

## Welcome to St. James' Episcopal Church!

This brief pamphlet might help you understand more fully what membership means in the Episcopal Church and at this church, St. James', located in the hills and dales of Parkton.



All are welcome to worship at St. James' Church no matter what your religious background or faith tradition. All are invited to receive Holy Communion.

## Baptism

Baptism is the sacrament by which God adopts us as his children and makes us members of this body, the church. It is the essential rite of initiation into the Christian community. Since baptism may be administered only once, if you have already been baptized, you do not need to be baptized again to join the Episcopal Church. The church encourages parents to have their infant children baptized, but we welcome adults and children of all ages to the font.



## Confirmation, Reception and Reaffirmation

Confirmation is the sacrament in which the baptized express their mature commitment to Christ. The rite is administered by a bishop through prayer and the laying on of hands. Those confirmed become "confirmed communicant members" of the Episcopal Church.

St. James' offers separate confirmation classes for youth and for adults.

The bishop will receive, rather than confirm, a person into the Episcopal Church who has already been baptized and confirmed in another church, especially churches such as the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox that have bishops in apostolic succession. Those interested in being received join one of our confirmation classes.

Because spiritual growth is an essential part of the Christian life, the Episcopal Church invites those confirmed members who feel so moved to publicly reaffirm their baptismal covenant. As in confirmation, the bishop offers a prayer and the laying on of hands, but no formal preparation is required for this witness of faith.



## Membership at St. James'

A person baptized at St. James' remains a member of the parish until death unless he or she requests a transfer of membership to another parish.

Someone who is a member of another parish and wishes to transfer his or her membership to St. James' should request the necessary transfer papers from his or her parish.

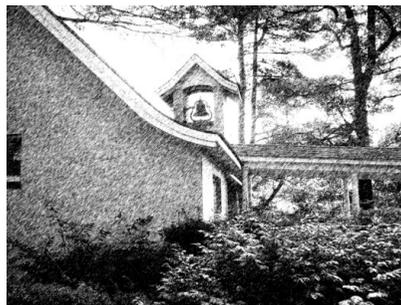
At St. James', as at other Episcopal parishes, you must receive communion at least three times a year to be a full "communicant member." Members in good standing are expected to be faithful in attending corporate worship throughout the year and to participate in the lively work and prayer of this parish community.

We encourage every member to make a pledge of financial support to the parish. Offering such a pledge is a requirement for serving on the vestry.



St. James  
of Jerusalem





HOW DO I BECOME  
A MEMBER...



...OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH?

"St. James', a parish  
rooted in its witness  
to Christ, is a  
welcoming Episcopal  
Community—open in  
spirit, deep in faith,  
rich in worship,  
and active in service."

St. James' Episcopal Church  
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Diocese of  
Maryland



The Episcopal  
Church



The Anglican  
Communion

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