

UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, DC 20549

FORM 8-K

CURRENT REPORT
PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE
SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

DATE OF REPORT (Date of earliest event reported): November 13, 2017

Commission File Number 0-17071

FIRST MERCHANTS CORPORATION

(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

INDIANA	35-1544218
(State or other jurisdiction of incorporation)	(IRS Employer Identification No.)

200 East Jackson Street
P.O. Box 792
Muncie, IN 47305-2814

(Address of principal executive offices, including zip code)

(765) 747-1500

(Registrant's telephone number, including area code)

Not Applicable

(Former name or former address, if changed since last report)

Check the appropriate box below if the Form 8-K filing is intended to simultaneously satisfy the filing obligation of the registrant under any of the following provisions:

- Written communications pursuant to Rule 425 under the Securities Act (17 CFR 230.425)
- Soliciting material pursuant to Rule 14a-12 under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14a-12)
- Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 14d-2(b) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14d-2(b))
- Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 13e-4(c) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.13e-4(c))

Item 5.02 Departure of Directors or Certain Officers; Election of Directors; Appointment of Certain Officers; Compensatory Arrangements of Certain Officers

(d) On November 9, 2017, the Board of Directors of First Merchants Corporation (the "Corporation") increased the size of its Board of Directors from ten (10) to eleven (11) members with the additional vacancy added in Class II. The Board appointed Michael C. Marhenke to fill the vacancy. Mr. Marhenke's term will continue until the 2018 Annual Meeting of the Shareholders, at which time he will be considered for election for a two (2) year term. A copy of the Corporation's press release, dated November 13, 2017, announcing the appointment of Mr. Marhenke is attached hereto as Exhibit 99.1.

Item 9.01 Financial Statements and Exhibits.

(d) Exhibits.

Exhibit 99.1 [Press Release, dated November 13, 2017, issued by First Merchants Corporation](#)

SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the Registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned hereunto duly authorized.

First Merchants Corporation
(Registrant)
By: /s/ Mark K. Hardwick
Mark K. Hardwick
Executive Vice President,
Chief Financial Officer
and Chief Operating Officer

Dated: November 13, 2017

EXHIBIT INDEX

<u>Exhibit No.</u>	<u>Description</u>
99.1	Press Release, dated November 13, 2017, issued by First Merchants Corporation

November 13, 2017

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information, contact:

David L. Ortega, First Vice President/Director of Investor Relations

765-378-8937

<http://www.firstmerchants.com/>

SOURCE: First Merchants Corporation, Muncie, Indiana

FIRST MERCHANTS CORPORATION ELECTS MICHAEL C. MARHENKE TO ITS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

First Merchants Corporation, a \$9.0 billion financial holding company, has elected Michael C. Marhenke to the Boards of Directors of First Merchants Corporation and First Merchants Bank. Mr. Marhenke was the President and CEO of Independent Alliance Banks, Inc. prior to its acquisition by First Merchants Corporation on July 14, 2017.

Charles E. Schalliol, Chairman of the Board, commented, "The entire Board of Directors is excited to be adding a Director with Mike Marhenke's breadth of experience in banking and his knowledge of the Fort Wayne marketplace to our already strong board. I believe our shareholders and customers will be very enthusiastic about Mike joining us."

Mr. Marhenke stated, "Throughout the acquisition process, I learned much about First Merchants and its people, and am excited to be joining the Board of a growing, high performing institution. I look forward to bringing my banking experience and my experience with the Fort Wayne marketplace to First Merchants."

In making the announcement, Michael C. Rechin, President and Chief Executive Officer stated, "First Merchants is truly fortunate to welcome a leader of Mike's stature to our organization as a new Director. Mike's financial expertise, 40 years of banking experience, knowledge of the Fort Wayne marketplace and his work with community organizations in the northeast Indiana area will provide us with excellent guidance as First Merchants grows as the premier community bank."

Mr. Marhenke also serves on the United Way Campaign Cabinet, the Board of Directors of the David Hefner International Exchange, and the New Haven Adams Township Park Department Board.

About First Merchants Corporation:

First Merchants Corporation is a financial holding company headquartered in Muncie, Indiana. The Corporation has one full-service bank charter, First Merchants Bank. The Bank also operates as Lafayette Bank & Trust and First Merchants Private Wealth Advisors (each as a division of First Merchants Bank).

First Merchants Corporation's common stock is traded on the NASDAQ Global Select Market System under the symbol FRME. Quotations are carried in daily newspapers and can be found on the company's Internet web page (<http://www.firstmerchants.com>).

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