

A Parish Customary Regarding Marriages

held at

St. James' Mill Creek Hundred, Wilmington, DE

The Parish of St. James' Mill Creek, under the pastoral direction of the Bishop of Delaware, endeavors to conform its ministry to the Canons of The Episcopal Church, the guidance and directives of the General Convention of The Episcopal Church, the decisions of the Diocesan Convention of Delaware, and in accordance with appropriate laws of the State of Delaware.

The decision to allow and officiate at a marriage ceremony and blessing within the parish of St. James' Mill Creek always remains within the discretion of the Rector, or in his/her absence the Vestry of the parish. The Rector's decisions will be guided by prayerful and intentional pastoral practices, and in accordance with the following guidelines adopted by the Vestry:

- Only persons who are members or regular attendees of St. James' Mill Creek, and who support the ministry of the church, will be permitted to have their ceremony held in the church. Consideration will be given to those who once were members but no longer attend regularly due to the distance of their current address from the church. Relatives of current members may also be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- As the marriage ceremony is to be conducted by an ordained Episcopal minister in the context of his/her ministry, it is required that at least one of the parties be a baptized Christian.
- The parties must state their desire that their marriage is intended to be a life-long union lived in fidelity to one another, and to the best of their abilities in accordance with vows that they make.
- Pre-marriage relationship counseling must be completed with the Rector, or other approved clergy person permitted to officiate at St. James' Mill Creek. Additionally, the couple may be directed to complete a period of counseling with other qualified professionals.
- All ceremonies conducted within the church will be from The Book of Common Prayer, other liturgical resources issued and approved for use in The Episcopal Church, or in accordance with any guidance issued by the Bishop of Delaware.
- Marriage ceremonies will be held at times other than those of the regularly scheduled services of the parish. Employees and/or volunteer staff will serve at these ceremonies at their own discretion.