

And here is a full church

by [Hillary Kobernick](#) in the [August 2, 2017](#) issue

The sanctuary is quiet now.

Maple leaves, scattered yellow cake crumbs,  
the only evidence of the passing  
of Tuesday morning and here is a full church.

You have to leave when the funeral ends.

Brush the sorrow from your shoes  
till it stains the sanctuary, this chewed gum  
feeling, this hapless God wearing polka dots  
and plaid feeling, the silence

in the sanctuary while you packed the crying baby  
into the van, the baby who didn't start crying until  
lunch in the church basement. Crying, wouldn't stop,  
for maybe something baby and simple, maybe for

he just took notice of the silence in the room.  
How all the fried chicken sounded louder  
than the hands. The cry. The way he struggled  
against the seatbelt when you tried to buckle it.