

WINTER 2024

# HARVEST

*a magazine for clients and friends of The Joseph Group*



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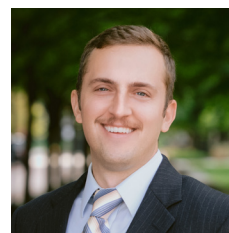
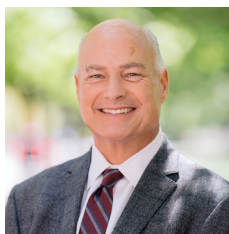
# 13

### SAVVY CFP

Shall We Go Dutch?

## OUR COMPANY

The Joseph Group has a simple but powerful mission: *helping create great lives, one story at a time.* We do this by understanding and encouraging our clients' goals and dreams and then developing tailored financial plans and portfolios that help each client live a life of greatness.



### The Joseph Group Team

*Top Row:* Mark Palmer, JD; Matt Palmer; R. Travis Upton, CFA, FRM, CAIA; Scott Mizer, QKA®; Todd Walter, CFP®, CPA *Second Row:* Jake Martin, CFP®; Nick Boyden; Matt Zimmermann, CFP®; Theresa LeChard, CFP®; Patrick Finneran, CFP® *Third Row:* Ryan Kuhn; Alex Jenney; Zach Granger; Jodi Picetti; Angie Eversole *Fourth Row:* John Backus; Kaleb Luke; Alex Durbin, CFA; Andrew Burkey *Fifth Row:* Matt Kruckenber, QKA®; Kim Kline, CRPS™; Lori Fiske; Michelle O'Brien



Welcome Joseph Group clients, friends, family and any others perusing the pages of this issue of Harvest Magazine.

It has been quite a year as we head into the homestretch of 2024. As we write this Partners Corner in mid-November, we are fully into Fall with the foreshadow of winter in the air. Here in Ohio, we dealt with a summer of record heat and drought. Unfortunately, the drought continues. September and October hurricanes generated devastating flooding and wind damage for Florida and throughout the southeast. Lives were lost and lives were forever changed. The recovery will continue for many years. Our prayers go out to everyone dealing with Mother Nature's fury.

But Fall means football, and as high school teams are ending their seasons, college teams are jockeying for playoff and bowl positioning, and at the pro level the Bengals and Browns are, once again, falling short of expectations.

Most notably, a long (and what seemed like unending)

election season is behind us. The process has its flaws. Too much money is spent and it creates divisiveness. Some are pleased with the results, others not so. But we all need to look to the future with the expectation that those whom we have elected will work to assure that there is "liberty and justice for all."

In this issue of Harvest Magazine you will meet good friends and clients Joe and Ginny Favazzo. Joe's knack for seeing business opportunities and then going after them has served the marketplace, provided employment for hundreds and has rewarded Joe and Ginny in a manner that they have been able to give back to others. And their warehouse collection of vintage automobiles has provided an outlet for a passion Joe and Ginny share.

Our MARKETalk section offers thoughts about how the world is changing and how with those changes our Wealth Allocation Framework provides an "all weather" approach to developing investment strategies and using those strategies in positioning client assets for both safety and growth.

In Our Savvy CFP section "Shall We Go Dutch?" we share with readers what we learned when we received a visit from a number of financial advisors from The Netherlands.

Finally, as always, we provide readers with updates on team promotions and new team members who have joined us.

Thank you for allowing us to be part of your great life!

With gratitude,  
Mark, Scott, Travis, Todd, and Matt



JOE & GINNY FAVAZZO

## DRIVEN BY DREAMS: CELEBRATING LIFE'S JOURNEY

*Editor's Note: We are delighted to share the great life story of longtime friends and clients, Joe and Ginny Favazzo. Theirs is the quintessential American success story – humble beginnings to the blessings of family life, business success, and their latest chapter of an extensive car collection and travel. Key to all of it has been doing it together and maintaining a foundation of gratitude, humility, and joy. Enjoy learning more about this wonderful couple and continue to pursue your own great life story!*

**Matt: Joe, thank you for sharing your and Ginny's great life story with our readers. Let's start with a bit about your families and how you two met.**

I was born and raised in Alliance, Ohio and Ginny was born and raised in Canonsburg, Pennsylvania.

I have two brothers and two sisters. My father had 13 brothers and sisters, all but one resided in Alliance. Our family home was the area where everyone congregated, and always great food was available!

Ginny has one brother and one sister in Pennsylvania, and another sister living in Oklahoma. Ginny claims the challenging aspect with meeting my family was remembering everyone's name, and just all the commotion!

