

STEPHEN J. NICHOLS

NED BUSTARD

the **Church History**

ABCs

Augustine

and twenty-five

other heroes

of the **Faith**



INTRODUCTION

You probably enjoy hearing stories of your parents or grandparents. Of course, everybody walked to school back then and it was always snowing! You even like to hear stories about your friends. You know, like the time Jack fell off the boat and got all wet.

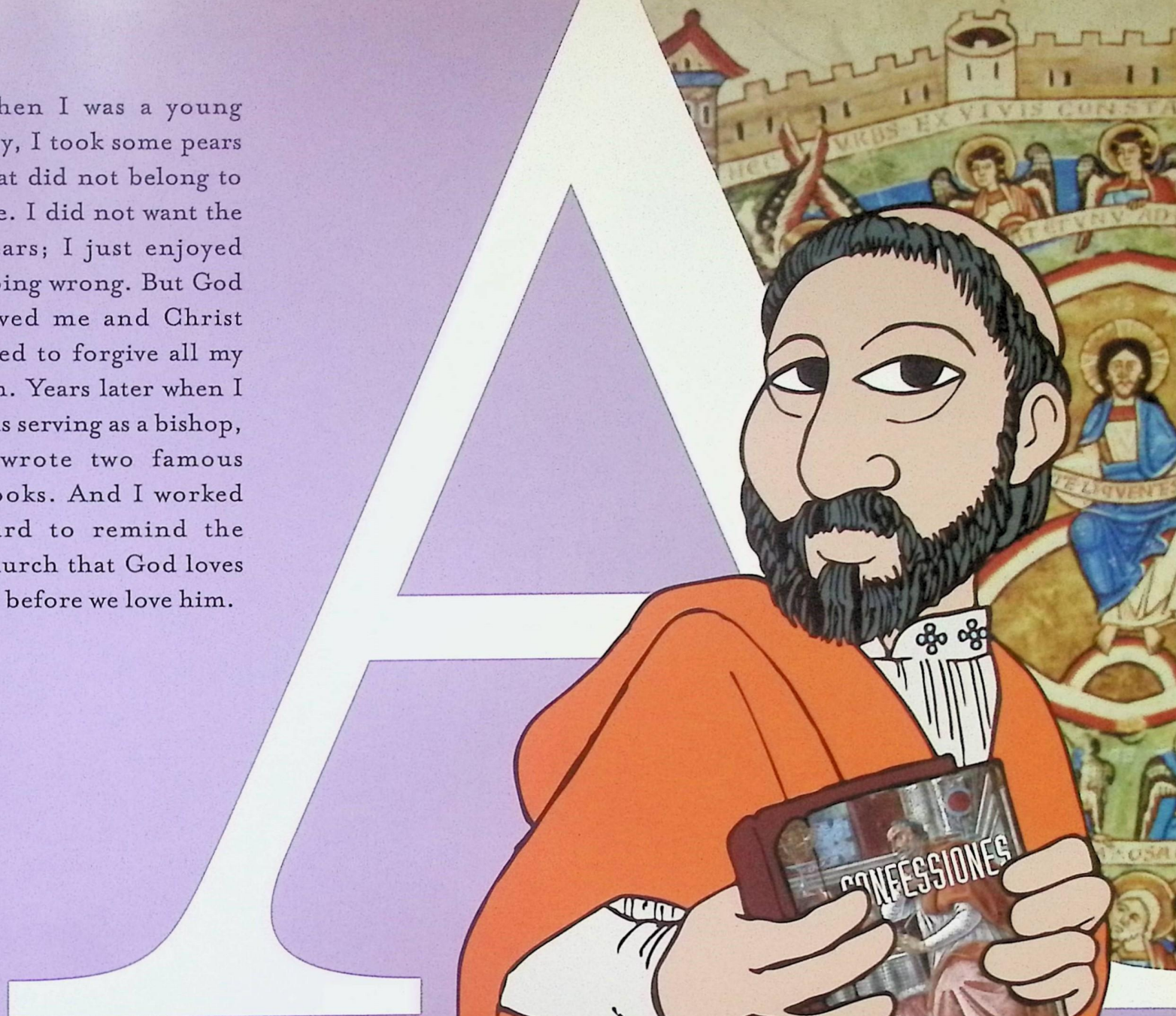
You enjoy these stories because the people in them are very special to you. You also like these stories because these stories tell you something about you.

