

August 2018 | Monthly News from Crown of Life Church

### *Mark Your Calendar*

**8/8**

Back to School Night

**8/15**

Parents Meeting

**8/22**

School Open House

**8/27**

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

## Dealing with Criticism

BY PASTOR ZACHARY PUDLO

### The Fact of Criticism

“Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.” We’ve all heard the familiar taunt. We may have even quickly snapped this little phrase back in someone’s face when being criticized. We live in an age of constant criticism. It’s all over TV. Open your social media apps and you’ll see criticism of people or policies as far as your eyes can see. As the start of another school year is just around the corner, I can’t help but think about the kind of criticism children face. What are grades if not a criticism of how well the student performed in their school work? What is a loss in an athletic event if not a glaring criticism of how well that person performed on the court/field? And what about the “friends” at school who tease a student who doesn’t perform well academically, athletically, or socially? We all face criticism, and that isn’t likely to change.

### The Danger of Criticism

How are we to respond in a Godly way when we inevitably receive criticism? The biggest danger of receiving is not the damage to our reputation, but how our hearts respond. Our natural response to criticism is to feel as though some sort of injustice is being heaped upon you. So what’s the natural response? To get even. You are tempted to despise not only the critic, but the entire group of people from which the critic comes. John Newton, maybe best known for being the author of Amazing Grace, once wrote in a letter entitled On Controversy, “Whatever...makes us trust

*continued*

in ourselves that we are comparatively wise or good, so as to treat those with contempt who do not subscribe to our doctrines, or follow our party, is proof and fruit of a self-righteous spirit.” Here’s what Newton is saying: when you have a feeling of superiority or contempt, it’s a sign that grace is not operating your life. We may say we live by the gospel, but it isn’t actually playing out and influencing our lives in practice. Newton goes on, “A man may have the heart of a Pharisee, while his head is stored with orthodox notions of the unworthiness of the creature, and the riches of free grace. Yea, I would add, the best of men are not wholly free from this leaven; and therefore are too apt to be pleased with such representations as hold up our adversaries to ridicule, and by consequence flatter our own superior judgments.”

This is a glaring problem in our culture. We have lost the ability to take criticism gracefully. Instead, we tend to take criticism as personal attacks and return the “favor”. As our church is going through a series on marriage, I am reminded of some of the counselling I give to couples before they get married. I always share with them some of the research and findings of Dr. John Gottman who noted that criticism is one of what he calls “the four horsemen” of marriage. Attacking a person spells doom for a relationship.

### The Grace Option

So how do we fix this problem? The first step is to recognize that this is really a heart problem. When we are criticized and are tempted to attack a person to get even, pause for a moment and ask yourself, “What am I defending?” Are you defending something truly important and of eternal value? Or are you simply

defending the public opinion of yourself? Secondly, face the truth. Often, when you are criticized there is at least a kernel of truth to the criticism. But is that the worst thing? Is it the worst thing to recognize that you aren’t perfect in every single way? The Bible’s answer to this is an emphatic “No”. The fact that you aren’t perfect is evidence of God’s grace. You aren’t even close to perfect and yet God loved you enough to die for you. Seeing your imperfections only magnifies the grace of God.

Finally, how do we respond with grace when you are attacked? David’s words to Joab concerning his son Absalom are extremely applicable at this point: “Deal gently with him for my sake.” Absalom had taken control of David’s throne. He flat out betrayed his own father. And yet, when he was attacked by his own son how did David respond? He didn’t try to get even. He didn’t try to get his revenge. Instead, he dealt with Absalom with grace. He remembered that Absalom was not just his child but was a child of God’s first and foremost. And so he tried to deal with Absalom the same way God would have, gently and with grace.

### Conclusion

When you are criticized keep your eyes open for any kind of a self-righteous spirit. That’s the devil trying to creep into our hearts. Look to Christ where you see a Savior who had to die for you because you are imperfect. But also see a God who loved you so much he was happy to die for an imperfect person like you. And finally, when you are criticized keep David and Absalom in mind. Remember the person who is criticizing you is a child of God as well. So treat them the same way your gracious God has treated you.

SEPTEMBER 9

# Every Member SUNDAY

Join us for our annual every member weekend.  
Picnic on Sunday, September 9th after the 10:30 service.  
Fun food and fellowship for the whole family.



