



CHRISTMAS → ON THE MOVE

an advent resource from
strandz



Contents

Christmas on the Move	3
• Family Use	3
• Congregational Use	4
The Sundays of Advent	5
Colouring Posters	
• Advent	6
• Christmas on the Move	7
Advent Ideas	8
Printable Nativity	
• Stable	9
• Nativity Characters	10-13
• Individual Nativity Figures	14-25

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Strandz is the hub of children and families ministry of the Anglican Dioceses in New Zealand
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Christmas on the move

Christmas on the Move is designed to be an 'at home' activity for your congregation, and can also be used in church.

Family Use

In the *Christmas on the Move* digital files, you will find a **Printable Nativity** - including figures of Mary and Joseph, the baby Jesus, a stable, a shepherd, sheep, angel and some magi - all ready to colour.

Our idea is that you set up the stable ready to receive Mary and Joseph, and that, during Advent, Mary and Joseph make a journey around your house to the stable.

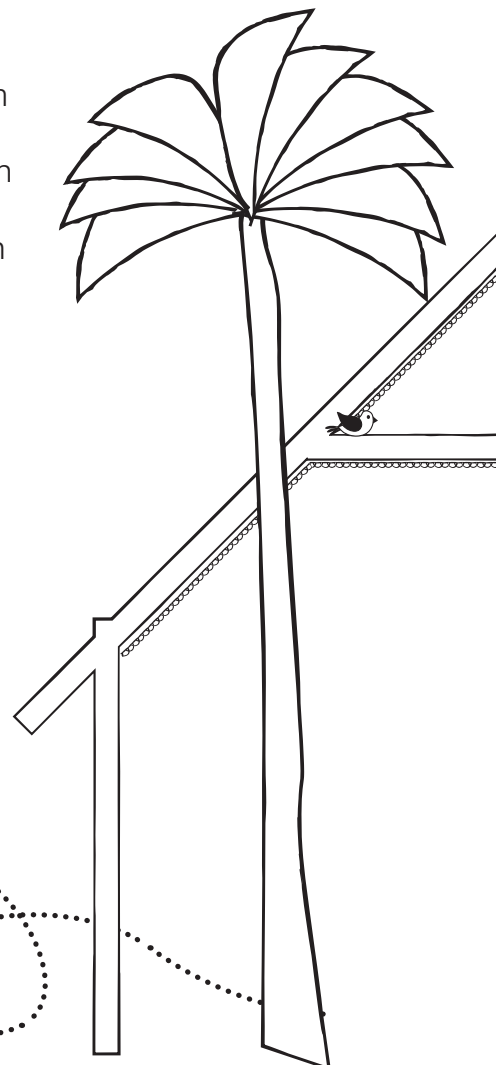
It was about 112km from Nazareth to Bethlehem as the crow flies, or about 144km to walk. What would be a similar distance apart in your local geography?

Mary and Joseph would have been dependent on being able to sleep in others' homes on the way, perhaps with family, perhaps with strangers, perhaps sometimes sleeping outdoors. What connections can you help children make with people in our world who have to take long, difficult journeys (a great opportunity to focus on refugees), or people in New Zealand who don't have a home to sleep in?

As a congregation you could encourage the children to take Mary and Joseph out in their local community, and to take photos/selfies with them – creating a church photo album (either on a noticeboard, in a Facebook group, or some other way). You might ask them to take Mary and Joseph to the many Christmas and end of term celebrations they attend, or to meet important family members and friends – the people they would turn to if they had to make a long journey or needed a place to stay.

You could make an Advent family ritual each evening, by:

- lighting candles in your Advent wreath
- burning a section of your Advent candle (see below)
- saying a prayer
- opening a window on their Advent calendar
- finding a new place for Mary and Joseph to come to rest. One family member could be designated to reposition Mary and Joseph, and others could look for them.



Congregational Use

The *Christmas on the Move* digital files also include vector files of **Individual Nativity Figures**. This means you can print Mary, Joseph and Jesus in large formats.