The people of church history are also very special to you. Their story is your story. Their story also tells you something about you. The Bible tells us that we all belong to one big family, the family of God. And there are a lot of stories to be told in this big family. In this book, we can only tell the story of twenty-six of these people because there are only twenty-six letters in our alphabet. But there are many more stories that could be told.

In fact, this story hasn't even ended yet. Someday you will be adding your own story to it.

So open these pages and meet your new friends. They all have a great story to tell. . . .

When I was a young boy, I took some pears that did not belong to me. I did not want the pears; I just enjoyed doing wrong. But God loved me and Christ died to forgive all my sin. Years later when I was serving as a bishop, I wrote two famous books. And I worked hard to remind the church that God loves us before we love him.



A is for
apricot, apple,
and **Augustine**
—Africa's ancient bishop

SAINT
AUGUSTINE



B is
for boat,
berries,
and Anne
Bradstreet,
America's
first bard

I was born in England. I would spend my days reading books, especially poetry. Because we weren't free to practice our faith, we boarded a large boat bound for Boston. My father was the governor of the colony and later my husband was, too. We had a very busy house. At night when it was quiet I would write my poetry. I wrote about kings and queens and nature and about my family. I also wrote about trusting God even during hard times—like when my house burned down. They call me a "bard." That is a fancy word for "poet." I just wanted to use my gift to serve and glorify God.



ANNE
BRADSTREET

JOHN CALVIN



C is for catfish, castle,
and John **Calvin**,
champion Reformer

I grew up in France and went to college in Paris, a big city with big cathedrals. I was only 14, and I was not very interested in church or in God. Then God captured my heart and made me his child. I left France for Switzerland—but I never learned to yodel. I ended up at the city of Geneva. I taught people all about God's creation, all about Christ's death on the cross, and all about becoming good and caring citizens. We sent missionaries across the border into France and even across the seas to Brazil.

I wrote many books. In one of them I chimed, "Every blade of grass and every color in this world is intended to make us rejoice in God."

