



The markets finished the week flat to slightly lower as the S&P 500 dropped 0.13%<sup>1</sup>. While economic news was upbeat, concerns over a dramatic rise in capital gains taxes and increased Covid infections muted the positive news. Unemployment claims fell more than expected, hitting a new low since the beginning of the pandemic<sup>2</sup>. The issue of raising capital gains taxes could have a larger effect on the markets going forward<sup>3</sup>. Granted, as the proposal stands, the effect would mostly fall on those with in excess of \$1 million in

income, raising the capital gains rate from 20% to 39.6% (plus an additional 3.8% Obamacare tax). Adding in state and local taxes could knock the tax on capital gains to 50%+ in states such as California and New York. The concern here is the effect on new investments and fear of selling holdings on the downswing for fear of triggering a big tax bill. The proposal has far to go as a divided congress will not have an easy time passing the proposal in its present format.

It was a trying week around my household as my wife tested positive for Covid and started spiking a fever a week ago Saturday. Fortunately, it was a milder case, and she appears to be out of the woods and is recovering but, quarantining her to the one side of the house and being her caregiver (masked for every excursion to the hot zone) kept me out-of-the office and attempting to work from home. I'm back in the office today for a few hours and hope to get back to a normal work week in the upcoming days. Please get your vaccines and stay safe!

---Chuck

***This Week's Inspiration/Activity:***

***"The indispensable first step to getting the things you want out of life is this: decide what you want."***

***Actor and Author, Ben Stein***

***Your activity for this week is to spend some time thinking about the goals you wish to accomplish and choose one to start putting down on paper and fleshing it out.***

***This Week in History –***

***April 26, 1977 -- The infamous Studio 54 opens in New York City<sup>4</sup>.***

<sup>1</sup> see update below

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cnn.com/2021/04/22/economy/unemployment-benefits-coronavirus/index.html>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/business/biden-propose-hike-capital-gains-taxes-pay-more-child-care-sources-2021-04-22/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/studio-54-opens>

*In this week's recap: Mixed signals lead to a choppy week.*

# Weekly Economic Update

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*Presented by Charles D. Vercellone, ChFC, April 26, 2021*

## THE WEEK ON WALL STREET

The crosscurrents of strong corporate earnings, rising global cases of COVID-19, and the specter of higher capital gains taxes led to a choppy week of trading that left stock prices slightly lower for the week.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average lost 0.46%, while the Standard & Poor's 500 slipped 0.13%. The Nasdaq Composite index fell 0.25% for the week. The MSCI EAFE index, which tracks developed overseas stock markets, dropped 0.47%.<sup>1,2,3</sup>

## A DIRECTIONLESS WEEK

Despite continued better-than-expected corporate earnings, stocks retreated as concerns over rising global COVID-19 infections weighed on investor sentiment. A mid-week rally erased much of these losses, with reopening stocks and small cap companies leading the market.

The stock market resumed its decline in reaction to reports that President Biden supported a capital gains tax increase on wealthy Americans. The Biden news prompted worries that stocks could come under pressure this year if such an increase were to go into effect next year.

Solid economic reports, along with a reassessment of the capital gains news, helped stocks to bounce back and close out the week on a positive note.

## HOUSING SHOWS STRENGTH

Two housing market reports last week reflected strong consumer demand for homes. Sales of new homes in March jumped by 20.7% from February and by more than 66% from last March, reaching levels not seen since 2006. All regions recorded double-digit gains, except for the West, which experienced a decline of 30%.<sup>4</sup>

Though existing home sales fell 3.7%, it wasn't for lack of consumer interest, as evidenced by the 18-day average to sell a home. The decline was largely an issue of tight inventories. This demand/supply imbalance drove median home prices higher by 17.2% from March 2020 to \$329,100.<sup>5</sup>

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## TIP OF THE WEEK



*Save your business money by buying furnishings and equipment at bankruptcy auctions, government sales, closeouts and furniture rental outlets.*

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## THE WEEK AHEAD: KEY ECONOMIC DATA

**Monday:** Durable Goods Orders.

**Tuesday:** Consumer Confidence.

**Wednesday:** Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) Announcement.

**Thursday:** Jobless Claims. Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Source: Econoday, April 23, 2021

The Econoday economic calendar lists upcoming U.S. economic data releases (including key economic indicators), Federal Reserve policy meetings, and speaking engagements of Federal Reserve officials. The content is developed from sources believed to be providing accurate information. The forecasts or forward-looking statements are based on assumptions and may not materialize. The forecasts also are subject to revision.

## THE WEEK AHEAD: COMPANIES REPORTING EARNINGS

**Monday:** Tesla, Inc. (TSLA).

**Tuesday:** Microsoft (MSFT), Advanced Micro Devices, Inc. (AMD), Visa (V), Alphabet, Inc. (GOOGL), Starbucks (SBUX), Amgen, Inc. (AMGN), Eli Lilly and Company (LLY), 3M Company (MMM), Texas Instruments (TXN), United Parcel Service (UPS), Mondelez International (MDLZ).

**Wednesday:** Apple, Inc. (AAPL), Facebook (FB), Boeing (BA), Ford Motor Company (F), Qualcomm (QCOM), Shopify, Inc. (SHOP), Servicenow, Inc. (NOW), Teladoc Health, Inc. (TDOC), Ebay (EBAY).

