

Kevin Litwicki - NMLS # 289959

Sr. Mortgage Advisor, Stampfli Mortgage LLC - NMLS #1598803

NMLS # 1598803

303 S. Main Street Verona, WI 53593

Office: 608-572-7522

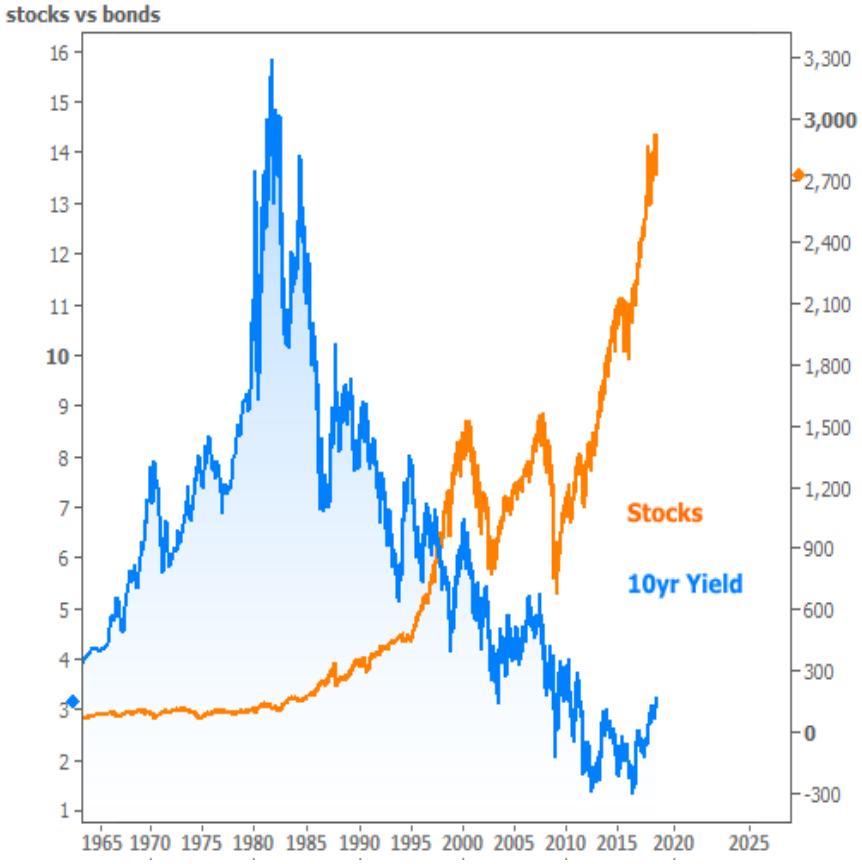
kevin@stampflimortgage.com

View My Website

Interest Rates Don't Go Up In a Straight Line – Here's Why

If you've been anywhere close to the housing market over the past few years, you know mortgage rates have been rising. Last week brought one of the sharpest increases in years even as rates were already pushing long-term highs. Now, this week's massive stock sell-off dropped in to remind us that rates don't always rise in a straight line.

There's a **common misconception** that stocks and rates move in the same direction. Stronger economy, higher stock prices, more jobs, more inflation, higher rates! Right?! In reality, it's not quite that simple, and it's always helpful to revisit the following chart to see why.



Despite the chart above, stocks and rates actually **DO** spend quite a bit of time moving in the same direction. In fact, the only real misconception is that they're **ALWAYS** moving in the same direction. Sometimes, they're joined at the hip. Other times, they're clearly moving in **opposite** directions.

MBS and Treasury

	Price / Yield	Change
MBS UMBS 6.0	99.51	+0.41
10 YR Treasury	4.9403	-0.1033
30 YR Treasury	5.3324	-0.0738

Pricing as of: 11/20 5:59PM EST

Recent Housing Data

		Value	Change
Mortgage Apps	Nov 11	199.8	-2.35%
Building Permits	Oct	1.3M	-7.5%
Housing Starts	Oct	1.31M	+7.21%
New Home Sales	Sep	676K	-1.17%
Pending Home Sales	Oct	63	-4.69%
Existing Home Sales	Oct	3.99M	+0.25%
Builder Confidence	Nov	25	-13.79%

