First Financial Corporation Indiana (THFF)

Updated October 27th, 2023, by Josh Arnold

Key Metrics

Current Price:	$34	**5 Year CAGR Estimate:**	8.3%	**Market Cap:**	$385 M
Fair Value Price:	$50	**5 Year Growth Estimate:**	-2.0%	**Ex-Dividend Date:**	01/05/24[1]
% Fair Value:	68%	**5 Year Valuation Multiple Estimate:**	8.0%	**Dividend Payment Date:**	01/13/24
Dividend Yield:	3.2%	**5 Year Price Target**	$45	**Years Of Dividend Growth:**	34
Dividend Risk Score:	A	**Retirement Suitability Score:**	A	**Rating:**	Hold

Overview & Current Events

First Financial Corporation Indiana is the holding company for First Financial Bank N.A. The company has locations in Indiana and Illinois and can trace its roots back to 1834. First Financial offers clients savings accounts, certificates of deposit and life insurance products, as well as home, automobile, agricultural and commercial loans. The company has a market capitalization of $385 million and produces about $200 million in annual revenue.

First Financial posted third quarter earnings on October 24th, 2023, and results were better than expected on the bottom line, but top line results fractionally fell short. Earnings-per-share came to $1.37, which was 20 cents better than expected, and down from $1.50 in last year's Q3. Revenue, however, was off 4.5% from the year-ago period, settling at $52.8 million, and falling about $270k short of estimates. On a dollar basis, net income was $16.3 million, off from $18.1 million a year ago.

Provisions for credit losses were $1.2 million, up slightly from $1.1 million a year ago. Total loans outstanding were $3.12 billion, up from $2.97 billion a year ago. This was driven by increases in commercial construction and development, commercial real estate, and consumer auto loans. Loans were slightly lower from this year's Q2.

Total deposits were $4.04 billion, down from $4.41 billion a year ago.

We now see $5 in earnings-per-share for 2023 after decent Q3 results.

Growth on a Per-Share Basis

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2028
EPS	$2.37	$2.55	$2.35	$3.12	$2.38	$3.80	$3.80	$3.93	$4.02	$5.82	***$5.00***	***$4.52***
DPS	$0.96	$0.98	$0.98	$1.00	$1.00	$1.02	$1.03	$1.05	$1.06	$1.07	***$1.08***	***$1.14***
Shares[2]	13.3	13.0	12.7	12.2	12.3	12.3	13.7	13.6	12.6	12.1	***11.9***	***11.0***

First Financial saw its earnings decrease just 8.5% from 2008 to 2009 – an excellent performance compared to many financial companies. In recent years, First Financial has seen earnings-per-share fluctuate rather wildly. For example, earnings-per-share declined in 2012, 2013, 2015 and 2017. The company has an earnings-per-share growth rate of just ~2% per year over the past decade. We see tailwinds and headwinds somewhat offsetting each other, mostly from higher loan balances and higher rates, but the potential for higher credit losses. First Financial could also see a margin tailwind from lower expenses relative to revenue. We forecast earnings-per-share growth of -2% for the foreseeable future given these factors.

First Financial pays a semi-annual dividend to shareholders in the months of January and July. The company has raised its dividend an average of 1.5% per year over the past ten years. First Financial issued a special dividend of $1.50 per share on 10/20/2017, though this is not a common occurrence and should not be expected to reoccur in the future. We are targeting a sub-30% payout ratio going forward for First Financial, translating to a $1.14 dividend in 2028.

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[1] Estimated date

[2] Share count in millions

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Valuation Analysis

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Now	2028
Avg. P/E	13.5	12.9	14.6	12.2	18.4	14.2	11.1	9.2	10.6	7.9	***6.8***	***10.0***
Avg. Yld.	3.0%	3.0%	2.9%	2.6%	2.3%	2.2%	2.4%	2.9%	2.5%	2.3%	***3.2%***	***2.5%***

Based off estimates for 2023, shares have a forward price-to-earnings ratio of 6.8. First Financial's stock has traded with an average multiple of ~14 over the past ten years. However, there have been three years (2008, 2009 and 2017) where the multiple was artificially elevated due to earnings declines. Excluding these outlier years, First Financial has traded with an average earnings multiple of ~13, and we peg fair value at 10 due to low sector valuations and the company's own uninspiring growth outlook. Still, we see a strong positive impact on total returns from the valuation.

First Financial has increased its dividend for the past 34 years. While earnings-per-share figures declined in 2009, the company's dividend grew. Investors shouldn't expect the company to have high dividend growth, however. First Financial has not shown a willingness to be more aggressive with its dividend increases, likely due to irregular earnings.

