

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): **February 9, 2026**

FIRST MERCHANTS CORPORATION

(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

| | |
|---|---|
| Indiana (State or other jurisdiction of incorporation) | |
| 001-41342 (Commission File Number) | 35-1544218 (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)

| Title of Each Class | Trading Symbol(s) | Name of each exchange on which registered |
|--|-------------------|---|
| Common Stock, \$0.125 stated value per share | FRME | The Nasdaq Stock Market LLC |
| Depository Shares, each representing a 1/100th interest in a share of Non-Cumulative Perpetual Preferred Stock, Series A | FRMEP | The Nasdaq Stock Market LLC |

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))

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is an emerging growth company as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act of 1933 (§230.405 of this chapter) or Rule 12b-2 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (§240.12b-2 of this chapter).

Emerging growth company

If an emerging growth company, indicate by check mark if the registrant has elected not to use the extended transition period for complying with any new or revised financial accounting standards provided pursuant to Section 13(a) of the Exchange Act.

ITEM 5.02 DEPARTURE OF DIRECTORS OR CERTAIN OFFICERS; ELECTION OF DIRECTORS; APPOINTMENT OF CERTAIN OFFICERS; COMPENSATORY ARRANGEMENTS OF CERTAIN OFFICERS.

(d) On February 9, 2026, the Board of Directors of First Merchants Corporation (the "Corporation") increased the size of its Board of Directors from twelve (12) to thirteen (13) members with the additional vacancy added in Class III. The Board appointed Larry W. Myers to fill the vacancy. Mr. Myers' initial term will continue until the 2026 Annual Meeting of the Shareholders, at which time he will be considered for election for a one (1) year term. For his service as a Director, Mr. Myers will be entitled to receive his pro rata portion of the standard Director annual retainer and will be a participant in the Corporation's Equity Compensation Plan for Non-Employee Directors. However, since Mr. Myers will be an employee of First Merchants through the First Savings Bank merger integration date, he will not start receiving Director compensation until the third quarter of 2026. Other than his salary as a temporary employee and being eligible to receive Director compensation, thereafter, Mr. Myers did not enter into any material plan, contract, or arrangement in connection with his appointment as a Director. Mr. Myers is not a party to any transaction with the Corporation that would require disclosure under Item 404(a) of Securities and Exchange Commission Regulation S-K.

Mr. Myers has been appointed to serve on the Corporation's Risk and Credit Policy Committee.

A copy of the Corporation's press release, dated February 9, 2026, announcing the appointment of Mr. Myers is attached hereto as Exhibit 99.1.

ITEM 9.01 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND EXHIBITS.

- (a) Not applicable.
- (b) Not applicable.
- (c) Not applicable.
- (d) Exhibits.

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Exhibit 99.1 | Press Release dated February 9, 2026 issued by First Merchants Corporation. |
| Exhibit 104 | Cover Page Interactive Data File (embedded within the Inline XBRL document) |

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/ Michele M. Kawiecki

Michele M. Kawiecki

Executive Vice President, Chief Financial Officer
(Principal Financial and Accounting Officer)

Dated: February 9, 2026

N / E / W / S / R / E / L / E / A / S / E

February 9, 2026

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information, contact:

Nicole M. Weaver, Vice President and Director of Corporate Administration

765-521-7619

<http://www.firstmerchants.com>

SOURCE: First Merchants Corporation, Muncie, Indiana

FIRST MERCHANTS CORPORATION APPOINTS LARRY MYERS TO ITS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

First Merchants Corporation, a \$21.4 billion financial holding company, announced that Larry Myers has been appointed to the Boards of Directors of First Merchants Corporation and First Merchants Bank. Myers recently announced plans to transition from his role as President and Chief Executive Officer of First Savings Bank and First Savings Financial Group, Inc., positions he has held for nearly 20 years. The two organizations completed their merger on February 1, 2026, further strengthening First Merchants' presence in southern Indiana.

"Mr. Myers brings extensive banking experience and a proven leadership record that will enhance our Boards' strategic and governance capabilities," said Jean Wojtowicz, Board Chair. "His deep knowledge of the southern Indiana market aligns well with our long-term growth priorities and will support our continued focus on creating shareholder value."

Chief Executive Officer Mark K. Hardwick added, "Larry's perspective as a seasoned community bank executive will be an important addition to our boardroom. His insights will support disciplined growth, operational execution, and our commitment to delivering strong financial performance. We are pleased that southern Indiana will continue to have a significant voice as part of our expanded footprint."

During Myers' tenure at First Savings, he served as Chairman of the Indiana Bankers Association and on the board of the American Bankers Association. He earned both his Bachelor of Science and MBA from the University of Kentucky and joined the Federal Home Loan Bank Board of Directors in 2018. Myers' career includes decades of experience in community banking, credit management, and regional economic development.

"I am honored to join the First Merchants Boards at such an important time for the organization," said Myers. "The merger underscores a strong alignment in culture, strategy, and customer focus. First Merchants has demonstrated a disciplined performance trajectory and a clear growth strategy, and I look forward to contributing my expertise as the company continues to build long-term value for shareholders."

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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 First Merchants Private Wealth Advisors and First Savings Bank (as divisions 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 website (www.firstmerchants.com). FIRST MERCHANTS and the Shield Logo are federally registered trademarks of First Merchants Corporation.