St. Matthew's IN THE COSMOS
A REVIEW OF OUR STORY

Introduction

The story is important: our personal story, our tribal story, the story of the Good News
Following is how our story fits into the cosmos, how we are similar to other stories, how we are different.

Circle 1 **All of God's Creation**

We are part of a wondrous world.

Circle 2 **All People**

We are made in the image and likeness of God.

Circle 3 **All Believers**

In contrast to atheists, we believe in a higher power, a divinity. We share this circle with all people of faith.

Circle 4 **Belief in One God**

A particular and personal God external to ourselves, not many or abstract gods
In common with Islam and Judaism
We are creatures, God is the creator
See Catechism: God the Father, p 846 BCP
Have Old Testament in common

Circle 5 **Judeo-Christian Tradition**

Story of sin and promise of redemption
God revealing Himself and His will
Preparing us for a Redeemer

Circle 6 **Christianity**

The story of Jesus: his life, death, resurrection
The story of the early Church
The New Testament
See Catechism: Jesus, p 850 BCP

Circle 7 **The Catholic Church**

Catholic vs. Protestant
Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral, p 876-7 BCP
Essentials: Scriptures, Nicene Creed, Two Major Sacraments, Historic Episcopate
The Sacramental View of Life: Material things can reveal God and be vessels of grace
Anglican, Roman Catholic, Orthodox Churches share this circle for the most part
Liturgy is important, especially the celebration of the Holy Eucharist

Circle 8 The Anglican Communion

History of the Church of England and its spread around the world

Our Ethos: Lay Spirituality--not clergy-centered
A sense of beauty important
Balancing tensions of Catholic and Protestant
Elizabethan Settlement

The Book of Common Prayer

Three-legged stool of authority: Scripture, Tradition, Reason

Circle 9 The Episcopal Church

USA arm of Anglicanism

Presiding Bishop, General Convention, Seminaries

Our BCP

Circle 10 The Diocese of OLYMPIA

The diocese is the primary unit in the Church--"Where the bishop is, there is the Church."

Our Bishop: Apostolic Succession
Apostle, chief priest, pastor
Our visible link to the wider Church

Diocesan Convention

The Close

Institutions, Activities

Circle 11 ST. MATTHEWS

History

Structure and activities: vestry, acolytes, altar guild, etc.

Where our personal stories tie in with the Church's story

The Duty of all Christians: p 856 BCP
Follow Christ
Come together week by week for corporate worship
Work, pray, give for the spread of the kingdom