Our personal journey began in 1974, when I knocked on Ginny's apartment door and proceeded to show her a set of waterless cookware! She did place an order, but on a layaway plan, and I was supposed to deliver to her the payment book. Instead, I mailed it. She was somewhat irritated when it appeared in her



▲ Joe and Ginny, circa 1970's

mailbox, and thinking she'd never see me again, she threw it away! I followed up six weeks later, inquiring as to why a payment had not been received, and Ginny stated that I didn't deliver it to her. So, I confessed I had dropped it in the mail instead. She said she hadn't received it, and that it must have gotten lost in the mail! So, I did deliver the payment book, we went out for drinks that night, and later started dating. After almost seven years, Ginny did confess that she did receive the payment book and threw it away. I still claim it was entrapment!

**Matt: Laughing...great story Joe! Let's move on to your respective careers – sketch those for us please.**



▲ The Favazzo family in the garage

Ginny's career started in accounting, working in offices around Pittsburgh. After we moved to Ohio she worked at Diebold's Research Center in North Canton, in the ATM division.

My career started by responding to an ad for a summer job in

1972 that stated, "Sleep late, eat steaks and flirt with the waitresses, \$250.00 a week." The next thing I knew I was selling waterless cookware to single working girls in their homes, for their hope chest! I thoroughly enjoyed this job, and a year later, I was promoted and sent to Pittsburgh to open up an office there. That job lasted 14 years.

I had an opportunity in 1987 to enter the medical device industry with my founding of Modern Medical. That business brought us and our first-born son, Matthew, to Columbus. Ginny stayed at home with Matthew, while I grew my business. Then in 1989, our



▲ Joe with their 1947 Mercury

second son, Christopher, was born. Modern Medical grew to 125 employees and in 2013 was acquired. I stayed with that company for an additional two years. Modern was sold two more times, the last being to Optum. I had a non-compete clause for five years, so during that time Ginny and I traveled, purchasing cars and signs.

I - along with a few former employees - started a new pharmacy company in 2018, which I am still active in today.

**Matt: Congratulations on building a great business, selling it, then re-entering the same industry again! Let's move on to your own family; tell us about your and Ginny's two sons.**

Our two sons are now 38 and 35 years old. The oldest, Matt, lives in Hoboken, New Jersey, and



▲ Sons Christopher and Matthew



▲ The family, including grand dog Kimber!

works in the family pharmaceutical business. Our youngest son, Chris, lives in Watertown, Tennessee, and works in a different family business that we have had for many years. Both are single and enjoying life. Chris has a great dog, "Kimber" that we love...she is our grand dog!

Our main residence is in



▲ Ginny & Joe overlooking part of their garage.

Columbus, Ohio, and we have a second home in Mt. Juliet, Tennessee. We own property in Lebanon, Tennessee, and currently are in the process of building our final home there.

**Matt:**  
Wonderful. Let's turn to another part of your great life story – your and Ginny's amazing car

**collection. Tell us how you got into that hobby.**

Ginny and I have been involved with cars since our early teens. I worked at my uncle's gas station in Alliance. Ginny worked the summers at Pittsburgh International Dragway and Heidelberg Racetrack, both in the Pittsburgh area.

Our current car collection consists of about 40 vehicles. They range from 1947 to 2020. We specialize in original cars. As you may know, cars are only "original" once! For example, we own a 1969 Plymouth Road Runner with only 3,600 miles and

a 1964 fuel-injected Corvette with 32,000 miles. We also own a 1973 Oldsmobile Delta 88 convertible with 3,400 miles, with the original tires on it, that are still inflated! There is a 1969 Pontiac GTO that we completely restored to its original state, that car has 1,100 miles on it since



▲ Part of the car and sign collection

its completion 13 years ago! We also kept the 1977 Pontiac Grand Prix that was purchased in 1980, and in 1981 was the car we drove to Winchester, Virginia to get married! Our collection also includes many porcelain and neon signs from the 50's and 60's.

**Matt: Wow. Can you share some of your favorites?**

**My favorites:**

- 1969 Pontiac GTO
- 1965 Pontiac 2 + 2 convertible
- 1987 Oldsmobile Cutlass Supreme, purchased for me by Matt and Chris
- 1987 Chevrolet Sierra short bed pickup truck



▲ Ginny & Joe at the Mecum Classic Car Auction

### Ginny's favorites:

- 1958 Pontiac Chieftain convertible
- 1969 Pontiac Grand Prix
- 1971 Oldsmobile Cutlass 442-W30
- 1965 Chevrolet Malibu SS convertible
- 2016 Chevrolet Corvette Z06

**Matt: You and Ginny were so gracious to host a group of our clients and friends earlier this year at the large warehouse where you house your collection. Seeing these up close was such a treat for all of us – thank you so much! Let's move on to any closing advice you would give our readers as they approach or enter retirement – or as we like to**

**put it, "the next great chapter of their lives."**

My advice to anyone as they approach and enter retirement would be to have a plan. Not just financially, but a life plan. For example, a hobby, whether it be golf, or gardening, enjoying grand children or traveling. It is important to stay mentally and physically busy. Challenge yourself daily.