# Mind Matters Exhibit

Mind-Matter Exhibit at the Science Museum of Minnesota aims to build a greater understanding of the importance of mental health. Hands-on experiences bring you closer to the facts, feelings, and issues surrounding this topic which touches many of our lives.

Peer into mini-dioramas of important moments in mental health history. Play a quiz show to test your knowledge of common misconceptions about mental illnesses. Hear what it's like to experience psychosis, and feel what it's like to be unable to ignore your surroundings. Watch heartfelt videos of diverse individuals talking about their personal experiences living with mental illnesses. Write down your own worries and destroy them in the Worry Shredder. Gather additional information in a resource center to share with someone you know or better your own mental health.

This exhibit will be open for the next several months. Keep your eyes open for an opportunity to visit on your own, or look for a possible Crown of Life excursion later in the fall.



## Camp Croix

Did you miss out on Camp Croix this year? Not to worry, the summer isn't over. Besides having an awesome week long summer camp for kids, Camp Croix offers some amazing prices on campsites, cabins, or the lodge. If you are still looking to get out this summer and enjoy the beauty of God's creation on a budget look into visiting Camp Croix. More info at <http://campcroix.org>.



# Lutheran Women's Mission Somethingorother

The opening service at the LWMS Convention in Green Bay included 1840 voices in song and praise. 1445 registrants attended sessions from over 800 WELS/ELS congregations. The purpose of this 55th annual event is for mission support, spiritual renewal, inspiration and fellowship.

Missionaries and a panel of missionary wives shared their experiences of serving the Lord at home and abroad. Workshops included the topics of Hispanic outreach, campus ministry, childcare education as an outreach tool, and updates from Stevens Point, Apacheland, Thailand, Pakistan and a dozen more. Over the past year LWMS has given \$125,000 to WELS home and world mission projects beyond the budgeted basics from WELS. The celebration of the 125th anniversary of



the Apache Mission in AZ was a highlight, as well as power point reports about the latest home and world mission developments from WELS Boards for Home and World Administrators Rev. Keith Free and Rev. Larry Schlomer.

This year's convention theme was "Speak, O Lord, from the Valley to the World." Attendees were treated with opportunities to meet and talk with missionaries,

view and purchase mission crafts, and enjoy a banquet followed by hilarious entertainment and an excellent barbershop quartet.

The 56th Annual LWMS Convention will be held at the Iowa Event Center in Des Moines, June 27-30, 2019.

Thank you to all who have given to our missions through our door collections twice a year.

## SCHOOL NEWS

### Gearing Up for a New Year

BY DANIEL PLATH

School is just around the corner! For some that may bring a smile, while in other cases a bit of a groan. Either way, the start of school means making sure things are ready to go when that first day arrives.

Our school janitors and others have been hard at work cleaning carpet, waxing floors, washing walls, and doing many other tasks that often go unnoticed. The office staff has been fielding calls, giving tours, and getting books and supplies ordered. Our teachers have been cleaning and preparing their rooms and classes so the school year is a great one for every student.

Our two new teachers, in 1st and 6th grade, have been gearing up and are ready for the COL adventure.

Kindergarten through 4th grade will enjoy a new Language Arts series that is sure to be a challenge

for all students. The upper grades will have some new field trips and exciting changes to the school day.

Welcome to our new families and students that will be coming to COL for the first time. As always, we encourage you to introduce yourself and get to know these newcomers. Encourage your student to talk to them and welcome them. Change can be difficult and we want these new families and their students to feel welcome and a part of the COL family.

I am certain that this year will get off to a great start and we will continue that momentum through the school year.

Parents, don't forget that "Back to School" night is August 8th from 4-7 PM. Please make every effort to stop in so that you and your student can get all the information needed.





## Tips in Communicating

**Repair attempts** – any statement or action that prevents negativity from escalating. People naturally do this; couples in happy marriages, and those who deal with conflict well accept and look for repair attempts.

**“I” statements** – instead of accusatory “You never take out the trash!” statement reflecting “I” communicates much better without the sting. “I feel overwhelmed by all the household tasks that need getting done. I’d appreciate it if you would take out the trash to help me.”

**Empathize/Summarize** – when your spouse is speaking, do not interrupt until he/she is finished. Then before presenting your side take a moment to empathize with his/her viewpoint and summarize.