Take the files to your local printer and get them printed on any size paper such as A0) for colouring and putting on the walls of the church or sanctuary, or on a tougher material like corflute if you would like figures you can move around your church.

Mary and Joseph could visit various ministries that happen at your place and in the community during the week. Photos of these could be a great addition to your church's facebook page or noticeboards.

Mary and Joseph could be positioned in the church to highlight different aspects of Advent and/or the lectionary readings.

They might be by the Advent wreath on the first Sunday (or Jesse tree if you use one); by a banner representing peace, or by a world map or globe to go with the theme of 'peace' for the second week; in the place you share morning tea on the third Sunday for 'joy' and for the fourth week in a place that picks up the theme of love: at the communion table; by the foodbank offertory; or associated with some other ministry.

They might also come to rest at the stable, ready for the arrival of Baby Jesus on Christmas Day if that will be part of your service(s).



The Sundays of Advent

What are the themes of the Sundays in Advent? Most of us don't use the Book of Common Prayer Four Last Things: Death, Judgement, Heaven and Hell...

We most commonly use Hope, Love, Joy and Peace!

Colouring Posters

While there is often a frustration of 'just giving the kids a colouring in sheet,' with the rise in popularity of adult colouring in books, these posters and sheets can be a great intergenerational activity, for young and old alike.

Illustrated Children's Ministry

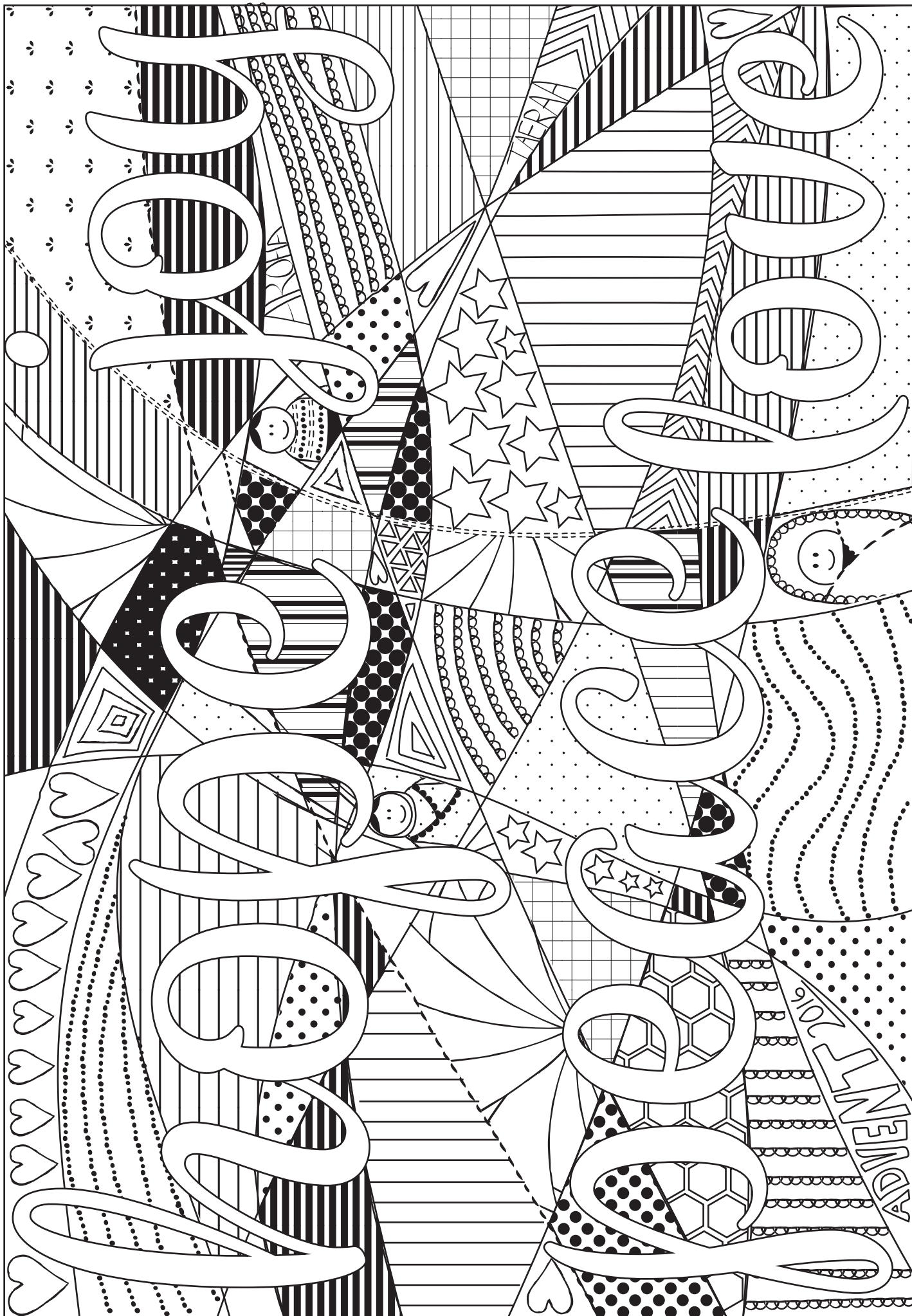
A great website with digital files for purchase of large size posters and colouring pages with the words Hope, Love, Joy, Peace and Emmanuel. Different groups in the parish could prepare each poster, or they could be done collectively during worship or at morning tea-time. If you have a parish working bee to prepare the church for Advent and Christmas, these could also be part of the day.