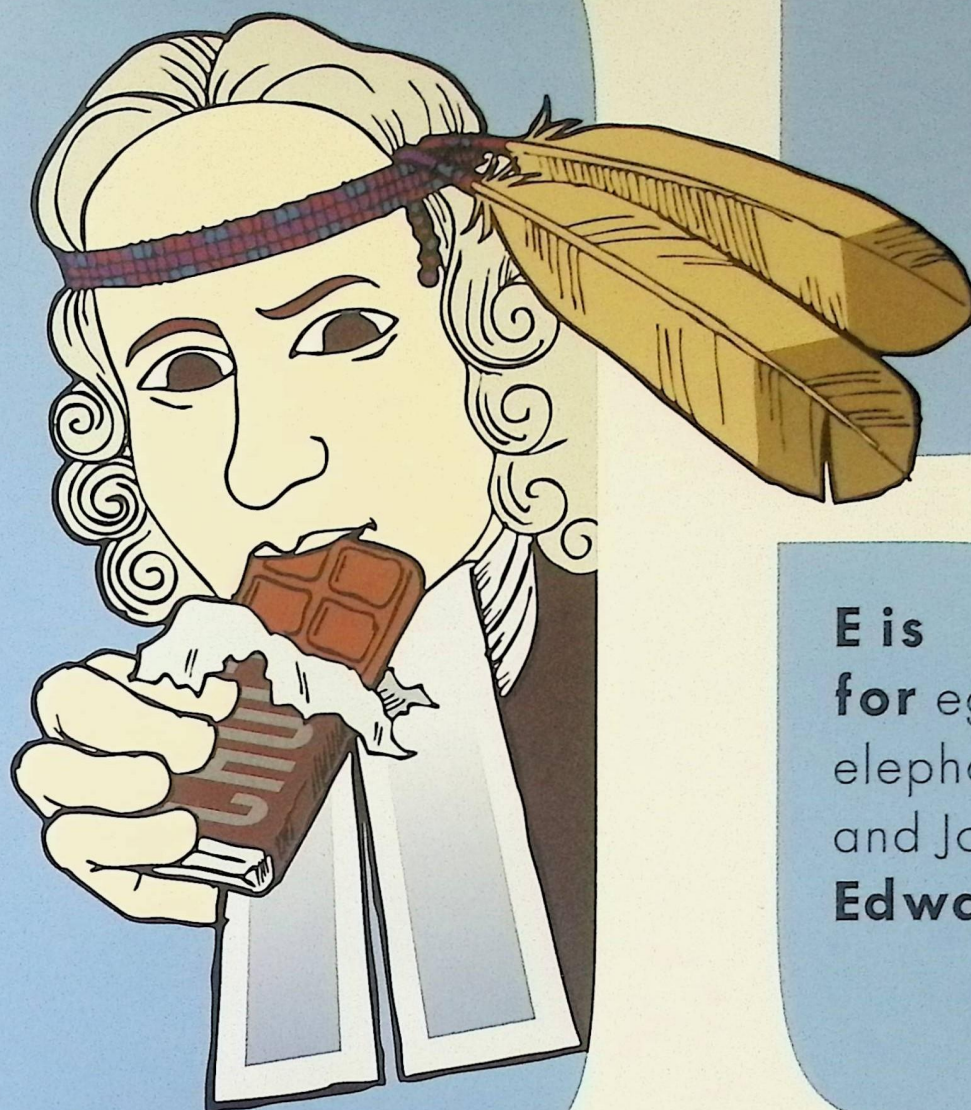
JOHN DONNE



I lived in England during the time of the Reformation. England is a really big island. I once said, "No man is an island." We all depend on each other. I went to Cambridge for study, but I spent most of my time outdoors writing poetry. Then I moved to London. I would walk across the bridges at night and write even more poems. During the day, I was a lawyer and was soon elected a member of Parliament. Finally, when I was forty-five years old I became a pastor. My wife and I had a dozen—that's twelve—kids. People like to read my poems, saying they're quite dramatic. My favorite poems were my *Devotions*. In one of them I said, "Don't ask for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for thee."



D is
for
door,
drawing,
and John
Donne



E is
for eggs,
elephants,
and Jonathan
Edwards



I was the only brother to ten sisters. They helped me with my studies and taught me to ride horses. I started pinning scraps of cloth to my coat to help me remember ideas I would get on long horseback rides. I used these ideas in sermons I preached and in books I wrote. With my friend George Whitefield, I was part of the Great Awakening in the American colonies. I was also a missionary to the Mohican Indians. And for a little while I was even president of Princeton University. Everywhere I went I wanted people to enjoy God and to enjoy what God has made—even spiders.

JONATHAN EDWARDS

This detail shows the lower half of Christ's body as he is being lowered from the cross. A wooden plank is visible across his midsection, and a grey cloth is wrapped around his waist. The background shows a glimpse of the landscape with hills and a cloudy sky.



The book's title is really long, so folks just call it *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*. These were brave people who went through many cruel and scary punishments. They all had faith in a great God. I returned to England when Elizabeth I came to the throne. I was so grateful, I dedicated my book to her.