### EXAMPLE

“I can understand why this upsets you.”  
“I didn’t realize this mattered to you so much.”  
“I’m sorry that this has been such a struggle for you.”  
“So what I hear you saying is...”  
“If my understanding is right, you feel...”

Carrying out this step goes a LONG way in showing your spouse you care and honor their position and makes them much more likely to listen to your side.

Do not rebuke a mocker or  
he will hate you; rebuke a wise  
man and he will love you.

(Proverbs 9:8 NIV)

**Feelings** – even though men may roll their eyes at this, clarifying our feelings on a position intensely helps each other understand our point of view.

### EXAMPLE

“It upsets me when this happens because I feel under appreciated.”  
“I want you to keep the living room tidy because I would feel embarrassed if my mother stopped by suddenly and saw our mess.”  
“I guess I’m just disappointed you don’t think you can go to the concert, because I had been very excited about it all week.”

**Clarity** – global statements and vague/general demands or requests are difficult to live up to. Instead, try to communicate specifically what you need now. When your spouse sees the request is defined and doable, he/she will be much more eager and willing to comply.

### EXAMPLE

*Instead of: “We never get to spend time together!”*  
**Try: “I really enjoyed when we went to see that movie together; I’d like to go again.”**

*Instead of: “Can’t you just help me get the house ready?”*  
**Try: “It would make me happy if you could just take out the trash and vacuum.”**

*Instead of: “Can you just drive slower?”*  
**Try: “I feel nervous when we go this fast, could you drive the speed limit when we’re in town?”**



## ASK THE PASTOR

In our Wednesday evening Bible study this Summer we have been studying the classic work by C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*. Lewis does a great job of explaining Christian doctrines rationally without using Biblical terminology that would turn someone away who already has a distaste for organized religion. We live in a world filled with people who have a distaste for organized religion. Many refuse to believe what Christians say simply because they quote the words of the Bible.

So, are you able to answer questions as to why Christianity makes sense without using the Bible? For the next several months, we encourage you to ask questions that you have been asked and struggled to answer without quoting the Bible. Ask questions you think atheists and other unbelievers wonder about Christianity. We pastors will do our best to give you answers that do not quote the Bible, but are still Biblically sound...answers that modern people might be more willing to listen to. Send in your questions. Your names will be anonymous, the questions and answers might help you and many more.

## Getting to Know You: Brett Fuhrmann

I was born in Milwaukee, the 4th of 5 kids. After my dad finished school, my family moved to his hometown, New London, WI, which is near Appleton. I attended Fox Valley Lutheran and then went to UW-Madison for my freshman year. I was an undecided freshman when I went on a TCW trip through Kingdom Workers. During that time I had a moment of clarity and decided to head to MLC (eventually). I graduated in 2004 and was assigned to Houston, TX.



Amanda grew up in Hutchinson, MN. During high school, she played basketball (with Lindsay Whalen

#namedrop), volleyball, and track. She sang with the choir and starred in the musicals. She went to college at UW-Stout for multimedia design. We met while working at Camp Phillip in WI and married in 2003. Now she does graphic design work for an artist in Houston.

Chloe is entering 8th grade. She likes volleyball, basketball, running, drawing, crafts, singing, and acting. There's probably a few more activities that I forgot to mention, so feel free to ask her about them. She's looking forward to meeting her classmates and getting set for her last year of grade school.

Ben is entering 5th grade. He is a very active guy. He likes to play all sports, sing and act. Recess and PE are his favorite classes. Despite non-stop running around, on his last soccer team, he became the goalie, which was good practice sitting still. As soon as temperatures drop to the 50's, Ben will be the boy running around church with his hat, gloves, and winter coat.

Emma is entering 2nd grade. She is the Monkey Bar champion of Harris County and recently started gymnastics classes. She likes arts and crafts and learned to love running (in order to escape from her big brother).

### Fun Facts

I spent 3 months living in Costa Rica, working with missionaries, and living with a Tican family. I worked with Mrs. Mielke's sister and brother-in-law and 3 of Mr. Ohm's in-laws while in Texas. We survived 3 hurricanes, several floods, and a few tropical storms during the 14 years in Houston, but the most difficult weather days were the 4 snowfalls during those years. The ½ inch accumulation threw the city into turmoil and everything shut down. Once, the snow was about an inch and stayed on the ground until noon. I've tried hard to block those memories out of my mind.

