



Newsletter



The Name is Bond, I-bond

Business magazines have been talking about I-Bonds lately. What are they? They are US Savings Bonds that anyone can buy and redeem through the [US Treasury](#).

What makes them so attractive? The interest rate is adjustable, which should increase as the Federal Reserve increases their interest rates.

To learn more about these, check out this [helpful blog post](#) from our website.

Navigating tough times

2022 has not been easy on investors. Rising inflation, growing recession fears and declining market valuations are the worst of the worst when it comes to keeping your investor "head in the game."

One of the best things you can do is to zoom out... out from the daily news cycle, out of the current year and up to gain perspective on where we are relative to where we've been. Our comments on interest rate levels on page 2 is an example.

And remember, you are what you eat. That goes for brain food too. Once you zoom out and gain that much needed perspective, it will do your mind and body good to take a break from the daily newsreel. Listen to a favorite album from your glory days. Watch a favorite movie. Spend time with people you love. And tell us what you're doing to get more "joy" in your mental diet!

RMD Giving

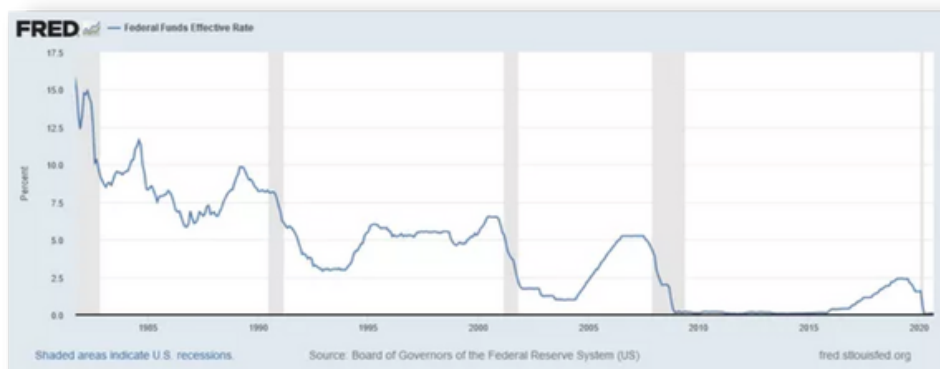
Clients who turn 71 before the end of 2022 and have an IRA will be receiving a letter or e-mail from our Investment Analyst, Emily Horn. This will give you instructions on how to give to a non-profit from your Required Minimum Distribution tax free.

If you are interested in learning more give Emily a call here at the office.



Interest Rates are... Low!

I once heard someone say, "when in doubt, zoom out." If there is one thing in abundance right now, it's doubt. So we thought a "zoom out" on interest rate levels since 1980 to now might be helpful.



Last month, the Fed announced a 0.75% rate hike, its largest since 1994. And many forecasters expect this won't be the end of the rate increases either. While this sounds severe, a quick examination of the chart above provides much needed perspective for where we are relative to where we've been. During this timeline, from 1980 to now, markets have endured much higher rates while still rewarding long-term, intentional investors.

These are challenging times for sure. But these are not the first challenging times nor will they be the last. Remember, your portfolio was built to weather sunny days and thunderstorms too.

ESG Fact Check

Because Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) investing is gaining controversy in the news, Align feels it needs to address this subject now. What started as a framework for aligning individual investors with their unique core values, is now being considered as a regulatory framework for enforcing political objectives.

Publicly, Align will always remain politically disinterested, particularly when it comes to industry insiders who attempt merge their politics into our business. **We are fiduciaries.**

Regarding ESG specifically, Align utilizes ESG methodologies as one of several possible frameworks for assessing the value and utility of a company's intangible "off-balance sheet items." We like to find companies who are:

- Responsible stewards of input costs and business resources (**Environmental**)
- Treat their employees and customers better than competitors (**Social**)
- Managing board room affairs transparently and honestly (**Governance**)



Such companies tend to generate higher quality earnings. ESG can help analysts uncover problems for investors that are not immediately obvious, and as such this remains a powerful risk assessment methodology for Align, devoid of our own political aspirations and ideologies.

Keep an eye out on social media for an up coming blog post on ESG as well as a client event this fall where we'll deep dive into the subject with Erik Laymon from our Investment Team and an outside guest speaker.

Articles to Check Out

Changes to 529 Giving Rules - This Bloomberg article discusses the recent changes congress made to the 529 Giving Rules that will go into effect for the 2024-25 school year. In short, there will no longer be a financial aid penalty for outside contributions.

How to Avoid Phishing Scams - This is a deep dive from PCMag.com on some simple best practices to keep your personal information safe while using the internet. This is a threat that will only grow over time, so educate yourself and your family.

Behavior Gap Newsletter - From the brilliant mind of financial planner, Carl Richards. This weekly newsletter offers simple, but insightful reminders to keep your mind on what matters and to not get distracted by everything else that's demanding your attention.



Beware the Media - Obviously you need to stay informed, but don't let the media impact your decision making. This video is presented by our very own Managing Advisor, Janel Cross.

If you find this material helpful you should know this is a small part of a series of videos Janel has been working on called MoneyMonday. This series covers everything from the basics of budgeting to retirement and estate planning.

**THANK YOU FOR THE GREAT PRIVILEGE OF
SHARING THE FINANCIAL JOURNEY WITH YOU!**



A L I G N

INVESTMENT AND INTENTION

You're never alone with Align

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