

We claim the privilege of worshiping Almighty God according to the dictates of our own conscience, and allow all men the same privilege, let them worship how, where, or what they may (Articles of Faith 1:11).

Alex raced down the soccer field, dribbling the ball with his feet. The other team began closing in. “I’m open!” Jake called.

With one fierce kick, Alex passed the ball to Jake. Jake kicked it straight into the open goal. “Score!”

The whistle blew. The game was over. Alex and Jake’s team erupted into cheers.

After celebrating, Alex ran to his mom. “Did you see that goal? Do you have any water? Can I go home with Jake?”

Mom laughed. “Yes, yes, and yes,” she said. “I’ve already talked to Jake’s mom, and I’ll pick you up at four.”

When Mom came to pick up Alex, he and Jake were playing in the backyard tree house. “Nice game, Alex,” Jake said. “See you tomorrow at school.”

On the way home, Alex was quiet. “What are you thinking about, Buddy?” Mom asked.

“About Jake,” Alex said. “He’s my best friend. And his mom’s your friend. They’re good people, aren’t they?”

“Yes, they are very good people. Why do you ask?”

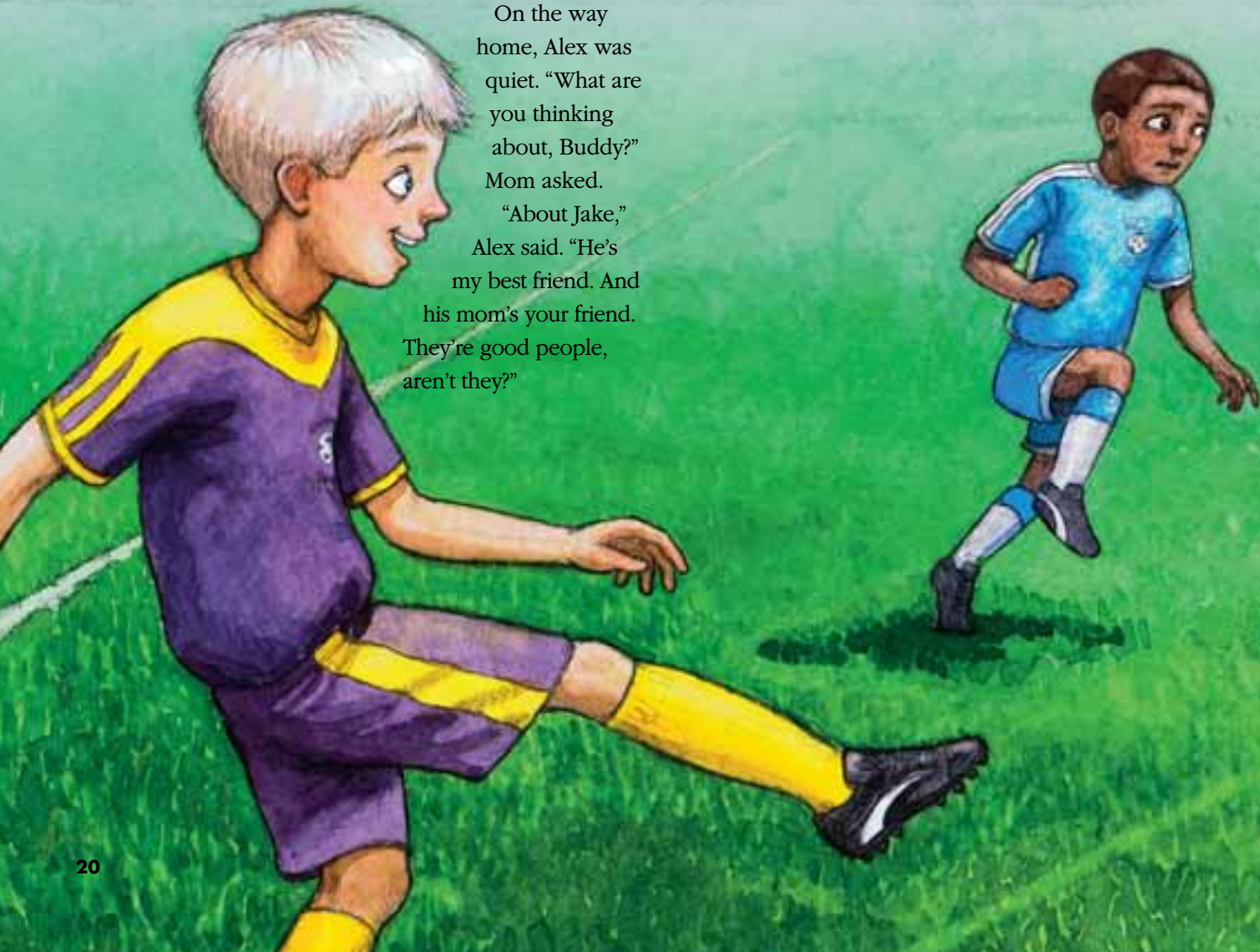
“I invited Jake to my baptism, and he said he’d come. But he said he’s not getting baptized when he turns eight. He said he was already baptized when he was a baby. And Jake goes to movies on Sunday all the time, and his mom drinks coffee, and . . .” Alex paused. “I never noticed before that we don’t believe the same things.”

“Well, we don’t believe *all* the same things as Jake’s family does. But we have a lot in common,” Mom said. “I always feel safe when you are at Jake’s house because his mom watches you carefully and never lets you play bad video games or watch movies that aren’t good.”

The Right

BY MICHELLE LEHNARDT

(Based on a true story)



“Yeah,” Alex said, laughing. “Jake’s mom is always watching. We can’t even climb on top of the tree house without her catching us!”

“And who’s the best soccer coach you’ve ever had?” Mom asked.

“Jake’s dad! He takes the time to explain things, and he doesn’t yell at us like some coaches.”

“Yes. He’s a great coach.” Mom parked the car in the driveway and rested her elbows on the steering wheel. “You’re going to have lots of friends who believe differently than we do, Alex. And as you get older, you’ll notice those differences more and more. But the

important thing is to pick friends who are kind, friends who are honest, and friends who respect your beliefs just as you respect theirs.”

Alex thought for a moment. “Jake is all those things: kind, honest, and respectful. I’m lucky to have him for a friend.”

Mom nodded. “I think so too.” ●

Kind of Friend

