

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 and
Chief Financial Officer
(Principal Financial and
Principal Accounting Officer)

Dated: April 21, 2006

EXHIBIT INDEX

Exhibit No.

99.1

Description

Press Release, dated April 21, 2006, issued by
First Merchants Corporation.

First Merchants Corporation

Exhibit No. 99.1

Press Release, dated April 21, 2006

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

April 21, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information, contact:

Mark K. Hardwick, Executive Vice President/Chief Financial Officer, 765-751-1857
<http://firstmerchants.com>

SOURCE: First Merchants Corporation (Nasdaq: FRME), Muncie, Indiana

FIRST MERCHANTS CORPORATION ANNOUNCES QUARTERLY CASH DIVIDEND

At its regularly scheduled meeting held on April 13, 2006, the Board of Directors of First Merchants Corporation declared a quarterly cash dividend of \$0.23 per share on its common stock.

The cash dividend is payable June 19, 2006, to stockholders of record June 5, 2006. For purposes of broker trading, the ex-date of the cash dividend is June 1, 2006.

About First Merchants Corporation

First Merchants Corporation is a financial holding company headquartered in Muncie, Indiana. Subsidiaries of the Corporation include First Merchants Bank, Madison Community Bank, United Communities National Bank, First National Bank, Decatur Bank & Trust Company, Frances Slocum Bank, Lafayette Bank & Trust Company, Commerce National Bank and First Merchants Trust Company. The Corporation also operates First Merchants Insurance Services, a full-service property casualty, personal lines, and healthcare insurance agency and is a majority member of Indiana Title Insurance Company, LLC, a title insurance agency.

First Merchants Corporation's common stock is traded over-the-counter on the NASDAQ National 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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