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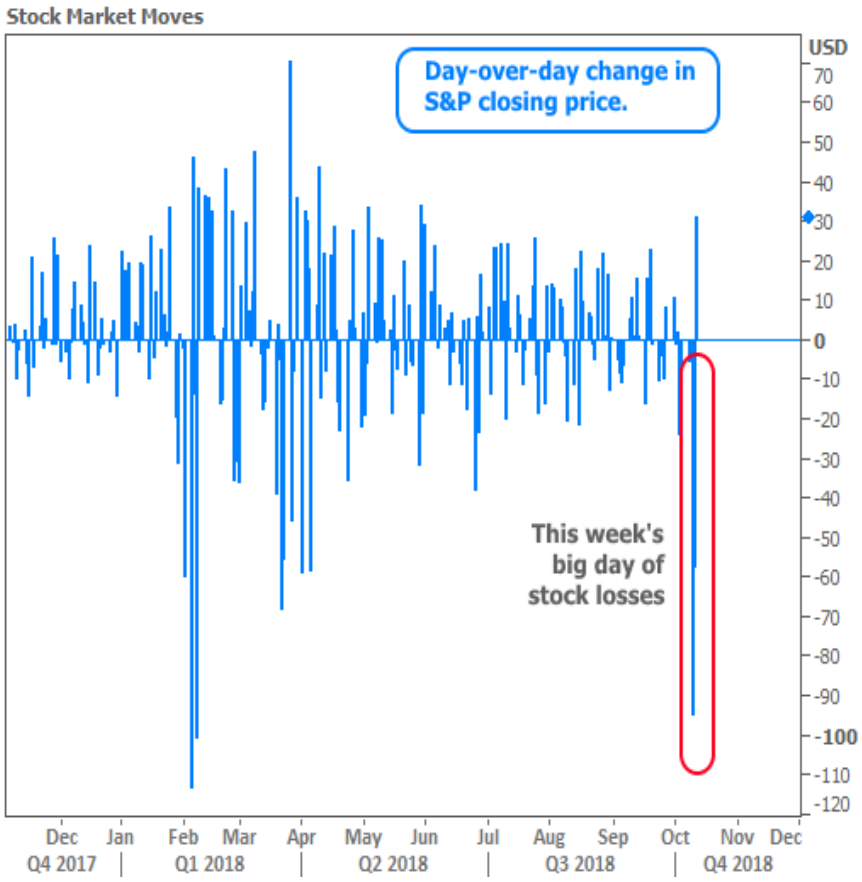
Fortunately for rates, the **biggest** stock market sell-offs are almost always helpful. And this week's was big! In fact, Wednesday's stock sell-off was the 3rd biggest since the Financial Crisis (the other two were in early 2018).



Rates were **reluctant** to follow stocks lower at first, but once things started to get really ugly for stocks, that changed. Rates were then relatively preoccupied with the prospect of additional weakness (which would have helped even more) or the risk of a big bounce (which would likely have caused rates to bounce as well).

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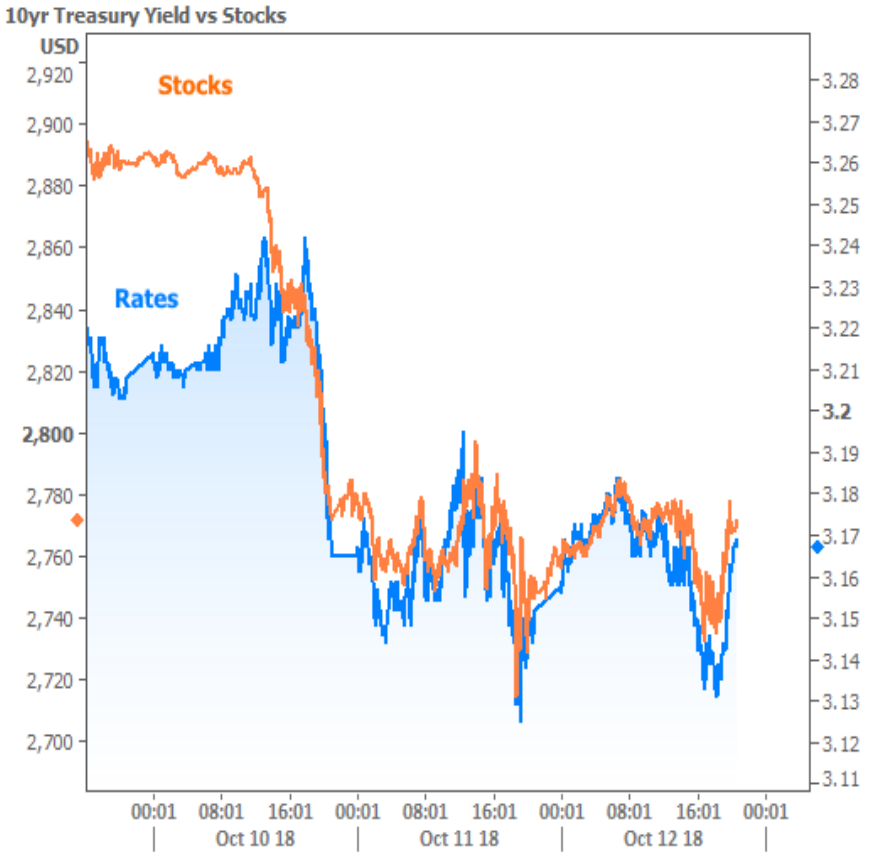

