

Running across the pews

by [Jeff Gundy](#) in the [February 9, 2022](#) issue

Just once during a potluck I went upstairs with some of my friends, our parents still nibbling and chatting in the basement, and it must have been winter because we ran around the square plain sanctuary as though it was a playground. We discovered that we could run across the tops of the pews, they were spaced a longish but not impossible distance apart, it was fun and not even really scary to stride from the front to the back, with the comforting padded seats promising a soft-ish landing if a foot slipped. But when I turned and started back I saw instead the hard backs of the pews and the floor a goodly way down, if I missed a step the landing would hurt plenty. I kept going, of course, not because anybody was watching but because I was bent on finishing. I was alert but not panicky, pretty sure I could do this, I made the little leaps as though my stumpy legs were born for nothing more than leaping from pew to pew, day into month into year, making the good landing or the hard one.