JOHN FOXE

JANE GREY

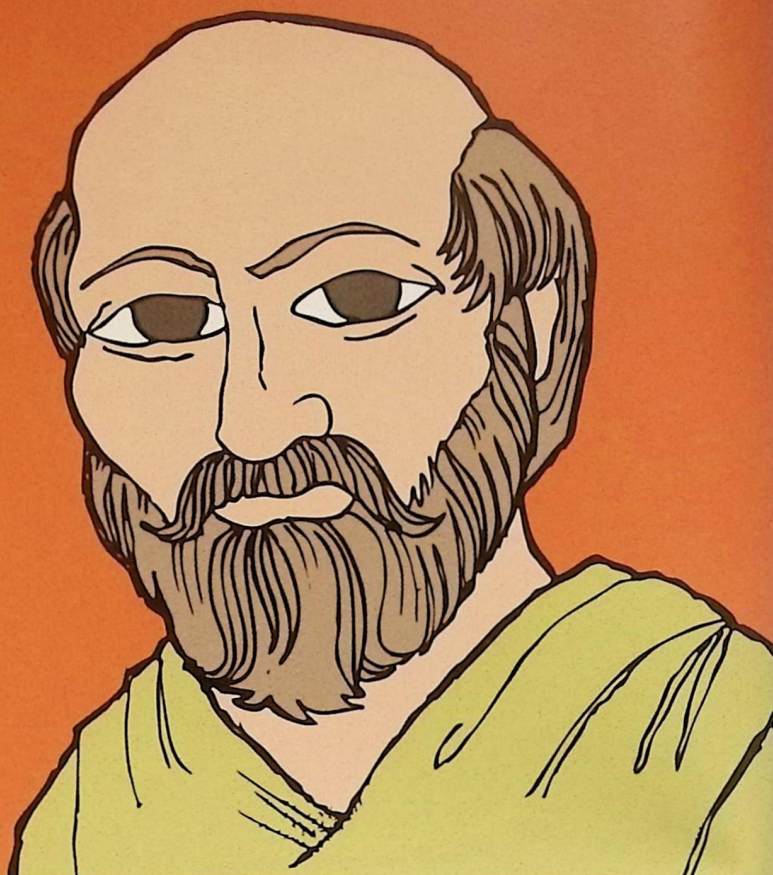


G is for
garden, gown,
and Lady Jane **Grey**,
queen for nine days

When I was just a little girl I taught myself Greek and Hebrew. I used to write letters to the Reformers like Ulrich Zwingli (skip ahead to "Z" and you'll see). I was a great niece to King Henry VIII. His son, Edward VI, was the next king. A very godly king, Edward VI died after just a few years on the throne. Since I was part of the Reformation, I was put on the throne as England's queen.

I only lasted nine days until—
Mary's army marched through the gates.
Then I was put in the Tower of London. Just before I died as a martyr, I gave my sister my Bible. Inside it I wrote, "Rejoice in Christ, as I do. Follow the steps of your master Christ, and take up your cross."

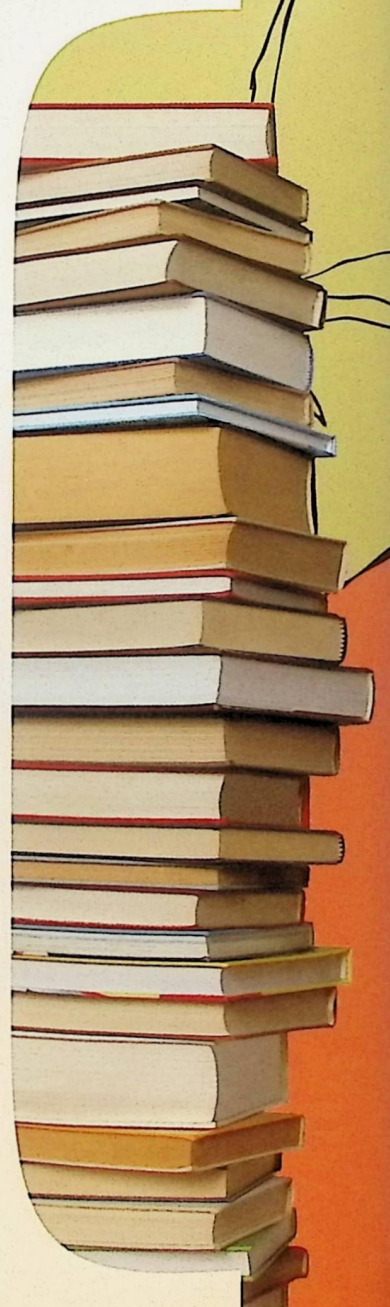
HIPPOLYTUS



H is for
hopscotch, hot
dog, and **Hippolytus**

Hi. Let's get one thing straight, my name is Hippolytus, not hippopotamus—that's a very big animal with really short legs. I'm not Hippocrates, either—he was the father of medicine. And I'm not a hippocampus—that's a make-believe horse with a fish tail. Nope, I'm Hippolytus. I lived in Rome

around AD 200, and I wrote many books. One of them was *The Refutation of All Heresies*. A heresy is a false teaching, and some of these false teachings denied the humanity of Jesus. Look across the page to see what my friend Ignatius has to say about that. I never signed my name to my books and soon people forgot all about me. However, in the 1840s they found a statue of me. On it was a list of all the books I wrote. Now you know who I am and you know that H is for Hippolytus.





