TALKING POINTS

Data through January 2020

Open-End Net Fund Flows (\$)	12/19	11/19	YTD (Dec)
Equity	-60.15B	-37.57B	-361.97B
Taxable Bond	27.60B	26.42B	219.09B
Municipal Bond	8.99B	8.54B	93.24B
Hybrid	-5.04B	-2.37B	-49.55B
Taxable Money Market	64.53B	43.21B	561.61B

Key Interest Rates	1/31/20	12/31/19	1/31/19
Federal Funds Target Rate	1.75%	1.75%	2.50%
ICE LIBOR (3-Month)	1.75%	1.91%	2.74%
2-Year T-Note	1.31%	1.57%	2.46%
10-Year T-Note	1.51%	1.92%	2.63%
Bond Buyer 40	3.51%	3.63%	4.08%

Commodities/U.S. Dollar	1/20	YTD	12 Mo.
U.S. Dollar Index (DXY)	1.04%	1.04%	1.89%
TR/CC CRB Commodity Index	-8.33%	-8.33%	-5.19%
Crude Oil/WTI (per Barrel)	-15.56%	-15.56%	-4.15%
Natural Gas (per million BTUs)	-15.98%	-15.98%	-34.52%
Gold Bullion (Ounce)	3.93%	3.93%	19.94%

Total Return Performance

U.S. Stock Indices	1/20	YTD	12 Mo.	
S&P 500	-0.04%	-0.04%	21.67%	
DJIA	-0.89%	-0.89%	15.79%	
NASDAQ 100	3.01%	3.01%	31.60%	
S&P MidCap 400	-2.61%	-2.61%	11.24%	
Russell 2000	-3.21%	-3.21%	9.18%	
Russell 3000	-0.11%	-0.11%	20.51%	
U.S. Styles/Market Caps	1/20	YTD	12 Mo.	
S&P 500 Growth	2.26%	2.26%	24.73%	
S&P 500 Value	-2.64%	-2.64%	18.29%	
S&P MidCap 400 Growth	-1.21%	-1.21%	14.14%	
S&P MidCap 400 Value	-4.13%	-4.13%	8.16%	
Russell 2000 Growth	-1.10%	-1.10%	13.87%	
Russell 2000 Value	-5.40%	-5.40%	4.35%	
Foreign Stock Indices (USD)	1/20	YTD	12 Mo.	
MSCI World NET (Ex-U.S.)	-1.94%	-1.94%	12.12%	
MSCI Emerging Markets NET	-4.66%	-4.66%	3.81%	
MSCI Europe NET	-2.51%	-2.51%	13.20%	
MSCI BRIC NET	-4.40%	-4.40% -4.40%		
			6.88%	
MSCI EM Latin America NET	-5.60%	-5.60%	-3.54%	
MSCI EM Latin America NET Nikkei 225	-5.60% -1.48%	-5.60% -1.48%		
Nikkei 225 Bloomberg Barclays Bond Ind.			-3.54%	
Nikkei 225	-1.48%	-1.48%	-3.54% 14.49%	
Nikkei 225 Bloomberg Barclays Bond Ind. U.S. Treasury: Intermediate GNMA 30 Year	-1.48% 1/20 1.43% 0.48%	-1.48% YTD 1.43% 0.48%	-3.54% 14.49% 12 Mo. 6.27% 5.51%	
Nikkei 225 Bloomberg Barclays Bond Ind. U.S. Treasury: Intermediate	-1.48% 1/20 1.43%	-1.48% YTD 1.43%	-3.54% 14.49% 12 Mo. 6.27%	
Nikkei 225 Bloomberg Barclays Bond Ind. U.S. Treasury: Intermediate GNMA 30 Year Municipal Bond (22+) U.S. Aggregate	-1.48% 1/20 1.43% 0.48%	-1.48% YTD 1.43% 0.48%	-3.54% 14.49% 12 Mo. 6.27% 5.51%	
Nikkei 225 Bloomberg Barclays Bond Ind. U.S. Treasury: Intermediate GNMA 30 Year Municipal Bond (22+) U.S. Aggregate Intermediate Corporate	-1.48% 1/20 1.43% 0.48% 2.43%	-1.48% YTD 1.43% 0.48% 2.43%	-3.54% 14.49% 12 Mo. 6.27% 5.51% 12.31%	
Nikkei 225 Bloomberg Barclays Bond Ind. U.S. Treasury: Intermediate GNMA 30 Year Municipal Bond (22+) U.S. Aggregate Intermediate Corporate U.S. Corporate High Yield	-1.48% 1/20 1.43% 0.48% 2.43% 1.92%	-1.48% YTD 1.43% 0.48% 2.43% 1.92%	-3.54% 14.49% 12 Mo. 6.27% 5.51% 12.31% 9.64%	
Nikkei 225 Bloomberg Barclays Bond Ind. U.S. Treasury: Intermediate GNMA 30 Year Municipal Bond (22+) U.S. Aggregate Intermediate Corporate	-1.48% 1/20 1.43% 0.48% 2.43% 1.92% 1.46%	-1.48% YTD 1.43% 0.48% 2.43% 1.92% 1.46%	-3.54% 14.49% 12 Mo. 6.27% 5.51% 12.31% 9.64% 9.78%	

