

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): May 1, 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))

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 8.01 OTHER EVENTS

On May 1, 2017, First Merchants Corporation issued a press release announcing the declaration of a cash dividend of \$0.18 per share. The cash dividend is payable on June 16, 2017 to stockholders of record as of June 2, 2017. A copy of the press release is furnished as Exhibit 99.1 to this Current Report on Form 8-K.

The information in this Form 8-K and the attached exhibit shall not be deemed "filed" for purposes of Section 18 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the "Exchange Act"), or incorporated by reference in any filing under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or the Exchange Act, except as shall be expressly set forth by specific reference in such a filing.

ITEM 9.01 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND EXHIBITS.

(a) Not applicable.

(b) Not applicable.

(c) Not applicable.

(d) Exhibits.

Exhibit 99.1	Press Release dated May 1, 2017 issued by First Merchants Corporation
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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.

DATE: May 1, 2017

FIRST MERCHANTS CORPORATION

By: /s/ Mark K. Hardwick

Mark K. Hardwick

Executive Vice President,

Chief Financial Officer and Chief Operating Officer

(Principal Financial and Accounting Officer)

EXHIBIT INDEX

<u>Exhibit No.</u>	<u>Description</u>
99.1	Press Release, dated May 1, 2017 issued by First Merchants Corporation

May 1, 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 (NASDAQ: FRME), Muncie, Indiana

FIRST MERCHANTS CORPORATION RAISES ITS QUARTER CASH DIVIDEND 20% TO \$0.18 PER SHARE

First Merchants Corporation (Nasdaq : FRME), parent company of First Merchants Bank, with offices in Indiana, Ohio, and Illinois, today announced that its Board of Directors has increased the Corporation's quarterly cash dividend \$0.03, or 20%, to \$0.18 per common share. The new rate will go into effect with the next payment on June 16, 2017, to stockholders of record as of June 2, 2017. This represents the second increase in the Corporation's dividend over the past year.

Michael C. Rechin, President and Chief Executive Officer, said, "We are excited that our high level of reported financial results allows us to return more capital to our shareholders. Our strong loan and deposit growth, along with efficiency improvements, continues to position First Merchants to steadily increase its dividend. We are optimistic about our future and our 2017 plan which includes building our franchise. Our Board and Management Team are committed to delivering meaningful total shareholder return performance, both in the form of dividends and stock price appreciation."

About First Merchants Corporation:

First Merchants Corporation is a financial holding company headquartered in Muncie, Indiana. The Corporation is comprised of First Merchants Bank, which also operates as Lafayette Bank & Trust, and First Merchants Private Wealth Advisors which operates 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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