# REPORTS

## **TREASURER** Fiscal Year 7/17 to 6/18

June ended the fiscal year to date (FYTD) with \$1,695,823 in total income with expected budget income to be \$1,631,040 which was \$64,782 above budget (**58,956 is an undesignated bequest and \$21,000 are special donations for the Pre-K playground**).

Expenses (FYTD) were \$1,663,776 which gave us a FYTD of +\$32,054. (FYTD) Envelope Offerings are \$44,071 less than budgeted. We owe \$40,000 to our special funds account and current available balance is \$75,002

Questions: [treasurer@colwsp.org](mailto:treasurer@colwsp.org)

## AUGUST CALENDAR

### Wednesday, August 1

6:30 pm Bible Class EGN

### Thursday, August 2

2:30 pm Southview Sr. Living Service

### Saturday, August 4

5:00 pm Worship EGN

### Sunday, August 5

8:00 am Worship WSP

9:00 am Worship EGN

9:15 am Education Hour-WSP

10:15 am Education Hour-EGN

10:30 am Worship WSP

### Monday, August 6

6:30 pm Worship WSP

7:00 pm Evangelism-EGN

### Tuesday, August 7

10:00 am The Commons on  
Marice-Sr. Living Service

### Wednesday, August 8

4:00 pm Back to School

Registration Night

6:30 pm Bible Class EGN

### Thursday, August 9

2:30 pm Southview Sr. Living Service

7:00 pm Elders-EGN

### Saturday, August 11

5:00 pm Worship EGN

### Sunday, August 12

8:00 am Worship WSP

9:00 am Worship EGN

9:15 am Education Hour-WSP

10:15 am Education Hour-EGN

10:30 am Worship WSP

### Monday, August 13

6:30 pm Worship WSP

7:30 pm Worship Committee

### Tuesday, August 14

10:00 am The Commons on  
Marice-Sr. Living Service

6:30 pm Education

Properties

7:15 pm Stewardship

### Wednesday, August 15

6:30 pm Parent Meeting

Bible Class EGN

### Thursday, August 16

2:30 pm Southview Sr. Living Service

7:00 pm Riverview Cemetery

### Saturday, August 18

5:00 pm Worship EGN

### Sunday, August 19

8:00 am Worship WSP

9:00 am Worship EGN

9:15 am Education Hour-WSP

10:15 am Education Hour-EGN

10:30 am Worship WSP

### Monday, August 20

6:30 pm Worship WSP

### Tuesday, August 21

10:00 am The Commons on  
Marice-Sr. Living Service

7:00 pm Council-EGN

### Wednesday, August 22

5:00 pm Open House

6:30 pm Bible Class EGN

### Thursday, August 23

2:30 pm Southview Sr. Living Service

### Saturday, August 25

5:00 pm Worship EGN

### Sunday, August 26

8:00 am Worship WSP

9:00 am Worship EGN

9:15 am Education Hour-WSP

10:15 am Education Hour-EGN

10:30 am Worship WSP

### Monday, August 27

*First Day of School*

2:30 pm Lilydale Sr. Living Service

6:30 pm Worship WSP

7:00 pm Youth & Adult Education

### Tuesday, August 28

10:00 am The Commons on  
Marice-Sr. Living Service

### Wednesday, August 29

6:30 pm Bible Class EGN

### Thursday, August 30

2:30 pm Southview Sr. Living Service

### Friday, August 31

*No School*

## AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

1 Damon Bilitz	8 Melodee Cannon	14 Derek Neubauer	22 Dave Footh
Carla Koeppen	Peter Chan	15 Christopher Eckhardt	23 Lois Hoeft
2 Elizabeth Dohrn	Lynette Klocow	Cadence Moe	Marcia Stueber
David Wright	Denise Lemmer	16 Ronald Johnson	Jamie Wakefield Jr.
3 Timothy Burdorf	Dick Radmer	Colleen Kom	Stu Waldhauser
Chad Ellwein	Charlene Schindeldecker	17 Danielle Bethke	Sara Wiplinger
John McCall	9 Michelle Koker	Kiara Boyer	24 Brett Hussong
Bradley Oberstadt	Jacob Stensland	Michael Kohnke	Rebecca Maki
John Schindeldecker	10 Christopher Hunter	18 Ryan Bolte	25 Karner Boyer
4 Jack Evenson	11 Emma Haehnel	Will Gydesen	Isabella Diaz
Vicki Tillman	Christie Lawrence	Mark Kruse	26 Gina Chan
5 Cydney Bluhm	Gary Sachs	Jameson Pieper	27 Ted Dohrn
Luz Cenicerros	12 Ryan Swiderski	19 Zackery Bejblik	Maxwell Hauck