Climate

As we have noted more than once, the S&P 500 Index has never failed to fully recoup any losses sustained from corrections or bear markets over time. That includes all of the negative events that have occurred as well. In other words, it has proven itself to be quite resilient. The reason we bring this up is because, depending on the day, the markets have been challenged lately by a new threat known as the coronavirus, which surfaced in China, is deadly, and currently has no remedy, such as a vaccine. As of 2/3/20, there were over 20,000 cases of coronavirus worldwide and more than 400 deaths, according to Bloomberg. For comparative purposes, NPR reported that there are as many as five million severe flu cases worldwide causing hundreds of thousands of deaths each year. Obviously, this new virus is serious and has already negatively influenced certain segments of the global economy, such as crude oil and other commodities. We intend to monitor its path moving forward.

Stock Market

The S&P 500 Index ("index") closed at 3,225.52 on 1/31/20, 3.13% below its all-time closing high of 3,329.62 on 1/17/20, according to Bloomberg. The S&P 500 Index posted a total return of -0.04% in January. Six of the 11 major sectors that comprise the index were up on a total return basis. The top-performer was Utilities, up 6.65%, while the worst showing came from Energy, down 11.07%. The S&P 500 Index posted a total return of 21.67% for the 12-month period ended 1/31/20. Ten of the 11 major sectors were up on a total return basis. The topperformer was Information Technology, up 46.07%, while the worst showing came from Energy, down 10.51%. We believe that rising dividend payouts reflect confidence in the current global economic climate. Total global dividend payouts are expected to rise 5.5% year-over-year to a record \$1.9 trillion in 2020, according to business information provider IHS Markit. All regions are expected to register dividend growth. Dividend-paying companies in the U.S. are expected to increase distributions by 7.1%, with technology, oil and gas and health care sectors driving the growth. Distributions from companies in emerging markets are projected to increase by 5.6% year-over-year, compare to 5.5% for developed markets. A Bloomberg survey of 23 equity strategists found that their average 2020 year-end price target for the S&P 500 Index was 3,355 as of 1/21/20, up from the previous survey estimate of 3,280 on 12/17/19, according to its own release. The highest estimate from 1/21/20 was 3,600 while the lowest estimate was 3,000. Considering that the S&P 500 Index posted a total return of 31.49% last year, we find it amazing that retail investors liquidated a net \$361.79 billion from open-end equity mutual funds in 2019, according to the Investment Company Institute (ICI).