I is for
ice cream,
iguana, and
Ignatius

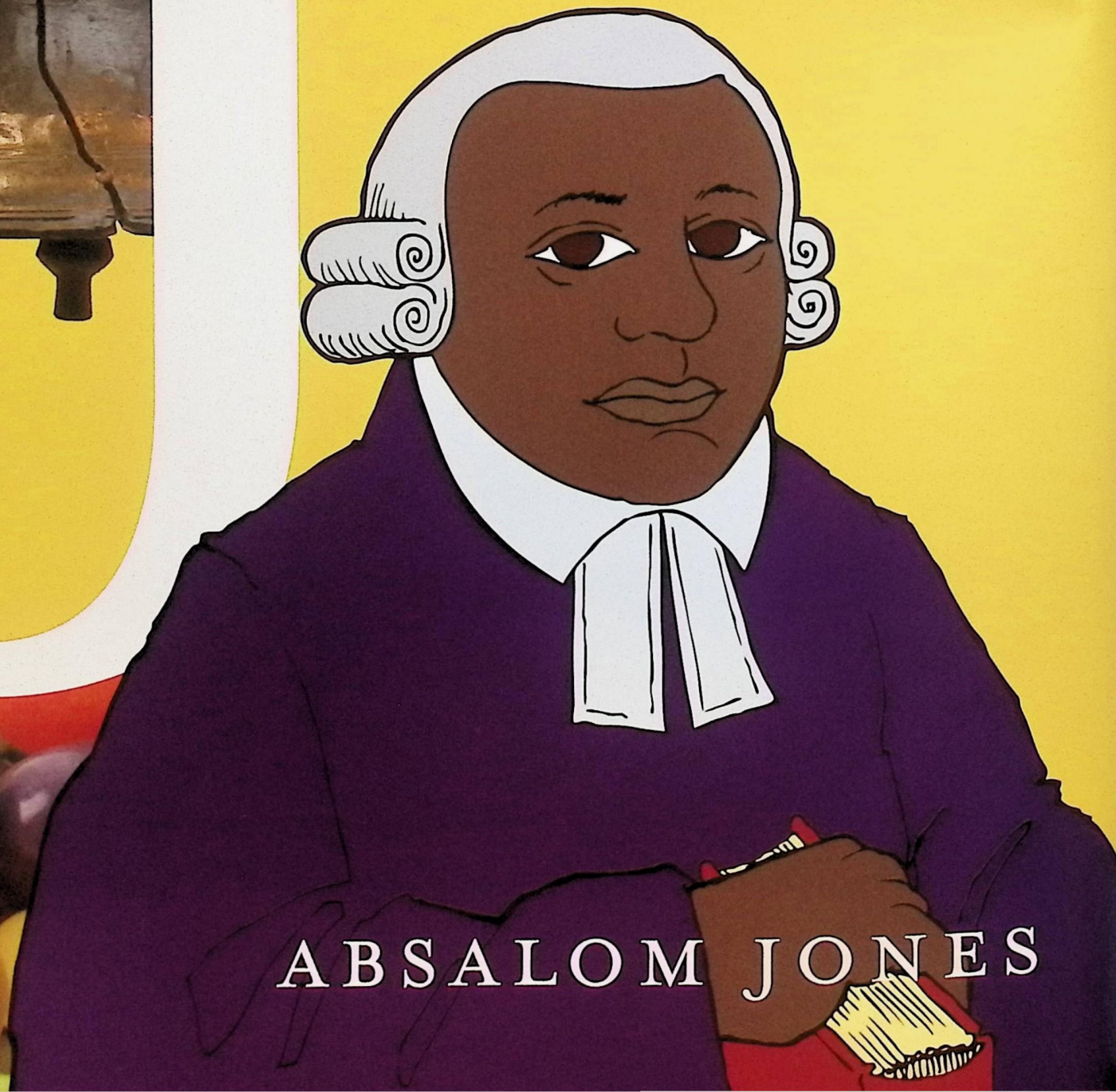
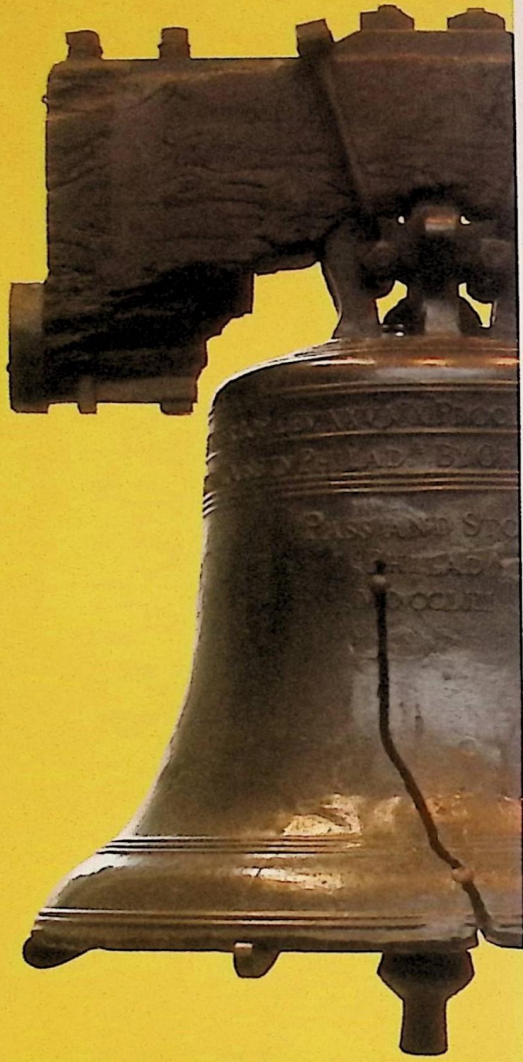
A long, long time ago, in a place far, far away . . . I always wanted to say that. It is true, though, I was born before anyone else in this whole book. I was a pastor in Antioch, the city where we were first called Christians. Like the apostles (and I knew at least one of them), I would write letters to churches. During my time, some people were teaching false ideas about Christ. I reminded them that Christ came down from heaven. We