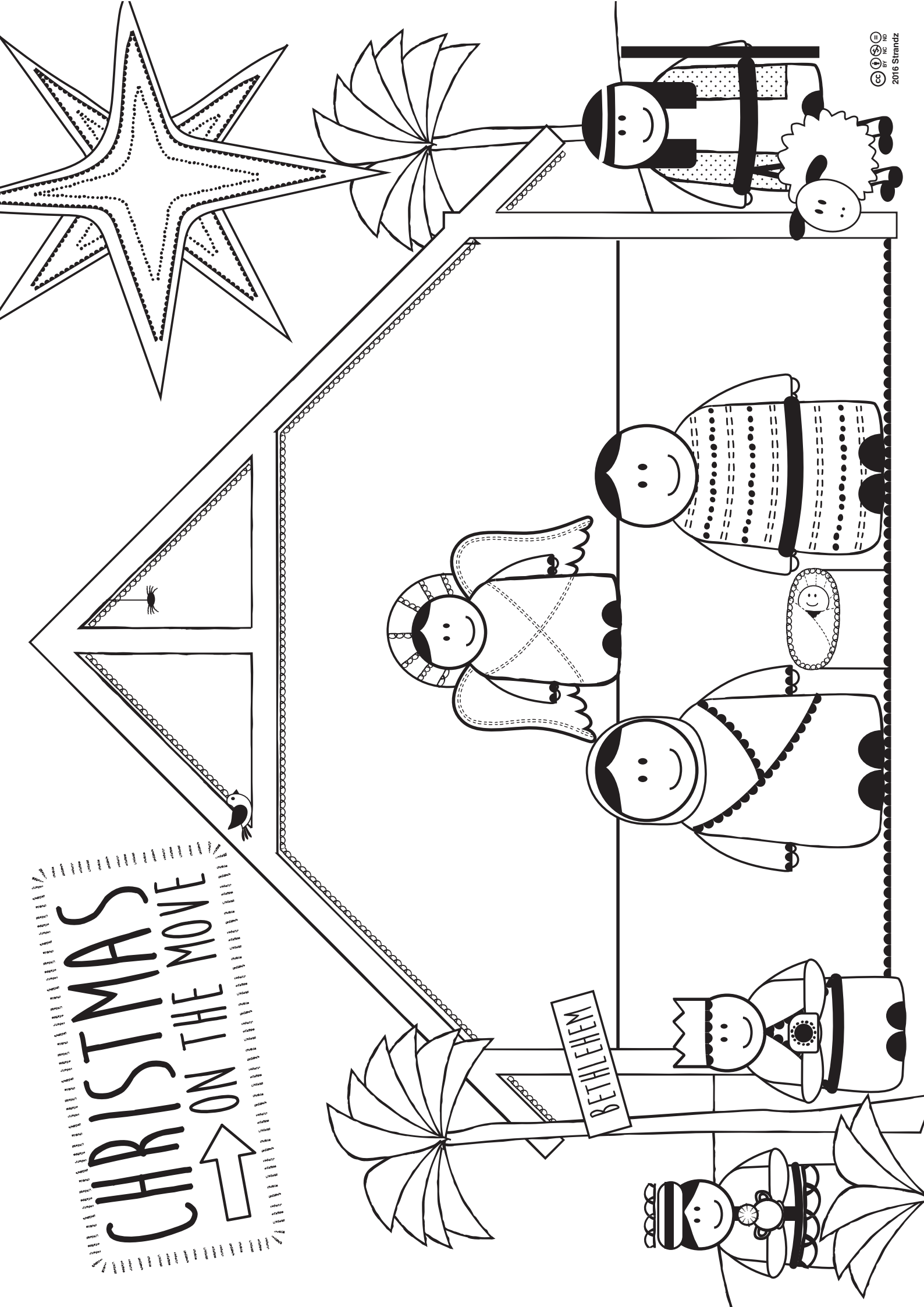
They also have alternative posters with the themes Dream, Believe, Inspire, Laugh, and Imagine. The posters for 2016 will be released in late October. illustratedchildrensministry.com