Safety, Quality, Competitive Advantage, & Recession Resiliency

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2028
Payout	41%	38%	42%	32%	42%	27%	27%	27%	26%	18%	***22%***	***25%***

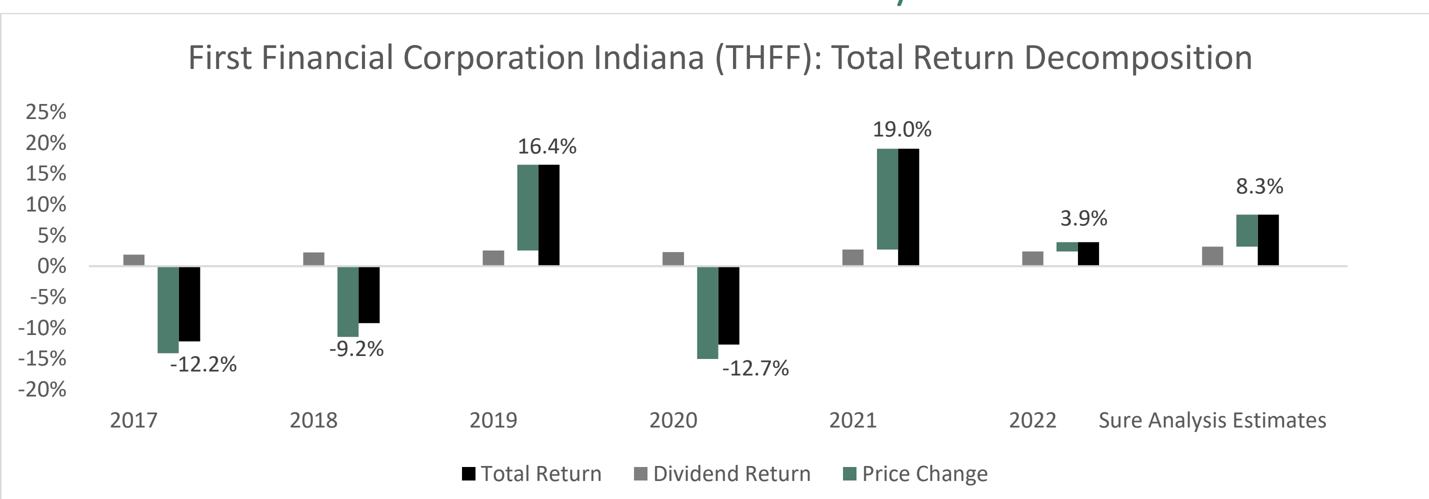
While earnings did decline in 2009, First Financial managed to weather the last recession well. Earnings recovered above 2008's earnings-per-share total in 2010. Since then, the company has experienced varied earnings growth. Investors looking for consistent earnings growth will likely be disappointed by First Financial.

If First Financial has a competitive advantage, it is the bank's presence in its small home markets. In addition, its net interest margin is very high compared to other banks. However, First Financial doesn't have any sort of competitive moat from its business model as it competes in the same ways every other small bank does.

Final Thoughts & Recommendation

After Q2 results, we now anticipate that First Financial Corporation Indiana could offer 8.3% returns through 2028, up from our last update. Shares are still quite cheaply valued on 2023 estimates. Total returns would be based on -2% earnings growth, the 3.2% yield, and an 8% tailwind from the valuation. Based upon this, we are reiterating the stock at a hold rating.

Total Return Breakdown by Year



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Disclosure: This analyst has no position in the security discussed in this research report, and no plans to initiate one in the next 72 hours.

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Income Statement Metrics

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Revenue	147.7	148.6	143.7	151.9	143.8	154.8	170	189	185	212
SG&A Exp.	57.1	57.9	61.9	54.0	52.2	51.6	56	62	66	68
D&A Exp.	5.5	6.0	5.5	5.0	4.4	4	5	6	6	---
Net Profit	31.5	33.8	30.2	38.4	29.1	46.6	49	54	53	71
Net Margin	21.3%	22.7%	21.0%	25.3%	20.3%	30.1%	28.7%	28.5%	28.6%	33.5%
Free Cash Flow	60.2	52.5	37.8	38.1	47.2	55	49	74	51	---
Income Tax	13.8	14.2	10.4	19.9	20.6	11.1	12	12	13	17

Balance Sheet Metrics

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total Assets	3018.7	3002.5	2979.6	2988.5	3000.7	3008.7	4023	4558	5171	4989
Cash & Equivalents	71.0	78.1	88.7	75.0	74.1	74.4	127	657	683	220
Acc. Receivable	11.6	11.6	11.7	12.3	12.9	14.0	19	17	17	21
Goodwill & Int.	44.4	43.4	42.7	36.5	36.0	35.6	89	88	94	94
Total Liabilities	2632.5	2608.3	2569.3	2574.1	2587.1	2566.0	3466	3961	4588	4514
Long-Term Debt	117.9	60.9	46.5	81.1	57.7	69.7	31	6	109	80
Total Equity	386.2	394.2	410.3	414.4	413.6	442.7	558	597	583	475
LTD/E Ratio	0.15	0.03	0.03	0.20	---	---	0.06	0.01	0.03	0.17

Profitability & Per Share Metrics

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Return on Assets	1.1%	1.1%	1.0%	1.3%	1.0%	1.6%	1.4%	1.3%	1.1%	1.4%
Return on Equity	8.3%	8.7%	7.5%	9.3%	7.0%	10.9%	9.8%	9.3%	9.0%	13.4%
ROIC	6.1%	7.0%	6.6%	8.1%	6.0%	9.5%	9.0%	8.3%	8.8%	12.3%
Shares Out.	13.34	12.94	12.74	12.22	12.25	12.25	13.7	13.6	12.6	12.2
Revenue/Share	11.10	11.24	11.19	12.33	11.76	12.63	13.22	13.77	14.06	17.34
FCF/Share	4.52	3.97	2.94	3.10	3.86	4.52	3.79	5.36	3.88	---

Note: All figures in millions of U.S. Dollars unless per share or indicated otherwise.