Bond Market

The yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury note (T-note) closed trading on 1/31/20 at 1.51%, down 41 basis points (bps) from its 1.92% close on 12/31/19, according to Bloomberg. The yield stood 87 bps below its 2.38% average for the 10-year period ended 1/31/20. The announcement of the coronavirus was primarily behind the plunge in bond yields in January, in our opinion. The uncertainty surrounding this virus likely sent a good chunk of investment capital from around the globe in search of a safe-haven, such as U.S. government bonds. Keep in mind, the Federal Reserve ("Fed") held the federal funds target rate (upper bound) at 1.75% at its January 2020 Federal Open Market Committee meeting, so there was no directional pressure on interest rates or bond yields from the Fed's actions, despite an indication that it would like to see inflation a bit more elevated. In 2019, retail investors funneled a net \$219.09 billion into open-end taxable bond mutual funds and another \$93.24 billion into municipal bond funds, according to the Investment Company Institute.

Takeaway

Robust job growth and more fiscally responsible consumers continue to provide solid underpinnings to the U.S. economy, in our opinion. Data from Experian indicates that the average FICO (Fair, Isaac & Company) score in the U.S. reached an all-time high of 703 in 2019, according to *Money*. FICO scores range from 300 to 850. A score above 800 is considered exceptional. The data shows that credit scores have been improving since 2013. The S&P/Experian Consumer Credit Default Index stood at 0.96% at the end of December 2019, well below the historical average of 1.83% since the inception of the index in July 2004, according to Bloomberg. This default rate reached as high as 5.51% in May 2009, which was at the tail end of the financial crisis. Think twice before betting against the consumer or the Fed!

Sources: Bloomberg, Bloomberg Barclays, Investment Company Institute

Past performance is no guarantee of future results. Historical performance figures for the indices are for illustrative purposes only and not indicative of any actual investment. Indices are unmanaged and an investor cannot invest directly in an index.