Christmas on the Move

We have also put together a *Christmas on the Move* colouring in sheet, with the words joy, hope, love and peace. This can be downloaded and printed as an A4, or enlarged to A0. Perhaps you could colour it in bit by bit as a family over the advent period.







CHRISTMAS
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→

Advent Ideas

Assemble a Nativity Scene

If you have a community-facing noticeboard or window, you can assemble the nativity scene over the weeks of Advent, building a sense of anticipation.

Perhaps you can start with the stable standing empty, add Mary and Joseph the following week, shepherds the next week and fill the sky with angels on the fourth week. These could be simple figures, coloured by the congregation (see [here](#) for several options). If you have a crib service or other Christmas Eve worship, this is great timing for adding Baby Jesus to the scene.

Alternatively, you might be using the 'Christmas on the Move' resource. In which case you would start with the stable, and maybe add more things to the stable each week (animals, manger) as Mary and Joseph make the pilgrimage closer and closer.

Advent Wreaths

A simple song that can be sung after the lighting of the Advent candle each week (to the tune of Frere Jacques)

*Light of Jesus, Light of Jesus,
Show the way, Show the way,
Shine in us forever, Shine in us forever,
This we pray, This we pray.*

Counting down the days at home

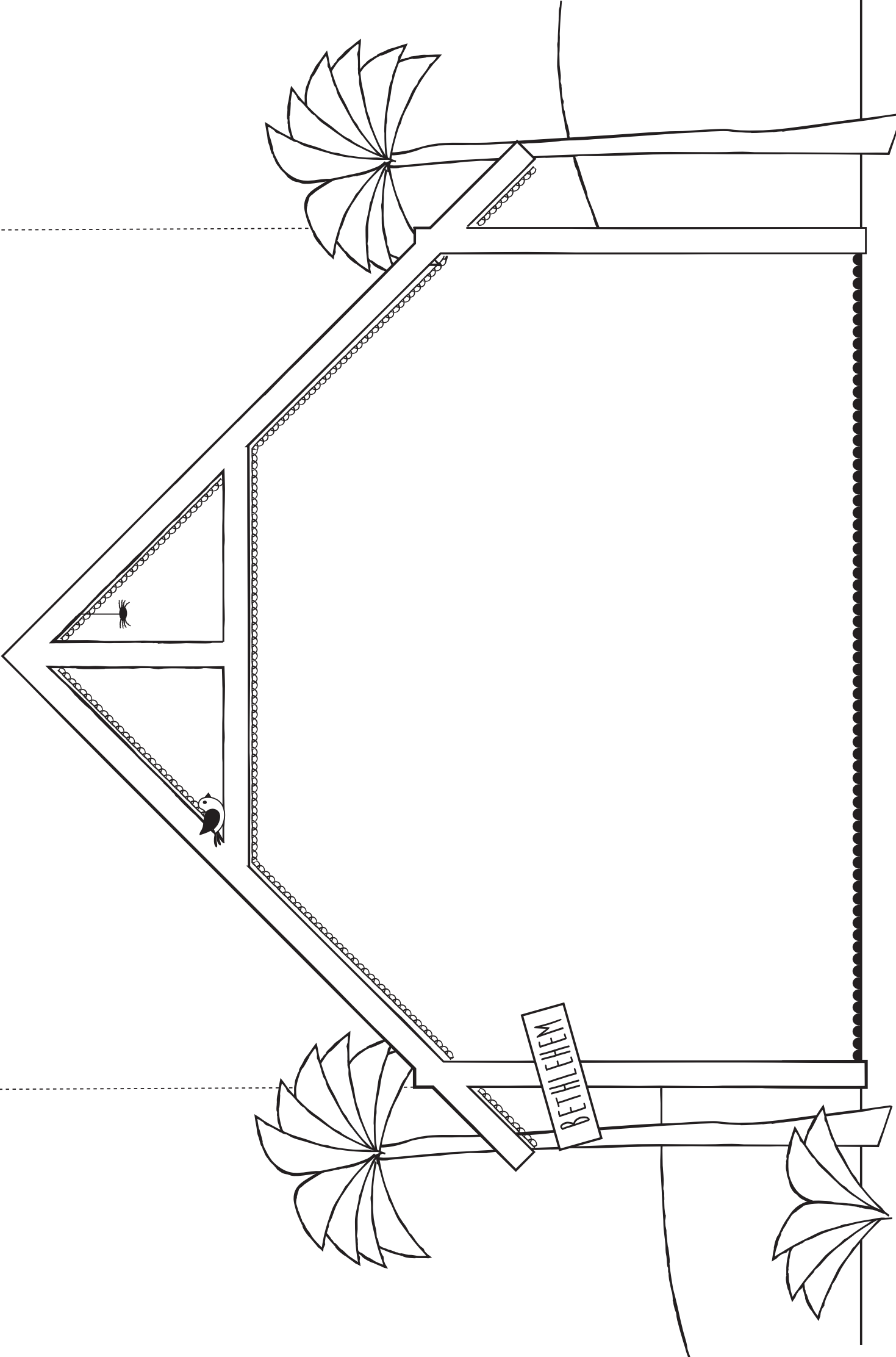
Here are some ideas for ideas that can be made or used at home:

Advent Candle

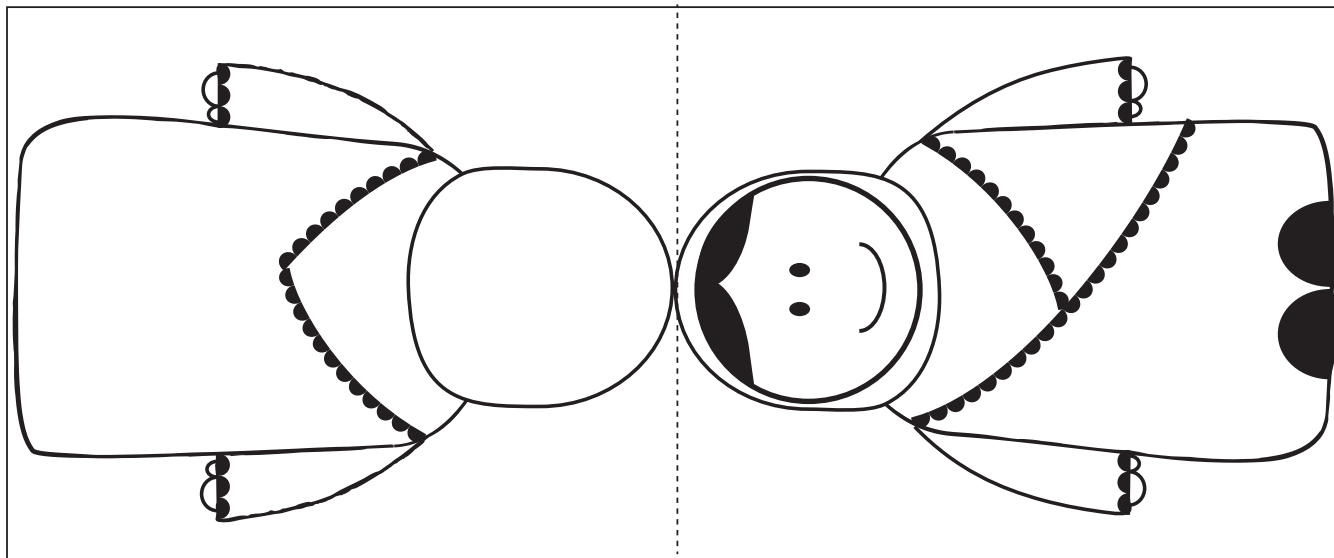
Another option is to use a candle, and mark off 24 sections (leaving a stub big enough to put in your candle holder and safely light the candle on Christmas Eve). Burn the candle each day. A taller, thinner candle will work better than a pillar candle as children can easily see the candle getting shorter each day. You will find an example and instructions [here](#), though just writing the numbers on the candle with a permanent marker also works!

Advent Spirals

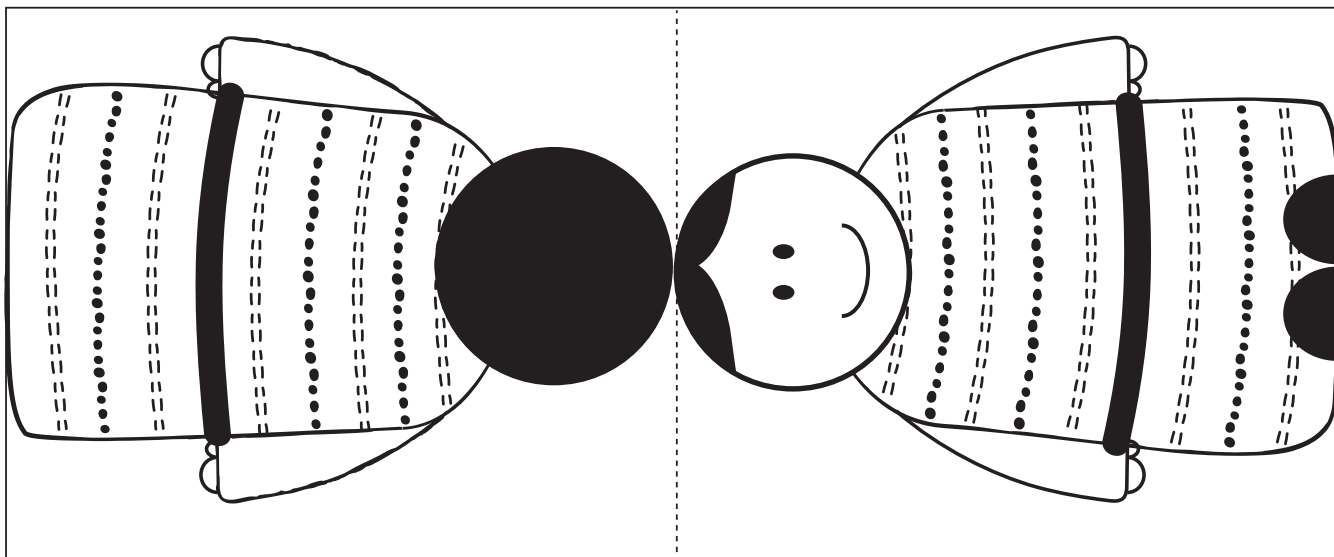
- [Wooden Spiral](#)
- [Salt Dough Spiral](#)