The net effect was that mortgage rates fell back to their **lowest levels** since last Thursday by the end of the week. You may have seen news stories over the past two days talking about a "sharp move higher" in rates. This has to do with stale underlying data used by many media outlets to write their once-a-week mortgage rate article. The sharp move higher occurred LAST week, as we discussed at the time.

With that in mind, it's important to remember that we're **still in a rising rate environment**. There are big headwinds in place and they won't go away quickly or easily. Rates' reluctance to follow big stock losses is apparent in the following chart.

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The **silver lining** is that financial markets are well aware of the challenges facing rates. And when traders are well aware of something, they trade accordingly. That means they've already pushed rates part of the way toward their expected destination, thus leaving more room for **pockets of recovery** along the way.

Much of the time, these pockets of recovery will take rates back down a ceiling they'd recently broken. In terms of 10yr Treasury yields (which tend to move proportionately with mortgage rates), 3.13% looks like just such a ceiling. A break below 3.13% would then suggest a move back toward 3.03%. And while none of that would look very impressive in the bigger picture, it could make a big difference for prospective buyers and borrowers in the coming weeks.

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Recent Economic Data

Date	Event	Actual	Forecast	Prior
Wednesday, Oct 10				
7:00AM	w/e MBA Purchase Index			240.7
7:00AM	w/e Mortgage Refinance Index			945.9
8:30AM	Sep Producer Prices (%)		0.2	-0.1
8:30AM	Sep Core Producer Prices YY (%)		2.5	2.3
10:00AM	Aug Wholesale inventories mm (%)		0.8	0.8
Thursday, Oct 11				
8:30AM	Sep CPI mm, sa (%)		0.2	0.2
8:30AM	Sep Core CPI Year/Year (%)		2.3	2.2
Friday, Oct 12				
8:30AM	Sep Import prices mm (%)		0.2	-0.6
8:30AM	Sep Export prices mm (%)		0.2	-0.1
10:00AM	Oct Consumer Sentiment		100.5	100.1
10:00AM	Oct 1yr Inflation Outlook (%)			2.7
10:00AM	Oct 5yr Inflation Outlook (%)			2.5
Monday, Oct 15				

Event Importance:

No Stars = Insignificant
☆ Low
★ Moderate
★★ Important
★★ Very Important

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Date	Event	Actual	Forecast	Prior
8:30AM	Sep Retail Sales (%)	0.1	0.6	0.1
8:30AM	Oct NY Fed Manufacturing	21.10	19.00	19.00
10:00AM	Aug Business Inventories (%)	0.5	0.5	0.6
Tuesday, Oct 16				
9:15AM	Sep Industrial Production (%)	0.3	0.2	0.4
9:15AM	Sep Capacity Utilization (%)	78.1	78.2	78.1
10:00AM	Oct NAHB housing market indx	68	67	67
Wednesday, Oct 17				
8:30AM	Sep Building permits: number (ml)	1.241	1.278	1.249
8:30AM	Sep House starts mm: change (%)	-5.3		9.2
8:30AM	Sep Housing starts number mm (ml)	1.201	1.220	1.282
8:30AM	Sep Build permits: change mm (%)	-0.6		-4.1
Thursday, Oct 18				
8:30AM	Oct Philly Fed Business Index	22.2	20.0	22.9
Friday, Oct 19				
10:00AM	Sep Existing home sales (ml)	5.15	5.30	5.34
10:00AM	Sep Exist. home sales % chg (%)	-3.4	-0.7	0.0

All Your Mortgage Needs, Professionally Delivered with a Personal Touch

Whether you're a first-time homebuyer hoping to navigate the process of buying a home so that it is a fun and anxiety-free process or a homeowner looking for refinance options that deliver more freedom and flexibility, I can help you analyze your current situation and find money saving options. With expertise in all areas of mortgage and financing, my hope is that once I become your mortgage partner, I'll stay your mortgage partner. With clients from A to Z, files never leave my hands or my desk. From start to finish, every step of the way, my goal is to keep the lines of communication open, provide complete and attentive service, and ensure the most seamless and satisfactory process possible.

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