

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, 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 February 9, 2017, the Board of Directors of First Merchants Corporation appointed Michael J. (Jud) Fisher to fill the vacancy on the Board caused by the retirement of Roderick English on October 1, 2016. Mr Fisher's term will continue until the 2017 Annual Meeting of the Shareholders, at which time he will be considered for election for a three (3) year term. A copy of the Corporation's press release, dated February 10, 2017, announcing the appointment of Mr. Fisher is attached hereto as Exhibit 99.1.

Item 9.01 Financial Statements and Exhibits.

(d) Exhibits.

Exhibit 99.1 Press Release, dated February 10, 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: February 10, 2017

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

February 10, 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 J. FISHER TO ITS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

First Merchants Corporation, a \$7.2 billion dollar financial holding company, has elected Michael J. (Jud) Fisher to the Boards of Directors for First Merchants Corporation and First Merchants Bank. Mr. Fisher is the President and COO of the Ball Brothers Foundation located in Muncie, Indiana.

Charles E. Schalliol, Chairman of the Board, commented, "The entire Board of Directors is excited to be adding a Director with Jud Fisher's breadth of experience and his work in philanthropy to our already strong board. I believe our shareholders and customers will be very enthusiastic about Jud joining us."

Mr. Fisher stated, "I am enthused about the company and know the people I'll be working with well. I look forward to bringing my experience to help an Indiana-based community bank make a difference."

In making the announcement, Michael C. Rechin, President and Chief Executive Officer stated, "First Merchants is truly fortunate to welcome a leader of Jud's stature to our organization as a new Director. Jud's financial expertise, philanthropy experience, knowledge of the Muncie marketplace and his work with community organizations throughout central Indiana, along with his leadership qualities will provide us with excellent guidance as First Merchants grows as the premier community bank."

Mr. Fisher also serves on the Delaware Advancement Corporation Board of Directors, the Indiana University Health Ball Memorial Hospital Board of Directors, the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, the Methodist Health Foundation Board of Directors, and the Edmund F. and Virginia B. Ball Foundation Board of Directors.

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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