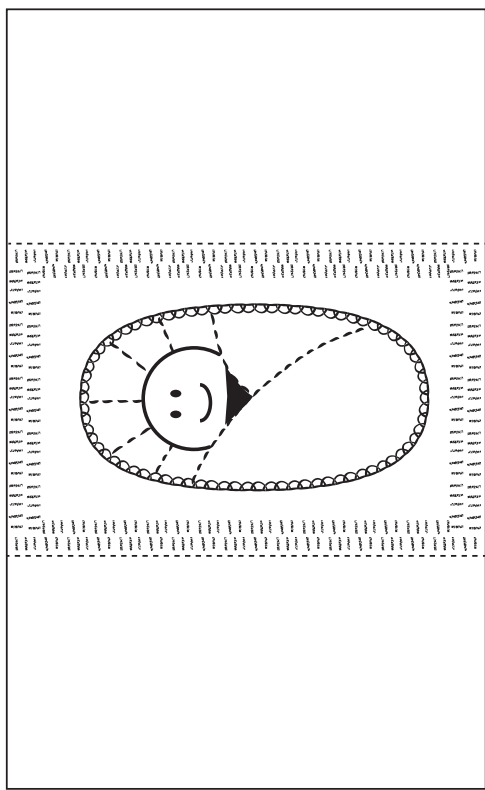
Cut along the solid lines and fold on the dashed lines



