

Newsletter

Q2 2026

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Serving our clients and their loved ones nationwide.

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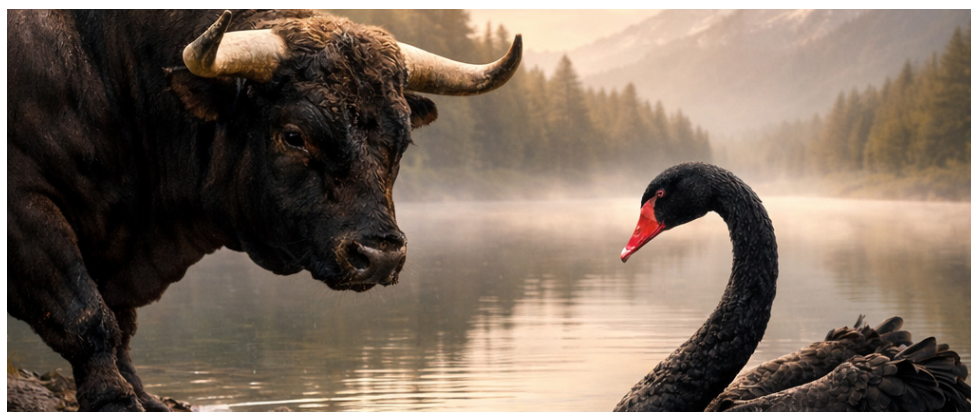
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Geopolitical risk and markets: the black swan analogy

By Austen Wilson



Sometimes markets feel like a bull being suddenly confronted by a Black Swan.

Unexpected events can create moments of uncertainty. Yet history shows that disciplined investors who remain focused on long-term fundamentals are often best positioned to navigate those periods.

From time to time, the world reminds us that investing does not happen in a vacuum. Conflicts between nations, shifting alliances, trade restrictions and disruptions to supply chains can ripple through global markets. When events like these unfold, it is natural to wonder what they might mean for our portfolios.

Author Nassim Nicholas Taleb popularized the term “Black Swan,” inspired by the long-held belief that all swans were white until explorers discovered black swans in Australia in the 1600s. Something once thought impossible suddenly proved real.

Taleb uses this story as an analogy for rare and unexpected events that can have a large impact on markets and the global economy. Financial crises, pandemics and geopolitical conflicts can sometimes feel like these “Black Swan” moments. Yet while certain events are unpredictable, market volatility itself is not unusual.

Investor and author Morgan Housel, in *The Psychology of Money*, notes that market pullbacks happen more often than many investors expect. Historically, markets experience two to three declines of around 5% each year. Drops of about 10% have occurred roughly once every 16 months, and declines of 20% have appeared about every five to six years.

Looking back across more than 30 geopolitical events since the late 1930s, markets have often experienced an initial decline when uncertainty rises. The median drop has been about 6%, and in many cases, markets were higher 12 months later.

Part of the reason is that markets ultimately follow something deeper than the daily news cycle. Over time, the long-term direction of the market has historically been driven by business growth, innovation and corporate earnings. One of the greatest challenges during uncertain periods is the temptation to react quickly. Some of the market's strongest recovery days have historically occurred very close to its most difficult ones. Investors who step away during moments of fear can unintentionally miss those rebounds.

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A thoughtful financial plan is designed with this reality in mind. Diversification across investments helps smooth the experience over time, while maintaining appropriate liquidity helps ensure short-term needs are covered even when markets feel unsettled.

Unexpected events will continue to appear from time to time. They always have. The goal of long-term investing is not to predict every headline, but to build a strategy strong enough to endure them.

“The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance.” —Proverbs 21:5

If recent headlines or market movements have raised questions for you, that is completely understandable. These moments can also be an opportunity to revisit your financial plan, review your goals and help ensure your strategy remains aligned with the life you want to build.

We are always glad to have those conversations.

In faith and service,
Austen Wilson, MBA, BFA™

Works cited: Fiducient Advisors, L.L.C. *Geopolitical Risk & Markets*. Feb. 2026.

Reflecting on Thrivent’s 2025 Leading Practice recognition

Earlier this year, our founder Austen Wilson stood on the main stage at Thrivent’s Business Development Conference as Ascend National Wealth Advisors was recognized as Thrivent’s 2025 Leading Practice. It was a meaningful moment for our team and a chance to reflect on what has shaped our growth.

As we’ve grown, we’ve tried to stay grounded in what matters. Doing the work well. Showing up consistently. Serving people with care. It is not always the most visible approach, but it is what builds trust over time and shapes the relationships we value.

This recognition ultimately reflects those relationships more than anything else. The trust you place in us, the conversations we are invited into, and the responsibility that comes with that.

