

April 2026 Recap

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PRELUDE

This spring, our older daughter resumed swimming lessons at the local rec center. For still unknown reasons, she was difficult to work with during March, which made for an unpleasant experience for most of the people involved. But what a difference a month makes! After the calendar turned from March to April, a switch apparently flipped in our daughter's brain. She became increasingly excited about swimming lessons each week, listened to the instructors' directions, and made significant progress with her confidence and abilities in the swimming pool. The calendar turnover from March to April seemed to impact investors in similarly beneficial fashion, as global markets rallied in April following a difficult March. Despite unresolved geopolitical conflict in the Middle East, by month's end, most major asset classes finished higher and re-entered positive territory on a year-to-date basis.

GLOBAL EQUITY

While geopolitical conflict in the Middle East continued during April, apparent progress toward peace led U.S. equities to rebound strongly during the month, with performance across multiple major indexes ranging from +7.2% to +12.2%, cumulatively. In a change from prior months, growth stocks were among the best performers during April as the Russell 1000 Growth Index returned +11.9%, its best monthly return since July 2022. Within the large cap growth space, the communication services sector moved higher during the month partly due to an especially strong corporate

TABLE 1: GLOBAL EQUITY	APR	QTD	YTD	1 YR
Dow Jones Industrial Average	7.24	7.24	3.81	24.17
S&P 500 Index	10.49	10.49	5.70	31.05
Russell 2000	12.21	12.21	13.21	44.41
Russell 1000 Growth	11.90	11.90	0.96	30.63
Russell 1000 Value	8.16	8.16	10.43	29.25
MSCI ACWI USD	10.17	10.17	6.65	31.00
MSCI EAFE USD	7.45	7.45	6.12	24.60
MSCI EM USD	14.71	14.71	14.52	46.68
MSCI ACWI ex US USD	9.65	9.65	8.88	32.20

Source: Bloomberg, as of 4/30/2026. Past performance does not guarantee future returns.



earnings release from Alphabet, propelling the stock to a +33.8% April gain. While I do not typically discuss private companies in *On The Margin*, April marks a second straight month of me doing so, as I thought it might be helpful to share some perspective on SpaceX and its upcoming initial public offering (IPO), which it filed for in April. As a reminder, SpaceX is a company that provides multiple services, including rocket launches into space, satellite-based internet services, and artificial intelligence capabilities. The company is privately held but has an estimated valuation of \$1.5 to \$2 trillion, making it one of the most valuable companies globally. The company will likely only offer about \$75 billion worth of stock to the public, but doing so would still make for the largest IPO ever should the offering go according to plan. We think this event is important for investors to watch because should SpaceX eventually offer more shares to the public, its presence could create further concentration within the U.S. equity market, making thoughtful, risk-aware portfolio construction even more important for public equity market investors. We will keep you informed of this potentially historic event as more details emerge later this year.

International markets moved higher in April, partly due to the U.S. dollar weakening against several other major currencies. Developed international markets, as represented by the MSCI EAFE Index, returned +7.5% for the month. European and Japanese stocks were among the key contributors in April amid optimism surrounding a potential end to geopolitical conflict in the Middle East and the resulting stability of those countries' energy supplies. As a reminder, Japan and many European countries are importers of Middle Eastern petroleum-based products, which concerned various investors in March after the breakout of geopolitical conflict in the Middle East. Emerging markets bounced back sharply during

April, as the MSCI EM Index returned +14.7%, its largest monthly gain since November 2022. The same optimism surrounding progress toward the end of geopolitical conflict in the Middle East helped South Korean equities during the month, as South Korea also imports most of its oil from the Middle East. South Korean technology sector giants Samsung Electronics and SK Hynix led the way higher and returned +36.2% and +64.6% respectively, boosting emerging market returns broadly.

FIXED INCOME

U.S. fixed income returns were mostly positive during April, as the Bloomberg Aggregate returned +0.1%. Like global equity markets, geopolitical headlines remained relevant within fixed income markets during the month. While Treasury yields shifted mostly upwards during April partly amid ongoing concerns about potential inflation due to Middle Eastern geopolitical conflict, higher starting yields buoyed returns during the month. The Federal Reserve left interest rates unchanged at its April meeting, but several officials

TABLE 2: FIXED INCOME	APR	QTD	YTD	1 YR
Bloomberg US Aggregate	0.11	0.11	0.07	4.06
Bloomberg 1-3 Yr Gov/Credit	0.24	0.24	0.52	3.42
Bloomberg Treasury 5-7 Yr	-0.01	-0.01	-0.21	2.84
Bloomberg Investment Grade Corp	0.45	0.45	-0.03	5.25
Bloomberg High Yield Corp	1.69	1.69	1.19	8.84
JPMorgan EMBI Global Diversified	2.86	2.86	1.57	13.79

Source: Bloomberg, as of 4/30/2026. Past performance does not guarantee future returns.

dissented on the future direction of interest rates. Officials also tweaked their official public statements to include language about how “developments in the Middle East are contributing to a high level of uncertainty about the economic outlook.” Such dissent and commentary weighed on fixed income returns toward the end of April and by month’s end, investors priced in an even slimmer chance of an interest rate cut through the balance of 2026.

Outside of Treasury markets, spreads generally tightened, leading to positive returns for both investment grade and high yield corporate bonds. High yield corporate bonds fared better than their investment grade counterparts given their lower duration (less interest rate sensitive) profile in a rising interest rate environment. Emerging market bonds also moved sharply higher in April, benefiting from similar tailwinds as their emerging market equity counterparts.

POSTLUDE

“The more things change, the more they stay the same” is an aphorism French critic Jean-Baptiste Alphonse Karr coined in 1849. The phrase signifies that despite apparent surface-level changes, technological advancements, or leadership shifts, fundamental human behaviors and underlying problems or systems often remain similar. The phrase has had tremendous staying power in multiple capacities, with American rock bands like Cinderella and Bon Jovi even referencing it in songs written over 140 years after its coinage.

I think the phrase remains especially relevant in describing the first four months of global market performance in 2026. In a nutshell, despite some new and valid concerns, global markets are still in mostly positive territory through the first four months of the year (sound familiar?). The duration and global impact of geopolitical conflict in the Middle East remain to be seen, but we understand markets are often fickle in the short term and trying to position portfolios around resulting price reactions is incredibly difficult and risky. Despite near-term uncertainty, we continue to favor a prudent rebalancing approach within our clients’ portfolios and are encouraged by the benefits that approach has provided our clients to start the year.



Joe Nitting serves as the Director of Research for the centralized investment research function of the Retirement & Investment Solutions practice at CBIZ, Inc. Joe conducts investment research in both traditional and alternative asset classes, and he assists in the portfolio construction process for the firm’s centralized investment research function. Joe has a B.S. in both Finance and Accounting from the University of Dayton. He began his career in investments at a boutique registered investment advisory firm in the greater Chicago area, focusing on traditional investments. He also served as an analyst for a registered investment advisory firm in the Cleveland area, where he specialized in alternative investments. Joe plays an important role in fostering a culture of collaboration and creativity within CBIZ while offering unique insights based on his experience across a wide spectrum of investment types.

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