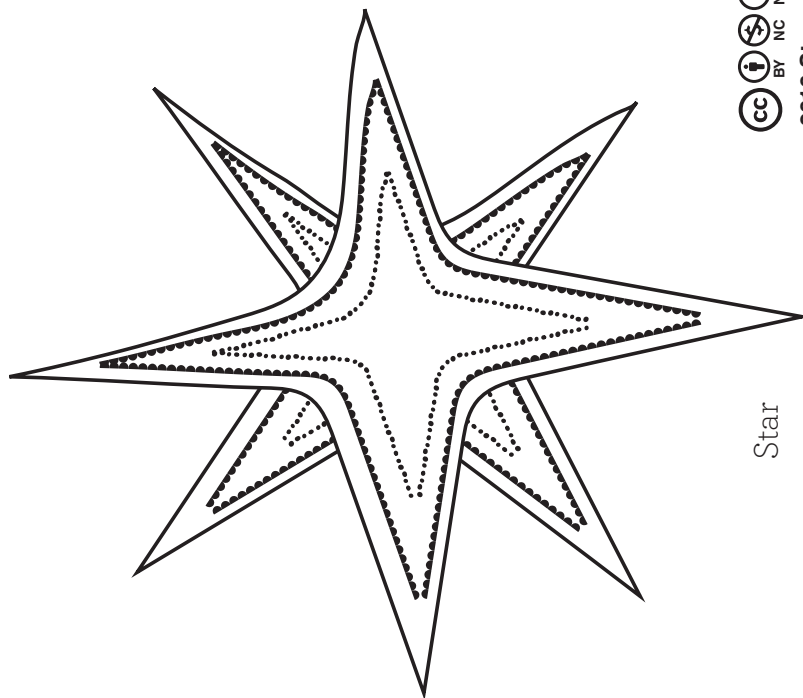
Mary



Joseph




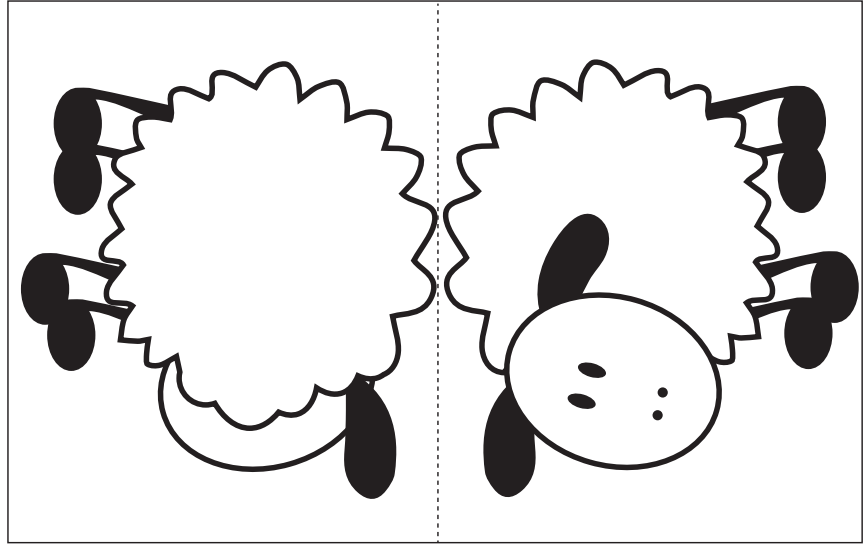