Thank you for the trust you place in our team.



Events and reminders

Tuesday, April 14

Market & Economic Update webinar
[Register here](#)

Wednesday, April 15

Shred event in Federal Way
[Register here](#)

Tuesday, April 21

Savvy Social Security with Tim Kiesling webinar
[Register here](#)

Friday, May 8

Women’s Prosperi-Tea in Gig Harbor
[Register here](#)

May 26 and 27

Estate Strategy Essentials with Austen Wilson
[Register here](#)

No products will be sold at events.



Riddle us this

I start out small and quietly grow,
The longer I stay, the faster I go.
I build on myself year after year,
Rewarding patience far more than fear.

What am I?

Think you can be the quickest of this quarter? Email jayne.hartland@thrivent.com with your answer!

Lord of Life MobilePack: A community effort to feed children around the world

Community members Shari Jones and Richard Young recently shared a story from their local church, Lord of Life Lutheran, where they regularly use their Thrivent Action Team benefits to support service projects in their community. One effort close to their hearts is the church's annual Feed My Starving Children MobilePack, a volunteer event that has grown into a meaningful tradition.

Now in its sixth year, the event began with a simple spark of inspiration. Members of the church first learned about mobile food packing through a women's event hosted by another local congregation. Not long after, what many would call a moment of providence occurred when the Lord of Life pastor and a Feed My Starving Children leader happened to sit next to each other at a basketball game. That conversation helped bring the idea to life, launching the MobilePack event that continues today.

This year's gathering brought together volunteers of all ages for seven packing shifts. Families, students and community members worked side by side filling frozen meal bags with rice, soy, vegetables and vitamins. Together they packed a record-breaking 186,624 meals, enough to feed 511 children for an entire year.

Support from Thrivent Action Teams helped provide resources for logistics and volunteers throughout the event. For Shari, Richard and many others involved, it is a meaningful reminder of how communities can come together in faith and service to make a lasting difference.



New team members

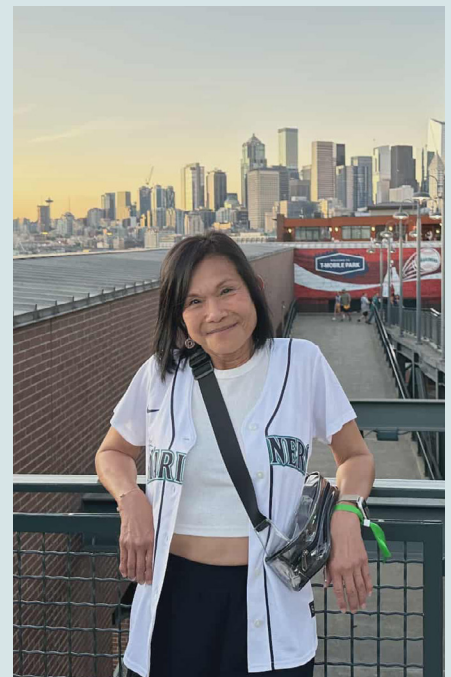
[Visit our team page](#) to learn more.



CASSIDY BAAS
OFFICE PROFESSIONAL



ANDREW MCELWEE
OFFICE PROFESSIONAL



SHARON CHWOROWSKY
OFFICE PROFESSIONAL

Share the gift of financial confidence



As our client, you already know the value of personalized financial guidance. Why not share this benefit with your family and friends?

Recommend us when loved ones are:

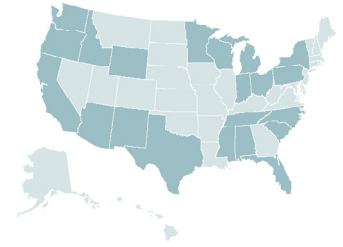
- Facing major life transitions
- Stressing about finances
- Needing investment or retirement planning help
- Seeking to align finances with values
- Requiring estate planning assistance

How we help:

- Customized financial plans
- Experienced investment guidance
- Retirement strategies
- Estate planning solutions
- Values-based financial advice

To refer people, simply provide your financial advisor with their contact information or have them reach out to us directly. We'll offer a complimentary consultation to understand their needs.

By referring, you're giving the gift of financial confidence. Let's extend sound financial guidance to those you care about most.



Our team serves clients nationally and is licensed in:

AL	MN	PA
AZ	MS	SC
CA	NC	TN
FL	NM	TX
ID	NY	WA
IN	OH	WI
MI	OR	WY

As of April 2026.

Stay connected

Check our team website and Facebook page for the latest news and upcoming events.

Website: thrivent.com/ascend

Facebook: facebook.com/ascendadvisors

Feed My Starving Children MobilePack and The Well Outreach are not affiliated with or endorsed by Thrivent.

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