call this the *incarnation*—a long and fancy word that also starts with an I. It means that Christ, who is God, became human just like us. He was born as a baby and grew up and played as a boy. Jesus was just like us so he could die for us on the cross. I took a great stand for my beliefs and was sent to Rome as a prisoner, where I was martyred by being eaten by lions.

IGNATIUS

J is for Jupiter, jelly beans, and Absalom **Jones's** journey to freedom

I was born a slave and worked in the fields. But I wanted to be free. When I was ten, I was sent to work in a grocery store in Philadelphia, the home of the Liberty Bell. I worked very hard at my job and went to school at night. Later on I married and we saved enough money to buy our freedom. At church one Sunday they told us to sit in a certain place because of the color of our skin. We left and formed a new church, and I soon became the pastor. At our new church I preached that God was the father of us all, red and yellow, black and white. Our church was its own Liberty Bell, ringing out a message of freedom for everyone.



ABSALOM JONES

JOHN KNOX



Who's
there?

My last name starts with a silent K, but I refused to keep silent! The church in my home of Scotland wasn't following the Bible, and neither were the kings and queens. So I spoke up. I was arrested and put on a galley ship. Then they kicked me out of the country, so I went to see my friend John Calvin. Later I went back home and kept on preaching and writing. The gospel spread all around the kingdom. I kept busy and even helped start the Presbyterian church, too.