Ginny's advice...follow the plan! Also, in regards to your relationship, make sure you make time to spend together!

**Matt: Joe, thank you so much for sharing your and Ginny's story with all of us. We're so thankful to know and work with you and we wish you continued health and joy as you live your great life. God Bless! ▲**

## NON-PROFIT SPOTLIGHT: LOWER LIGHTS MINISTRIES

We are pleased to introduce our readers to a local not-for-profit we support, Lower Lights Ministries.

Compelled by the love of God, the mission of Lower Lights Ministries is to invest in the restoration of the whole person and reconciliation of communities through transformative relationships and leadership development.

Founded in 1991 by the members of Lower Lights Community Church and Pastors Dave and Jane Fulks, for the first decade the ministry focused on meeting the emergency needs of Franklinton families.

Over the past two decades, the organization has evolved into a holistic community development organization.

Today Lower Lights has a variety of programs. They work with families to provide safe housing and to improve housing

stability. Their Youth Mentoring program and youth-focused Community Learning Center in the central Hilltop neighborhood promote positive youth development and the Center provides a place for middle and high school youth to go after school.

They offer safe housing and connect women in recovery and women returning from prison with comprehensive services to address their needs. Lower Lights Outreach Services provides individualized mentoring and supportive resources for adults in Franklinton.

Working in the community to address the needs of the whole person, Lower Lights builds relationships and works for a safe, healing community. Funded by church and business donations as well as grants and donations by individuals, Lower Lights has a variety of volunteer opportunities. Find out more at [lowerlights.org](http://lowerlights.org).



## A FAMILY-OPERATED BUSINESS WITH A LEGACY OF QUALITY

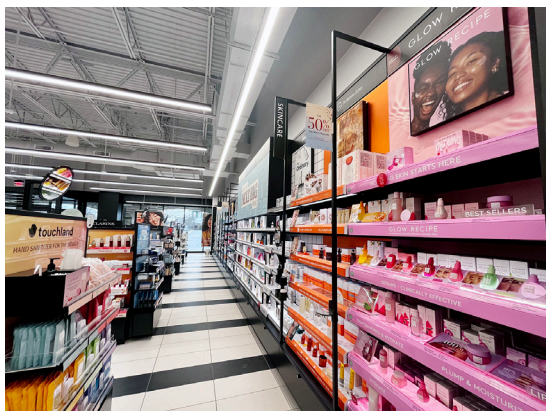
When your name is on the product, it means more.

Singleton Construction's story is one of family, grit, and a deep-rooted passion for building—not just structures but lasting relationships. It all began in 1995 with Nancy Doczy and Chris Singleton, who created a traveling team specializing in Walmart remodels. While they weren't constructing stores from the ground up, they transformed existing spaces with precision and care. In an industry where efficiency and attention to detail are vital, they weren't just improving stores—they were laying the foundation for a company that would span generations.



▲ Nancy Doczy and part of the Singleton team

Fast forward to 2006, when Denise Doczy-DeLong, Nancy's daughter, left her corporate career to follow in her mother's footsteps. Denise wasn't merely joining the family business; she was stepping in as the owner, ready to lead Singleton Construction into new territory. In her first year, with a small, tight-knit team, she managed seven jobs. But for Denise, it was never about the numbers. It was about taking care of her mother and focusing on the people—the clients, team members, and partners—that made each project personal.



Under Denise's leadership, the company expanded beyond

local projects, now serving nearly 40 states—a testament to its remarkable growth and potential.

Singleton Construction has become known for its ability to handle large, complex, multi-site building and remodeling projects for major retailers. Yet, despite this



▲ Adam Delong, Denise Doczy-Delong, Devin Delong

growth, the company never lost its small-business feel. The values Nancy and Chris instilled—care, integrity, collaboration, and a client-first mentality—remain the heartbeat of the business today.

By 2013, Singleton Construction truly became a family affair when Denise's son, Adam, joined the company, making it a third-generation family-operated business. In 2021, her second son, Devin, joined the team, further solidifying the company's family legacy. Despite completing over 6,000 jobs in 2023,

Singleton Construction's heart remains deeply personal. Every job and partnership is built on trust and communication, values passed down from generation to generation, ensuring that all stakeholders feel valued and important.



For the Singleton family, construction has always been about more than bricks and mortar. It's about building something enduring—relationships, communities, and a legacy of care and quality. They take pride not only in what they've accomplished but also in the team and the long-term partnerships they've nurtured. As they look to the future, they remain committed to the principles that have guided them from the beginning: doing great work and keeping people at the center of everything they do.



