

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP**

Check this box if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instruction 1(b).

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 or Section 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

OMB APPROVAL	
OMB Number:	3235-0287
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1. Name and Address of Reporting Person* <b>HARDWICK MARK K</b>			2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol <b>FIRST MERCHANTS CORP [ FRME ]</b>			5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer (Check all applicable) Director _____ 10% Owner _____ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Officer (give title below) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (specify below) <b>CFO &amp; COO / Executive Vice President</b>			
(Last)	(First)	(Middle)	3. Date of Earliest Transaction (Month/Day/Year) <b>12/07/2016</b>			6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing (Check Applicable Line) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Form filed by One Reporting Person Form filed by More than One Reporting Person			
<b>200 E JACKSON STREET</b>			4. If Amendment, Date of Original Filed (Month/Day/Year)						
(Street)	<b>MUNCIE</b>	<b>IN</b>	<b>47305</b>						
(City)	(State)	(Zip)							

**Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned**

1. Title of Security (Instr. 3)	2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	2A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year)	3. Transaction Code (Instr. 8)		4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed Of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5)			5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 3 and 4)	6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4)	7. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 4)
			Code	V	Amount	(A) or (D)	Price			
Common Stock	12/07/2016		M		7,500	A	\$11.38	70,834.446	D	
Common Stock	12/07/2016		M		2,000	A	\$15.32	72,834.446	D	
Common Stock	12/07/2016		F		3,198	D	\$36.26	69,636.446 <sup>(1)</sup>	D	
Common Stock	12/07/2016		I		6,000.394	D	\$36.94	4,000.263	I	401(k) Plan
Common Stock								446	I	Spouse IRA

**Table II - Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned (e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)**

1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 3)	2. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security	3. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	3A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year)	4. Transaction Code (Instr. 8)		5. Number of Derivative Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5)		6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year)		7. Title and Amount of Securities Underlying Derivative Security (Instr. 3 and 4)	8. Price of Derivative Security (Instr. 5)	9. Number of derivative Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 4)	10. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4)	11. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 4)	
				Code	V	(A)	(D)	Date Exercisable	Expiration Date						Title
Employee Stock Option (right to buy)	\$11.38	12/07/2016		M		7,500		02/23/2014	02/23/2022	Common Stock	7,500	\$0	0	D	
Employee Stock Option (right to buy)	\$15.32	12/07/2016		M		2,000		02/19/2015	02/19/2023	Common Stock	2,000	\$0	0	D	

**Explanation of Responses:**

1. Includes Restricted Stock Awards totaling 29,310.111 shares

**Remarks:**

Jennifer Mainord (Confirming Statement on File) 12/09/2016

\*\* Signature of Reporting Person Date

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

\* If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 4 (b)(v).

\*\* Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations See 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, see Instruction 6 for procedure.

Persons who respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB Number.