Debra Montgomery	13 Braden Fischer	Beth Plath	Andrew Otterstatter
Kara Plath	Derek Lander	Savannah Valenzuela	28 Duwayne Fries
Karissa Plath	Beverly Monjeau	20 Brita Kock	Kathleen Mommsen
Alissa Smith	Pauline Pagel	21 Ronald Burkhart	30 Richard Kraupa
6 MaryJo Buysse	Pastor Zachary Pudlo	Keith Danner	Jonathan Vandenbosch
Jonah Kurth	Alexander Thul	Todd Eichmann	31 Rachel Boehlke
Wynn Sandman	14 Aubrea Bluhm	Amber Rall	Jazmyn Solseth
7 Danielle Wold	Josette Kauffeld	Karl Schnobrich	

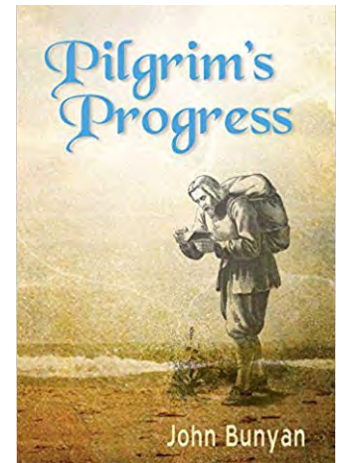


# “Pilgrim’s Progress”

BY JOHN BUNYAN | CHRISTIAN FICTION | ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The Pilgrim’s Progress is John Bunyan’s classic tale about the Christian’s journey through this life. It is widely considered one of the greatest pieces of English Literature ever written. The book is an allegory depicting the life of Christian, the main character of the novel. Christian goes through many different challenges and meets many different people on his way to the “Celestial City”.

I read this book for the first time when I was 10 years old. It was a captivating read then. It still is a captivating read now. But 20 years later it brings to mind so many more applications to life and my own personal journey through this world to heaven. People of all ages can relate to this book and can find countless applications for their own lives.



## STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT

### The Gifts of Cain and Abel

The first gifts that we read about in Scripture are the offerings made by Cain and Abel who were the sons of Adam and Eve. In Genesis 4:2-4 we read, “. . . Now Abel kept flocks and Cain worked the soil. In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the Lord. But Abel brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock.” Cain and Abel, having been instructed by Adam in the knowledge of the Lord, brought offerings or gifts for the Lord. Because one worked the land and the other raised animals, their gifts were different. We read that Cain “*brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering,*” whereas Abel “*brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock.*”

Between the two brothers there is also an indication of a difference in the attitudes of their hearts. While Cain wasn’t concerned about giving the first or best of his crop, Abel brought in his best. God looked with favor upon Abel’s offering. God looked into the hearts

of both Cain and Abel as He looks into our hearts. He saw Abel’s humble faith. In his gift, Abel showed his sincere gratitude for all that God had done for Him.

We need to understand that it’s not the size of our gifts and offerings which makes them acceptable to the Lord, but rather it is the attitude of our hearts and minds toward God. God wants our gifts to be an expression of our love for Him. He wants us to give cheerfully rather than grudgingly. He wants us to give out of love through faith. We are told by the writer in Hebrews that without faith it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6).

May this story of giving by Cain and Abel help us to examine our attitude toward giving. If we are not giving our first and best out of faith and love to the Lord, God does not look with favor upon our giving. May God grant us all faithful, loving, and giving hearts.

Source: 12 Months of Congregational Stewardship (vol. 1) by Ronald J. Chewing, Stewardship Advisors

Please direct ideas, questions or comments about this issue to [ZacharyPudlo@crownoflifemn.org](mailto:ZacharyPudlo@crownoflifemn.org)



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