

Questions or Concerns?

If you have questions regarding your current financial planning and investment services, or you are new and don't know where to begin with a financial plan, please call us at **515.225.6000** or email bmckibbin@onlyworkforyou.com.

And as always, We Only Work For You.

Syverson Strege and Company Appoints New President



Blake McKibbin has joined Syverson Strege and Company as President. Blake brings a diverse background of education, wealth management and philanthropic values to Syverson Strege. He joins us most recently from Merrill Lynch and US Trust and prior to that was with Farm Bureau.

Blake will work closely with Johnne Syverson as he transitions to Senior Strategic Advisor. Blake, David Strege and the entire team will continue to provide fee-only

financial planning and investment management services to our clients.

"I am excited to be returning to the Midwest to join the incredible team here at Syverson Strege," said Blake. He and his wife Betsy and their two children reside in Johnston.

Visit our website (www.onlyworkforyou.com) to learn more about Blake and the like-minded values he is bringing to our company!

David Strege Earns Kingdom Advisor Certification



Kingdom Advisors, a membership of a principled class of Christian advisors, recently named David Strege, CFP®, CFA, Co-founder and Senior Financial Planner at Syverson Strege and Company, a Certified Kingdom Advisor®.

Kingdom Advisors grants the certification to individuals who have demonstrated these capabilities:

- » Applying biblical wisdom in counsel
- » Providing technical competence
- » Exhibiting ethical behavior
- » Serving as a biblical steward

This honor recognizes Strege for drawing on his faith-based principles in managing the West Des Moines fee-only financial planning and investment management firm.

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“Acting with integrity, performing good stewardship and being considerate have always been part of our core values. Many of our clients prefer an advisor with a Christian worldview and this designation helps prove our commitment to good character,” said Strege.

In addition to the work Strege has done to earn this designation, he will have exclusive access

to tools and resources to continue to deliver competent biblical wisdom in his daily practice.

A graduate of Drake University, Strege has been providing guidance to his clients about personal finance since 1981. David and his wife Jennifer have two adult children and have opened their home to 27 foster children.

Additional resources: www.kingdomadvisors.com.

Year-In-Review

Lance Gunkel, CFP®, CFA | Chief Investment Officer



Can you believe 2017 is in the rear view mirror? It went by quickly, but there were many impactful stories from around the world.

This past year was again friendly to the investment markets as most major asset classes had positive returns. The US economy is now in its ninth year of expansion and appears to be relatively healthy, despite the recent string of hurricanes and other natural

disasters. We see that job creation and the housing market are strong, and wealth is above its pre-crisis peak. However, that increase in wealth has not been distributed evenly across the classes, which was a major issue in 2017, and one we anticipate to continue into 2018.

The disparity in income and wealth growth is one contributing factor to populism and anti-globalization. These movements that promote nationalism tend to weaken international trade and therefore cause an economic drag. These ideas were present in the US and UK political scene and created a pullback in US global leadership. We've watched China and Russia make moves into this role, which is worth keeping an eye on, particularly as North Korea makes strides in their nuclear program.

The tax overhaul that came at the end of 2017 is another major item to consider into 2018. The implications for individuals is complicated and will vary substantially from one person to the next. In terms of the impact on the economy, however, we have our suspicions. An estimate from the Joint Committee on Taxation projects that the plan will add \$1 trillion to public debt over the next ten years without much expected in the ways of economic growth. Growth in US debt is manageable at low interest rates, but will be a major pain point when interest rates rise.

Whatever the year brings for the markets, we hope 2018 is a great year for you and your loved ones. Cheers to 2018!

Update in Exchange Traded Fund (ETF) Strategies

As your investment adviser, one of our objectives is to continually look for less expensive versions of the funds or exchange traded funds (ETFs). There are now versions of these funds available for your portfolios.

We will make these changes in mid-January. As a result, you may see some transactions on your next quarterly report. If there are adverse tax consequences, your Planner will contact you before any changes are made.

Please note - this does not change your overall asset allocation or objectives. You will remain invested in the strategy most appropriate for you, and now at a reduced expense.

Support A Local Charity with Our Giving Club



Working with the team of certified, fee-only financial planners of Syverson Strege and Company means you not only may learn how to plan well and live well, but also how to incorporate an opportunity to give back to your local community. To assist our clients with this effort, we are excited to introduce a new benefit! Our new *Giving Club* will meet quarterly to help participants learn about three

nonprofit organizations doing positive things within our community. After each presentation, participants will decide the charity to support.

If you are interested in learning more or receiving an invite to our first *Giving Club* meeting, please contact Deb Longseth at dlongseth@onlyworkforyou.com or call her at **515.225.6000**.

Take Advantage of Endow Iowa Tax Credits Now

Did you make a gift of cash, real estate, appreciated securities or retirement assets to a qualified Endowment Fund in 2017? If so, that gift may qualify for Endow Iowa Tax Credits. As 2018 Endow Iowa Tax Credits continue to be awarded, now is the time to begin planning

for how you can utilize this 25% state income tax credit as part of your philanthropic strategy. Endow Iowa Tax Credits are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, with \$6 million in tax credits available annually. Less than \$3 million of these tax credits remain for 2018, and

we anticipate the credits will run out early this year. Please contact us at 515.225.6000 with any questions or let us know how we can assist in facilitating charitable giving as part of your investment planning.