# WELCOME TO THE TEAM!

We are pleased to announce **John Backus** has joined our firm as a Client Service Representative. John supports our financial advisors and clients, carrying out a wide range of account maintenance and servicing requests.

John's interest in working in wealth advisory is driven by the opportunity to apply his beliefs and convictions to his career.

Angie Eversole, Manager of Clients Services, said, "John has been such a great addition to the team. He's so willing to jump right in and do what needs done, and he already works so well with our clients."

Prior to working for the Joseph Group, John attended Mount Vernon Nazarene University, graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics with a minor in Financial Planning.

John lives in Columbus. In his free time, he loves spending as much time as possible with family and friends. He also enjoys reading theology, running, and playing piano.



We are also pleased to welcome **Kaleb Luke** to our Service Excellence Team as Client Service Representative. He also supports our financial advisors and clients, carrying out a wide range of account maintenance and servicing requests.

Kaleb's passion and mission came to light in college – to help others steward what they have for what they care about most.

Angie Eversole, Manager of Clients Services, said, "We were so thrilled to welcome Kaleb to



the team. He plays an important role in our mission to serve and empower our clients."

Kaleb graduated from Cedarville University in 2024 with a Bachelor of Science in Management and a Minor in Bible.

Kaleb was born and raised in the town of Kearney, Nebraska, the middle of three brothers. Upon graduating, he moved to Columbus to pursue his career in financial services. When he's not at work Kaleb enjoys spending time with friends and family, going to the lake, traveling, watching sports and remains an avid Husker fan.

We are also pleased to announce **Patrick Finneran, CFP®** has joined the firm as Client Advisor. Patrick is passionate about helping people align their money with their values, making informed decisions that will have a lasting impact.

Todd Walter, Partner and Chief Wealth Planning Officer said, "We are so blessed to have Patrick on our team! He's a man of incredibly strong character and has a passion for our mission. I'm confident all our clients will quickly benefit from Patrick's extensive experience and the wisdom it brings."

Patrick holds a Bachelor of Science in Economics from Miami University's Farmer School of Business in Oxford, Ohio and has over a decade of experience working with clients prior to joining The Joseph Group. He has earned the Certified Financial Planner® designation and is a member of the Financial Planning Association.

A central Ohio native, Patrick now lives in Hilliard with his wife Julie and their three children – Lucas, Elizabeth, and Timothy. When not at work you can find him traveling with family, on the golf course searching for a hole-in-one, or enjoying coffee over an inspirational book.



# CELEBRATING TEAM PROMOTIONS

It's been a busy year at The Joseph Group and in addition to welcoming Patrick Finneran and John Backus to the team, **Jake Martin, CFP®** has been promoted to Client Advisor and Team Leader. In this new role, Jake will continue to be lead advisor for a group of clients while also overseeing one of our advisor teams.

Jake has been with The Joseph Group since 2013. He strives to solve problems and help clients feel at ease about their financial lives and he enjoys pursuing new knowledge that will ultimately help his clients lead better lives.



Jake Martin, CFP®

**Theresa LeChard, CFP®** has been promoted to Client Advisor, with responsibility for a group of clients. Theresa joined The Joseph Group in 2021 as a Wealth Advisory Associate.

She obtained her Certified Financial Planner® accreditation in early 2023 and was promoted to Senior Wealth Advisory Associate soon after.

Theresa made an immediate impact when she joined The Joseph Group and looks forward to this new chapter. She loves working closely with her clients and their families to discover their purpose and empowering clients on their financial journeys.



Theresa LeChard, CFP®

Earlier this year **Alex Jenney** was promoted from the Service Excellence Team to the Advisor Team as a Wealth Advisory Associate. Alex joined The

Joseph Group in June 2023 as a Client Service Representative.

Partner and Chief Wealth Planning Officer Todd Walter said, "Alex understands every financial plan we create is a chance to empower someone to achieve their dreams, and every conversation is an opportunity to make a lasting impact. He loves serving clients."



Alex Jenney

Alex has always been interested in personal finance and stewarding money and knows finances are so much more than what people see on the surface.

This fall **Zach Granger** was also promoted from the Service Excellence Team to the Advisor Team as a Wealth Advisory Associate. Zach joined The Joseph Group in 2024 after graduating from Ashland University.

Partner and Chief Wealth Planning Officer Todd Walter said, "Since Zach's first day at The Joseph Group, he's been eager to jump in, help our team, and serve our clients well. His enthusiasm for helping our clients live great lives is so joyful and will be felt by all."



Zach Granger

Zach has always loved helping others and being able to help others achieve their goals is something he wanted in a career. He approaches everything with enthusiasm and always tries to see the potential each day has to offer.

