

Searching for a Church

Written by Calvin Fox
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Yesterday, Easter Sunday, we worshiped at an Episcopal Cathedral. The Service was like a dress rehearsal for the up-coming Royal Wedding at Westminster Abbey in London. The Rituals and Liturgy were done right and with 'elan and reverential pomp and color. The 35 voice choir and accompanying professional 5 instrument Brass Ensemble with timpani, as well as the magnificent pipe organ was outstanding- all well directed by a renowned Maestro.

We sang many Traditional Hymns celebrating the Lord's Resurrection and stood to enjoy the Hallelujah Chorus from G.F. Handel's Messiah. The Offertory Anthem was also by Handel and the *Sanctus* sung during the Communion Service was from Requiem in D by Mozart. All of this was wonderful. But-

There were probably 300 in the congregation which reflected its inner City location, well to do and very poor with a good mix of Brown, Black and White ethnicities. This was impressive. Actually, the number of people, including a lot of children who grew very restless, made for a less than worshipful experience, especially during Holy Communion. There was just too much commotion going on.

And the Sermon was a major disappointment. It was very well crafted, articulate and well-delivered- a highly polished puff piece. The popular Preacher missed his great opportunity to preach the Word, to proclaim the Gospel. Great music is not a substitute for the Gospel preaching. A Brass Ensemble can not cover up a clanging cymbal. Ceremonial Pomp does not make up for Pulpit Platitudes. Tis a pity!

My search for a Liturgical Church, Eucharistic Worship with Great Biblical Preaching goes on.