K
is for
kirk, king,
and John **Knox**

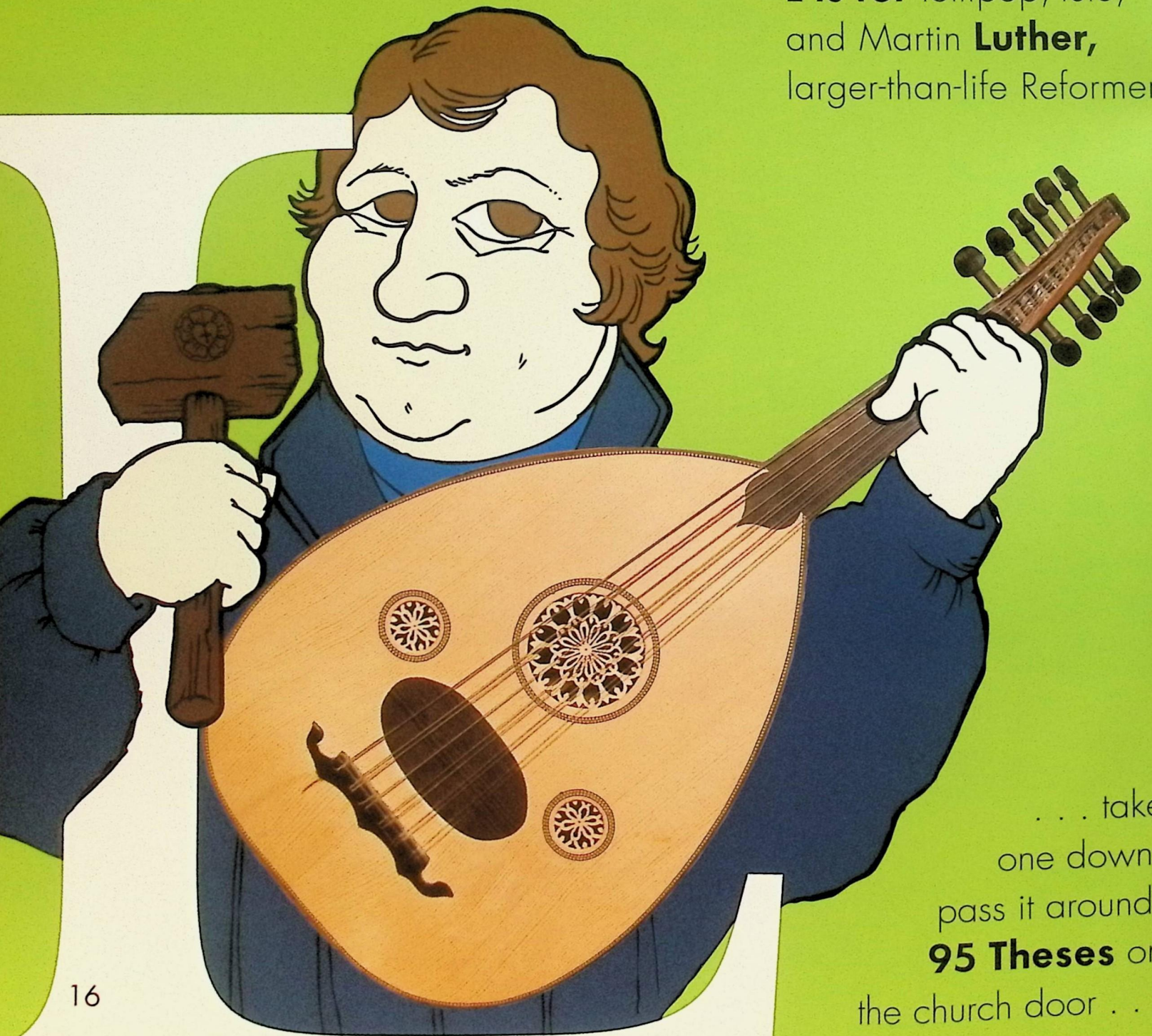


MARTIN LUTHER

I saw the whole world change in my lifetime, and I had a little something to do with it. I helped the church find its way back to the Bible and back to Christ and his work on the cross. It all started when I hammered a piece of paper to the church door at Wittenberg in Germany. Now don't try that at your church. People don't like that. In fact, it turned out that the Pope didn't like it and they put me on

trial in Worms (the city called Worms—not the things crawling in the ground). But I stood up for the Word of God. The Reformation spread all around Germany and soon all around Europe. I loved to preach and teach. I always enjoyed eating and good music. But most of all I loved to teach children the catechism. Even our family dog would listen in.

