for less than they owe if paying in full would cause financial hardship. (Source: CNBC)

S.O.S doesn't mean "Save Our Ship." At the 1906 International Radiotelegraph Conference in Berlin, 27 countries adopted SOS as the universal distress signal. Chosen for its simple and unmistakable Morse code pattern of three dots, three dashes, and three dots, it was designed to be recognized under poor conditions. The letters "SOS" were assigned afterward because they matched the signal's Morse code sequence, not for a specific phrase. (Source: Word Smarts)

On September 21, 1915, British lawyer Cecil Chubb unexpectedly purchased Stonehenge at an auction in Salisbury, England, for £6,600 (more than \$1 million in today's dollars).

Three years later, he donated the prehistoric monument to the British people, with conditions that it be preserved and remain accessible to the public. (Source: History.com)

An MLB baseball typically remains in play for only six to seven pitches before being replaced due to damage, scuffs, or being hit out of play.

As a result, a typical game uses 60 to 72 baseballs, and each team is required to have about 90 balls available for every game. (Source: MLB)



**To learn
more,
contact:****Kevin D. Lindblom, CLU, ChFC**

Your Vision Financial Group
3720 Queen Ct SW, Suite 4, Cedar Rapids, IA 52404
319-393-1643
kevin@yourvfg.com
www.yourvfg.com

Reproduction Prohibited without Express Permission. Eagle clients, and anyone receiving Eagle Focus Weekly directly or indirectly from an Eagle advisor, are not permitted to post Eagle Focus Weekly, either in whole or in part, to any publicly accessible website or social media site, including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn or a blog.

The statements, opinions and analysis in Eagle Focus Weekly are provided by Ned Davis Research, which is not affiliated with Eagle Strategies LLC nor any of its affiliates. These opinions and market conditions are subject to change without notice. Any past performance referenced does not guarantee future results. Information and statements that are forward looking are subject to certain risks and uncertainties. Indexes are unmanaged and you cannot invest directly in an index. Eagle is not responsible for the accuracy or completeness of information in this document.

Eagle Focus Weekly is intended for informational use only and is not investment advice nor an offer of any securities, products or services. Please contact your Eagle Investment Advisor Representative to discuss your investment objectives before making any investment decisions for your Eagle accounts.

Eagle Strategies LLC (Eagle) is an SEC-registered investment adviser. Registration with the SEC does not imply a certain level of skill or training. Eagle investment adviser representatives (IARs) act solely in their capacity as insurance agents of New York Life, its affiliates, or other unaffiliated insurance carriers when recommending insurance products and as registered representatives when recommending securities through NYLIFE Securities LLC (member FINRA/SIPC), an affiliated registered broker-dealer and licensed insurance agency. Eagle Strategies LLC and NYLIFE Securities LLC are New York Life Companies. Investment products are not guaranteed and may lose value. No tax or legal advice is provided by Eagle, its IARs or its affiliates.

Kevin D. Lindblom, CLU, ChFC is a Registered Representative offering securities through NYLIFE Securities LLC, Member FINRA/SIPC, a Licensed Insurance Agency, and a Financial Adviser offering investment advisory services through Eagle Strategies LLC, A Registered Investment Adviser.

Kevin D. Lindblom, CLU, ChFC is also an agent licensed to sell insurance through New York Life Insurance Company and may be licensed to sell insurance through various other independent unaffiliated insurance companies.

Your Vision Financial Group is not owned and operated by NYLIFE Securities LLC, Eagle Strategies LLC and its affiliates.

Copyright © 2026. All rights reserved.

SMRU 9135288 Exp. Date 09/30/2027