# 2024 JOSEPH PALMER VALUE AWARDS

Named after the father of the company's founders, the Joseph Palmer Values Award is given each quarter to a team member who has demonstrated a high commitment to living out our company values of integrity, teamwork, humility, excellence, and enthusiasm. Winners are nominated by teammates and are celebrated at our quarterly team meetings.

## KIM KLINE, CRPS™ - Q1 2024



In the first quarter, our Retirement Plan Services (RPS) team had a busy schedule of plan reviews, and Kim handled them like a pro. Said one co-worker, "Kim's teamwork displayed in getting through so many of the 401k due diligence reviews has been fantastic. Navigating schedules, both internal and external, handling curveballs,

all of it. She's been a fantastic teammate as we've dealt with this busy season." Another said, "When I was traveling on business, I left behind three rather large projects, just hoping she could move the needle a bit...All three were completed and well done." In addition to her RPS duties, Kim handles our weekly prayer list and schedules our team for community volunteering. One TJG-er recognized her for this saying, "Kim handles our volunteering program so well. She does a great job coordinating and finding outstanding programs for us, which is a challenge for a large group. Kim also does a great job with the prayer list, making sure it's always updated and in front of people." Kim, we appreciate all your incredible work!

## RYAN KUHN, CFA - Q2 2024



As Wealth Advisory Associate, Ryan has made a big impact since joining the team in 2023. In nominating Ryan, one teammate said, "Ryan has displayed each of our values daily. He is a vital part of our team in not just the work that he does, but HOW he does it. He attacks each day with enthusiasm, and I think our team

and clients feel that." Another said, "Ryan took on the project of our new sound system and he just dove right in with the enthusiasm he gives to everything, and it has been such a welcome upgrade to our events." Yet another also loves Ryan's enthusiasm, saying, "Ryan adds overall optimism to our team culture. I see Ryan work the room during events, earnestly engage with clients during reviews, and give clients his undivided attention when they call. I can always rely on Ryan to make any team event more fun, be helpful when needed, verbally express gratitude, and look for the good in issues and people! Authentic enthusiasm is something you can't teach!" Thanks for your enthusiasm, Ryan!

## Archie Griffin Featured at Spring Wealth Summit

We were thrilled to welcome football legend and local icon Archie Griffin as our featured guest for our Spring Wealth Summit in June. Perhaps the best comment ever made about Archie came from his coach, Woody Hayes. He once shared, "He's a better young man than he is a football player, and he's the best football player I've ever seen." High praise from one who knew the character of men.

Archie shared much about his life and the influences that have shaped him, including:

***My parents taught all of us the three D's: determination, dedication and desire. They expected us to live those words in all aspects of our lives and I credit them with giving me the drive and determination I had throughout my life.***

***They also gave me a strong upbringing as a Christian. I gave my life to Jesus Christ when I was 13 years old and I've tried to honor Him everyday since then. Every morning I pray that I can glorify Him in all that I do that day.***

***I was blessed by great coaches and great teammates – my successes were team successes.***

He has built a legacy of paying forward and striving to be his best in every aspect of his life. And he thanks God each day for the opportunities and blessings he's been given. What a role model!



▲ The Joseph Group partners Matt Palmer and Scott Mizer pose with Archie Griffin

## INVESTING IN AN UNCERTAIN WORLD



Alex Durbin, CFA,  
Chief Investment Officer

The year 2024 has been one in which, like many of the last several years, there is a sense events are happening at an accelerated pace. In under five years, Americans have experienced a global pandemic, an inflation shock rivaling those of the late 1970s/early 1980s, a sharp increase in interest rates, witnessed a land war in Europe many thought was unlikely, and watched as a former President was nearly assassinated (twice), while a sitting president was effectively retired.

Regardless of which side of the political aisle you fall on, you're likely to be in the majority of people who long for some degree of normalcy. As far as financial markets are concerned, I think it's worth asking, "what is normal?" It is possible that there is no "normal" in financial markets, only epochs. Reading the headlines today it is clear to us that the prior epoch of low inflation, stable geopolitics and global trade patterns, along with status quo domestic politics are likely gone.

Does this mean we should be worried, discouraged? I would wager no. This sort of uncertainty might seem new, but the future always looks uncertain. Everything of course seems clearer when it is in the rearview mirror. In fact, we often forget what it felt like to even have felt uncertain.

Instead of being frozen by uncertainty, we think instead that we must have an open playbook. A playbook that we think can work in a changing and uncertain environment. Several years ago, I happened to run into a long-time TJG client at a county fair. We talked a little about this world as it was unfolding even then and my words to this client were the ones I just shared – yes, things are uncertain, but we can navigate that by using a new playbook.