L is for lollipop, lute,
and Martin **Luther**,
larger-than-life Reformer

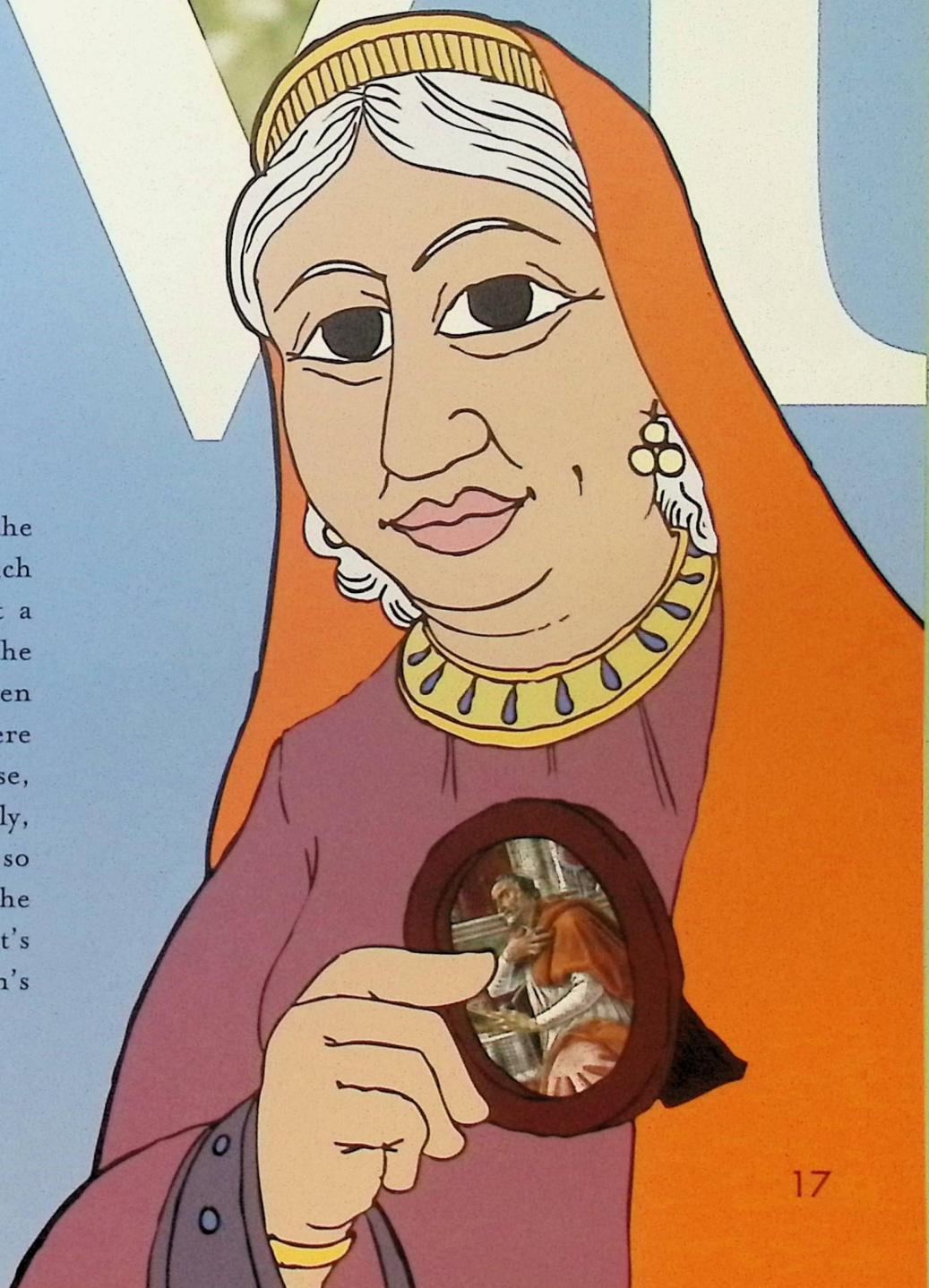


... take
one down,
pass it around,
95 Theses on
the church door ...

M is
for
muffin,
moose,
and
Monica,
mother of
Augustine

I'm Monica, and my son is back on the first page. I loved Augustine very much and prayed for him every day. I kept a close watch on that boy of mine. When he moved, I followed close behind. We even made it all the way to Milan, Italy. There he met a great pastor, Bishop Ambrose, and a great friend, Alypius. Eventually, my son met our mighty God. I was so happy when Augustine told me that he had become a follower of Jesus. That's what matters most, and that's a mom's mission.

MONICA





"A fine book; I hope there's a sequel. I better be in it."
HENRY VIII, King of England, 1509–1547

"An excellent resource for young and old—but where is Athanasius?"
C. S. LEWIS, author, *The Chronicles of Narnia* series

"This is a really great book . . . except that they didn't include me."
JOHN BUNYAN, author, *Pilgrim's Progress*

"I really enjoyed this church history book for young people, until I got to the letter W."
GEORGE WHITEFIELD, evangelist

Dramatically converted on the stormy seas, a slave-trader-turned-abolitionist penned the best-loved hymn of the Christian faith. A church father was arrested and martyred for teaching the truth about Christ's incarnation. Captured by pirates and shipped off to Ireland, a priest baptized thousands of pagans, from paupers to princes. Now who ever said church history was boring?

The Church History ABCs is a fun way for kids to learn about great figures in Christian history. Twenty-six heroes of the faith march through the alphabet, boldly telling their stories in language children can understand. This wide range of characters—men and women from across the centuries and from all over the globe—reflects the breadth of church history and reminds children that these great figures of the past were living, breathing people who lived and died for the glory of God.

STEPHEN J. NICHOLS (PhD, Westminster Theological Seminary) is president of Reformation Bible College and chief academic officer of Ligonier Ministries. Previously, he served as research professor of Christianity and culture at Lancaster Bible College. He has written several books, including *The Reformation, For Us and for Our Salvation*, and *Welcome to the Story*.

NED BUSTARD, a graphic artist, has written and illustrated many children's books, including *Ella Sings Jazz*, *The Story of Sir Galahad*, and *The Sailing Saint*.

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CHILDREN AGES 3–6