**Thursday:** Amazon.com (AMZN), Twitter, Inc. (TWTR), Mastercard (MA), Bristol Myers Squibb (BMY), Caterpillar, Inc. (CAT), Merck & Company (MRK), McDonald's Corporation (MCD), Comcast Corporation (CMCSA), American Tower Corporation (AMT).

**Friday:** Abbvie, Inc (ABBV), Chevron (CVX), Charter Communications (CHTR).

Source: Zacks, April 23, 2021

Companies mentioned are for informational purposes only. It should not be considered a solicitation for the purchase or sale of the securities. Investing involves risks, and investment decisions should be based on your own goals, time horizon, and tolerance for risk. The return and principal value of investments will fluctuate as market conditions change. When sold, investments may be worth more or less than their original cost. Companies may reschedule when they report earnings without notice.

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## QUOTE OF THE WEEK

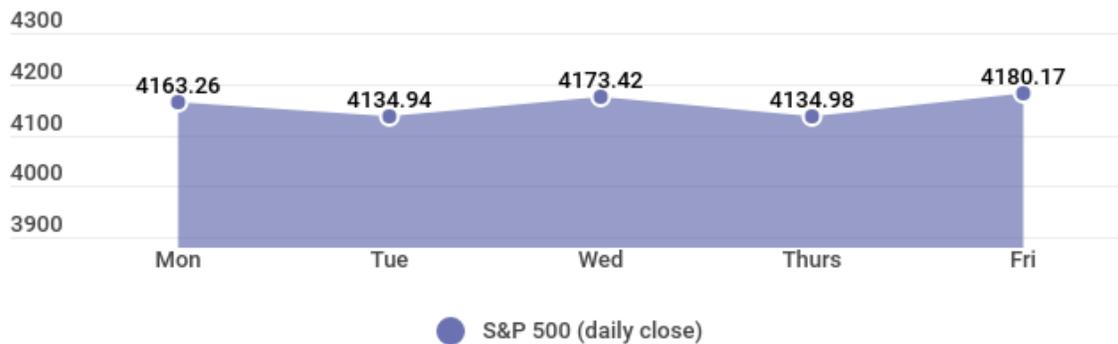


*“Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement.”*

HELEN KELLER

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Market Index	Close	Week	Y-T-D
DJIA	34,043.49	-0.46%	+11.23%
NASDAQ	14,016.81	-0.25%	+8.76%
MSCI-EAFE	2,288.56	-0.47%	+6.57%
S&P 500	4,180.17	-0.13%	+11.29%



	Treasury	Close	Week	Y-T-D
	10-Year Note	1.58%	-0.01%	-0.65%

Sources: The Wall Street Journal, April 23, 2021; Treasury.gov, April 23, 2021

Weekly performance for the Dow Jones Industrial Average, Standard & Poor's 500 Index, and NASDAQ Composite Index is measured from the close of trading on Friday, April 16, to Friday, April 23, close. Weekly performance for the MSCI-EAFE is measured from Friday, April 16, open to Thursday, April 22, close. Weekly and year-to-date 10-year Treasury note yield are expressed in basis points.

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## THE WEEKLY RIDDLE



*A certain month can begin on a Friday and end on a Friday as well. What month is it?*

*LAST WEEK'S RIDDLE: What number is 4 more than the number that is double one-fifth of one-tenth of 900?*

*ANSWER: 40 ( $900 / 10 = 90 / 5 = 18 \times 2 = 36 + 4 = 40$ ).*

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### **Know someone who could use information like this?**

Please feel free to send us their contact information via phone or email. (Don't worry – we'll request their permission before adding them to our mailing list.)

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The forecasts or forward-looking statements are based on assumptions, may not materialize, and are subject to revision without notice.

The market indexes discussed are unmanaged, and generally, considered representative of their respective markets. Index performance is not indicative of the past performance of a particular investment. Indexes do not incur management fees, costs, and expenses. Individuals cannot directly invest in unmanaged indexes. Past performance does not guarantee future results.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average is an unmanaged index that is generally considered representative of large-capitalization companies on the U.S. stock market. Nasdaq Composite is an index of the common stocks and similar securities listed on the Nasdaq stock market and is considered a broad indicator of the performance of technology and growth companies. The MSCI EAFE Index was created by Morgan Stanley Capital International (MSCI) and serves as a benchmark of the performance of major international equity markets, as represented by 21 major MSCI indexes from Europe, Australia, and Southeast Asia. The S&P 500 Composite Index is an unmanaged group of securities that are considered to be representative of the stock market in general.

U.S. Treasury Notes are guaranteed by the federal government as to the timely payment of principal and interest. However, if you sell a Treasury Note prior to maturity, it may be worth more or less than the original price paid. Fixed income investments are subject to various risks including changes in interest rates, credit quality, inflation risk, market valuations, prepayments, corporate events, tax ramifications and other factors.

International investments carry additional risks, which include differences in financial reporting standards, currency exchange rates, political risks unique to a specific country, foreign taxes and regulations, and the potential for illiquid markets. These factors may result in greater share price volatility.

Please consult your financial professional for additional information.

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CITATIONS:

1. The Wall Street Journal, April 23, 2021.
2. The Wall Street Journal, April 23, 2021
3. The Wall Street Journal, April 23, 2021
4. Yahoo! News, April 23, 2021
5. CNBC, April 22, 2021

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