We now have the election behind us and the Federal Reserve has finally begun cutting interest rates after one of the longest "pauses" in history. That said, the number of Americans who think the country is on the wrong track total more than 60%. It is easy to confront this set of facts and

wonder what precisely is an investor to do?

You've often heard us describe our Wealth Allocation Framework at The Joseph Group. This is the idea that portfolios we have the privilege of managing are objectives-based tools to help you meet your goals and live your great life story. This framework at its core is what we describe as an "all-weather" approach. Now, bear in mind that "all-weather" does not mean "only goes up". What it does mean, is that even in stormy seas the idea is that you (your capital more specifically) live to fight another day.

The chart below shows the returns over time of a diversified portfolio of US stocks and bonds. The areas shaded in orange represent periods where this diversified portfolio saw very little in the way of return due to rising bond yields, falling stock prices, or both. These "lost decades" are challenges for investors who fail to "open up the playbook" and assume what has happened in the recent past will continue on into the future. To my eye, this chart captures the idea that financial markets have no normal, only epochs. War, inflation, stagflation, financial bubbles, all have a tendency to show up from time to time. The astute investor knows this and plans for the possibility of change.



▲ Source: X.com, formerly known as Twitter

Our "playbook" for what we believe is a changing epoch is not to abandon stocks or bonds. It is possible that uncertainties at home and abroad could abate, inflation continue to trend lower, and the US economy continues to grow. Paired with a more fiscally disciplined US government this could be a powerful scenario for the diversified portfolio shown above. But what if these happy developments don't occur? What is the playbook for that scenario?

For clients we have the privilege of serving, many of you are familiar with our philosophy around real assets and what we call "Dynamic" strategies. Our view is that these areas

of opportunity allow us to build “all-weather” portfolios that handle uncertainties better than a simple portfolio of stocks and bonds.

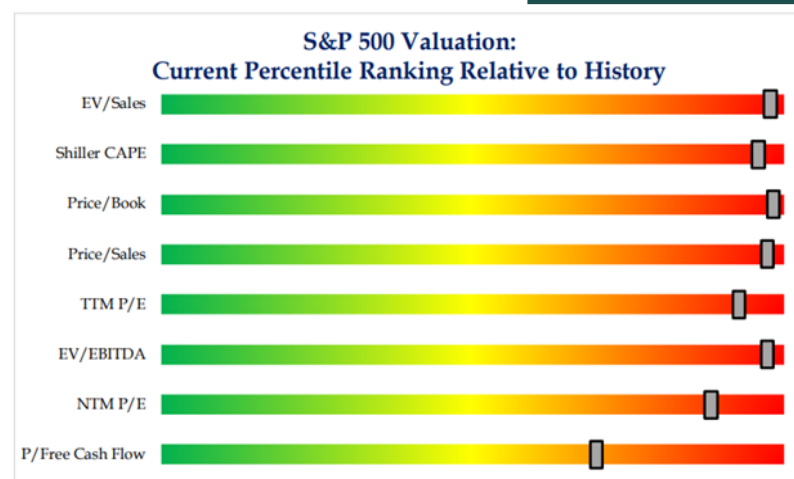
Let’s start with one example. As the year 2022 proved in relatively short order, the world is still a dangerous place. Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and an inflationary shock sent bonds on a path to their worst year in history while the stock market closed the year down ~20%. That spring, The Joseph Group leaned a little heavier into real assets and bought gold in on behalf of many clients. While not a large position it was a meaningful enough one that we thought it could be an effective hedge against geopolitical uncertainty and declining purchasing power.

As you can see in the chart below, gold has dramatically outperformed bonds and even stocks since March of 2022. Gold may not be a tool for every environment and there may come a time to take profits and reallocate, but in this current environment of heightened geopolitical risk and rising government spending it is one we think makes a lot of sense.



▲ Source: YCharts

Part of this “changing epoch” theme is how might markets and the economy handle a normalizing labor market, a transition to a new presidential administration, and contend with richly valued markets in the US. The table following shares several valuation measures for the S&P 500 and where the S&P 500 recently sat across these valuation measures relative to history. Suffice to say, on nearly every measure the S&P 500 is fully valued. If we believe we’re potentially at a pivot in financial epochs how does the S&P 500 respond from these lofty peaks? Will something disrupt the biggest companies in the S&P 500



▲ Source: Strategas

as we navigate the uncertainties ahead? If so, what might this mean for stock market performance?