EFirst Trust

High/Low Snapshot

Data as of 1/31/20

							Data as of	1/31/20
Index	10-Yr. High Value	Date	10-Yr. Low Value	Date	Month-End Value	% Off High Value	YTD Return (USD)	Month-End Yield
S&P 500	3329.62	1/17/2020	1022.58	7/2/2010	3225.52	-3.13%	-0.04%	1.83%
S&P 500 Growth	2047.06	1/23/2020	528.55	7/2/2010	1995.60	-2.51%	2.26%	1.18%
S&P 500 Value	1301.02	1/17/2020	486.55	7/2/2010	1249.47	-3.96%	-2.64%	2.60%
S&P MidCap 400	2100.34	1/16/2020	692.52	2/8/2010	2007.22	-4.43%	-2.61%	1.79%
S&P MidCap 400 Growth	988.53	1/16/2020	297.73	2/8/2010	953.75	-3.52%	-1.21%	1.10%
S&P MidCap 400 Value	692.20	1/16/2020	251.27	7/6/2010	654.60	-5.43%	-4.13%	2.56%
S&P 100	1489.62	1/17/2020	463.84	7/2/2010	1446.71	-2.88%	0.47%	1.87%
DJIA	29348.10	1/17/2020	9686.48	7/2/2010	28256.03	-3.72%	-0.89%	2.26%
NASDAQ 100	9216.98	1/23/2020	1728.34	7/2/2010	8991.51	-2.45%	3.01%	0.95%
Russell 2000	1740.75	8/31/2018	586.49	2/8/2010	1614.06	-7.28%	-3.21%	1.49%
Russell 2000 Growth	1128.77	1/16/2020	320.69	2/8/2010	1075.19	-4.75%	-1.10%	0.73%
Russell 2000 Value	2049.42	8/22/2018	804.33	10/3/2011	1821.01	-11.14%	-5.40%	2.31%
Russell 3000	1949.87	1/17/2020	602.36	7/2/2010	1888.03	-3.17%	-0.11%	1.77%
MSCI World Net (ex U.S.) (USD)	6499.50	1/17/2020	3249.15	5/25/2010	6300.59	-3.06%	-1.94%	3.33%
MSCI Emerging Markets Net (USD)	573.23	1/26/2018	296.24	1/21/2016	502.96	-12.26%	-4.66%	2.73%
Ibovespa/Brazil (USD)	43619.40	4/8/2011	9077.09	1/21/2016	26646.82	-38.91%	-7.13%	3.00%
RTS/Russia (USD)	2123.56	4/8/2011	628.41	1/20/2016	1517.07	-28.56%	-1.80%	6.57%
S&P BSE 500/India (USD)	245.12	1/24/2018	95.89	9/3/2013	218.68	-10.78%	-0.57%	1.18%
Shanghai Composite/China (USD)	832.07	6/12/2015	314.68	12/3/2012	430.96	-48.21%	-1.61%	2.28%
KOSPI/South Korea (USD)	2.42	1/29/2018	1.24	5/25/2010	1.77	-26.98%	-6.82%	1.88%
Hang Seng (USD)	4241.01	1/26/2018	2087.46	10/4/2011	3388.40	-20.10%	-6.37%	3.77%
MSCI Euro (USD)	1544.35	1/26/2018	814.62	6/1/2012	1352.78	-12.40%	-3.12%	3.42%
S&P 500 Consumer Discretionary	1005.69	1/17/2020	225.69	2/8/2010	992.01	-1.36%	0.63%	1.28%
S&P 500 Consumer Staples	659.44	1/22/2020	262.40	7/2/2010	648.25	-1.70%	0.36%	2.68%
S&P 500 Energy	737.09	6/23/2014	371.08	7/2/2010	405.45	-44.99%	-11.07%	4.32%
S&P 500 Utilities	351.64	1/30/2020	141.65	6/1/2010	350.08	-0.44%	6.65%	2.87%
S&P 500 Financials	516.21	1/2/2020	151.85	10/3/2011	497.10	-3.70%	-2.62%	2.07%
S&P 500 Banks	383.30	1/2/2020	105.73	8/22/2011	351.75	-8.23%	-7.16%	2.79%
FTSE NAREIT All Equity REITs	804.47	1/23/2020	317.99	2/9/2010	788.26	-2.01%	1.26%	3.58%
S&P 500 Health Care	1219.65	1/22/2020	324.13	7/1/2010	1153.96	-5.39%	-2.72%	1.70%
S&P 500 Pharmaceuticals	768.14	1/21/2020	268.30	6/4/2010	739.50	-3.73%	-0.71%	2.55%
NYSE Arca Biotechnology	5400.34	9/27/2018	960.69	2/8/2010	4830.27	-10.56%	-4.68%	0.31%
S&P 500 Information Technology	1720.68	1/30/2020	328.07	7/2/2010	1673.91	-2.72%	3.96%	1.20%
Philadelphia Semiconductor	1945.37	1/23/2020	307.49	8/31/2010	1789.93	-7.99%	-3.17%	1.62%
S&P 500 Telecom Services	191.12	1/22/2020	100.96	5/26/2010	182.84	-4.33%	0.92%	1.25%
S&P 500 Industrials	711.84	1/16/2020	234.50	7/2/2010	684.12	-3.89%	-0.45%	2.00%
S&P 500 Materials	401.59	1/26/2018	170.73	7/2/2010	361.99	-9.86%	-6.17%	2.24%
Philadelphia Gold & Silver	228.95	4/8/2011	38.84	1/19/2016	103.94	-54.60%	-2.75%	0.87%
TR/CC CRB Commodity	370.56	4/29/2011	155.01	2/11/2016	170.31	-54.04%	-8.33%	N/A
ICE BofAML Perpetual Preferred	290.45	1/30/2020	132.55	5/6/2010	290.44	0.00%	0.87%	4.85%
ICE BofAML U.S. High Yield Constrained	470.80	1/20/2020	226.12	2/12/2010	467.04	-0.80%	0.00%	6.12%

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