Does bad grammar make a bad chaplain?

Last week's column brought some surprisingly negative email over the bad grammar I used to describe how Wendi Sommers and I helped rescue a high school classmate from his overturned dune buggy.

My syntax sin was that I wrote "Wendi and I" when I should have written "Wendi and me."

One reader said the column left her "shocked and dismayed," while a college professor added that he hoped "Chaplain Burkes does not use such incorrect verbiage in his chaplain duties."

They were correct, of course. To quote one would-be editor, "the correct pronoun following any verb is the objective pronoun: me, him, her, us, them. It's never I or myself."

I can't begrudge them their grammar peeves. I often cringe when I hear someone say "anyways" when they should say "anyway." Worse yet is someone who reports that they "did good" instead of "did well."

This doesn't compare to the rancor my elementary teacher wife has for the misplaced apostrophe. She's actually taken her Sharpie and corrected signs in the store advertising "Apple's for sale."

Recently, she let out a shriek while typing something for class. "What's wrong?" I asked, expecting an arachnid.

"I accidently turned a plural into a possessive." She was simply pale.

I shrugged. Guess everyone has his or her battles.

I save my battles for people who insist on using "comfort grammar." I call it that because it is a language for those trying to console the bereaved. The language consists of at least four common phrases.