Forecasting that disruption is tremendously difficult, and many astute investors have ended their careers waiting for the bear market that never came. In keeping with this idea of all-weather portfolios, we believe an environment of elevated valuation levels doesn’t demand a retreat from stocks, but it does mean we should think differently about stocks. As mentioned earlier, one of our tools, or plays in the playbook for a scenario like this is the use of what we call “Dynamic” funds held in many client accounts. There are a host of strategies which can earn this label. One such example is the use of a “hedged” strategy which gives investors exposure to S&P 500 stocks with a measure of downside protection built in through the use of options. These options have a cost, so the fund must forego some upside potential, but our belief is that if stocks wobble or bond yields are too stubborn to be tamed by the Federal Reserve, a strategy that offers meaningful upside with less risk is a tool that offers potentially a better set of outcomes than a simple diversified portfolio of stocks and bonds.

The examples could continue, but hopefully the point is clear. Considering the potential that the world is simply different today is a perfectly normal thing to do. It then follows that if the world is different, we should then consider what that might mean for financial markets. Our stance is that diversification is good, but diversification goes beyond owning a mix of broad stock market indexes and bonds. Rather, diversification requires a recognition of the epoch we’re in a changing playbook to successfully navigate an uncertain world. ▲

# CORE PORTFOLIO ALLOCATIONS

AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

## CONSERVATION

Objective\*: Minimal risk and modest income, consistent with preserving principal over time periods of one year or more.

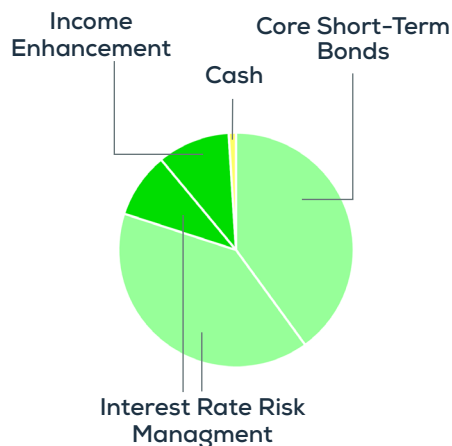
### SECTOR ALLOCATION:

**Cash:**  
1% Liquidity

**Core Short-Term Bonds:**  
40% High quality, low cost index

**Interest Rate Risk Mgmt:**  
49% Ultra short diversified

**Income Enhancement:**  
10% Securitized



## PROVISION

Objective\*: Sustain wealth by focusing on current income and low principal volatility over the long term.

Volatility Target\*: 3 to 8%

### SECTOR ALLOCATION:

**Cash:**  
1% Liquidity

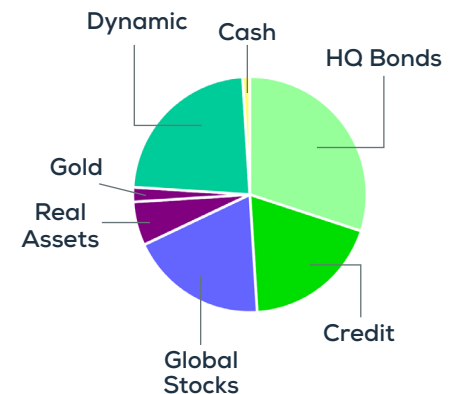
**HQ Bonds:**  
30% Corporate, TIPS

**Credit:**  
19% High yield, bank loan

**Global Stocks:**  
19% Blue chip dividends

**Real Assets:**  
8% REITs, commodities

**Dynamic:**  
23% Tactical income



## HARVEST

Objective\*: Risk-managed growth through a multi-asset strategy to achieve long-term dreams and goals.

Volatility Target\*: 8 to 15%

### SECTOR ALLOCATION:

**Cash:**  
1% Liquidity

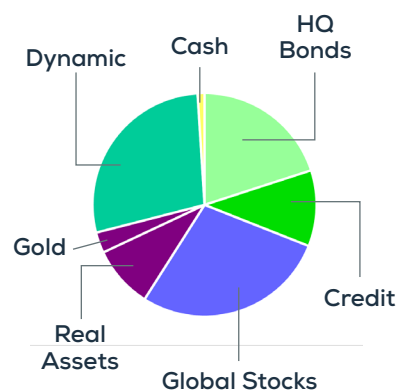
**HQ Bonds:**  
20% Corporate, TIPS

**Credit:**  
11% High yield

**Global Stocks:**  
28% Growth and dividends

**Real Assets:**  
12% REITs, commodities

**Dynamic:**  
28% Tactical, hedged stocks



## ABUNDANCE

Objective\*: Aggressive, concentrated portfolio that seeks to outperform major market averages over long-term market cycles.

Volatility Target\*: 15 to 24%

### SECTOR ALLOCATION:

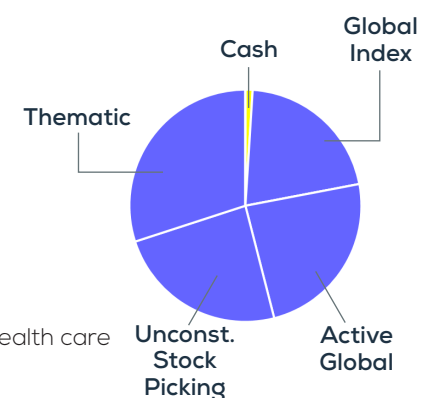
**Cash:**  
1% Liquidity

**Global Index:**  
21% Low cost index

**Active Global:**  
24% Growth, value, small

**Unconst. Stock Picking:**  
24% Value tilt

**Thematic:**  
30% Emerging markets, health care



\*There is no guarantee portfolio objectives or volatility targets will be met. Allocations subject to change without notice.

## SHALL WE GO DUTCH?

The annual Financial Planning Association was in Columbus this September. It was a big win for our city and for The Joseph Group as we sent our Advisors to the conference. Every year this conference draws an international crowd, and this year was no different. Prior to the start of the conference, a group of planners from the Netherlands reached out to The Joseph Group's Jake Martin to organize a group discussion. What ensued was fascinating!

Here are several key components of a financial plan we learned about from our peers in the Netherlands (amounts converted to US Dollars):

- **Income:** An average salary in the Netherlands is \$37,000-\$42,000 per year and couples generally need income of about twice that amount to live comfortably.
- **Income Taxes:** Income tax rates are 36.97% on incomes up to \$79,951 and 49.5% on higher incomes.
- **Pensions:** The Netherlands is known by experts as having one of the best pension systems in the world. The tax rates above include the tax for the government provided pension system (similar to Social Security) that starts paying at age 67. In addition, most employers also have a pension system into which both the employer and employee contribute to that begins annuitizing at age 67.
- **Expenses:** Cost of Living is comparable between the U.S. and the Netherlands.
- **College:** College only costs about

\$2,100 per year for students from the EU.

- **Healthcare:** The Netherlands has universal healthcare.

What are your impressions as you see this list? It isn't intended to be exhaustive, but as I review it, it is easy to see lower incomes, higher taxes, but more employer and government provisions. We could certainly unpack that further and talk about all the pros and cons of the Netherlands economic system versus the U.S., but that wasn't the goal of our conversation. This was intended to be a fun exchange of ideas with a spirit of curiosity. To that end, we had great dialogue about the differences in our economies, and investment,



▲ Some of The Joseph Group team members with our Dutch visitors

insurance, and estate planning strategies.

So, what can we learn from our discussion? I love the Theodore Roosevelt quote "comparison is the thief of joy." That's what I felt when we were with our new friends from the Netherlands – they and their clients were incredibly content. Recently, I've been reflecting on this concept and have come to the

conclusion contentment is a choice. Every person's context, including their financial position, is different.

Yet, we can each choose contentment no matter the financial circumstances. It's not always easy, but a great place to start is by not comparing ourselves with others. And as one of the Dutch Advisors so wisely said "people are people no matter where you are."

We were so privileged to host this group in our office. We learned so much from each other. I hope we have more opportunities to share ideas with other groups like this in the future. And before you ask – yes, we shared a meal together, but no, we didn't go Dutch.▲

Note: There is no guarantee that portfolio objectives or volatility targets will be met.



Todd Walter, CFP®, CPA; Partner and Chief Wealth Planning Officer

## FROM THE BOOKSHELF



### *The Rocking Chair Prophet* by Matthew Kelly

THERE IS A VOICE WITHIN YOU.

Listening to that voice is the difference between happiness and misery, wonderful memories and heartrending regrets. The Rocking Chair Prophet is a transformational story about reclaiming that voice and the unmitigated joy that comes from following it.

After an unspeakable tragedy devastates his life, Daniel, a thirty-three-year-old suburban man, disappears into the mountains. Years later, he reemerges filled with uncommon wisdom and other extraordinary gifts.

From that day on, people travel from far and wide to meet with Daniel, who sits on his rocking chair, meeting with visitors, and helping them explore their deeply personal questions. These questions lead to a series of epic conversations that traverse life's quintessential topics.

The Rocking Chair Prophet is a rich exploration of life and the human condition. It's an invitation to rediscover yourself and reorient your life. This is destined to be a book readers return to time and again, a book that speaks to us anew in every season of life.



## THE JOSEPH GROUP

CAPITAL MANAGEMENT

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*Important disclosures can be found at [josephgroup.com/custody-and-policy](https://josephgroup.com/custody-and-policy)*

As of December 31, 2023, the total assets The Joseph Group/we had under management and consulted on was \$938,156,000. Of that total, The Joseph Group's total discretionary Regulatory Assets Under Management were \$811,713,000 (RAUM) and the remaining \$126,443,000 of assets were comprised of group retirement plan assets for which we consult.

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