Jesus



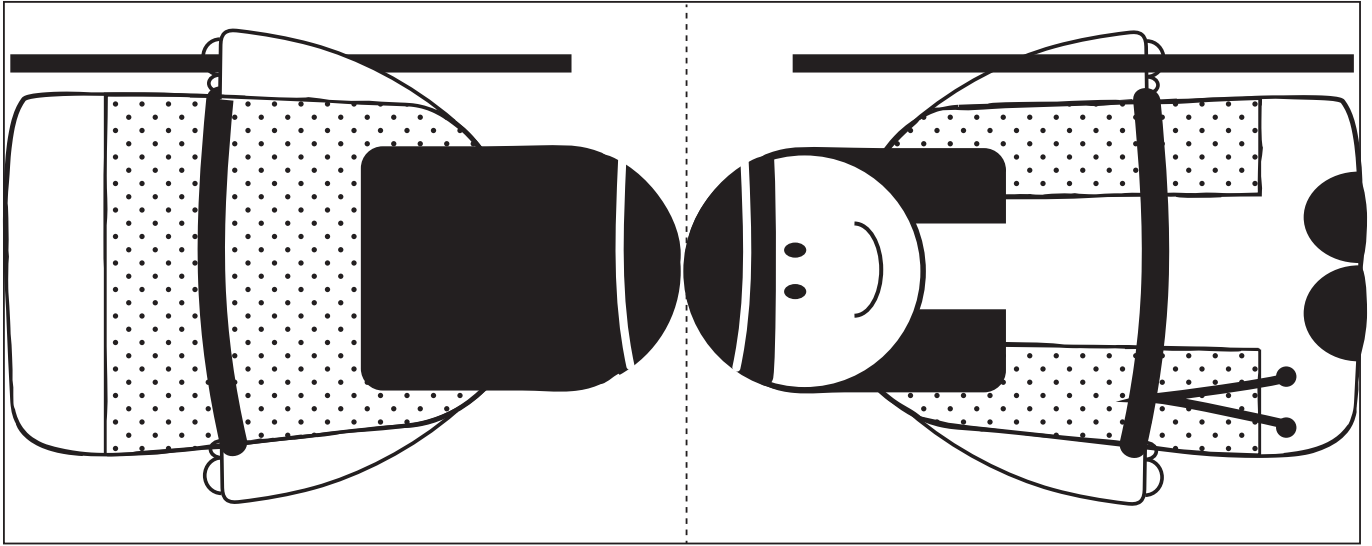
Star

CHRISTMAS

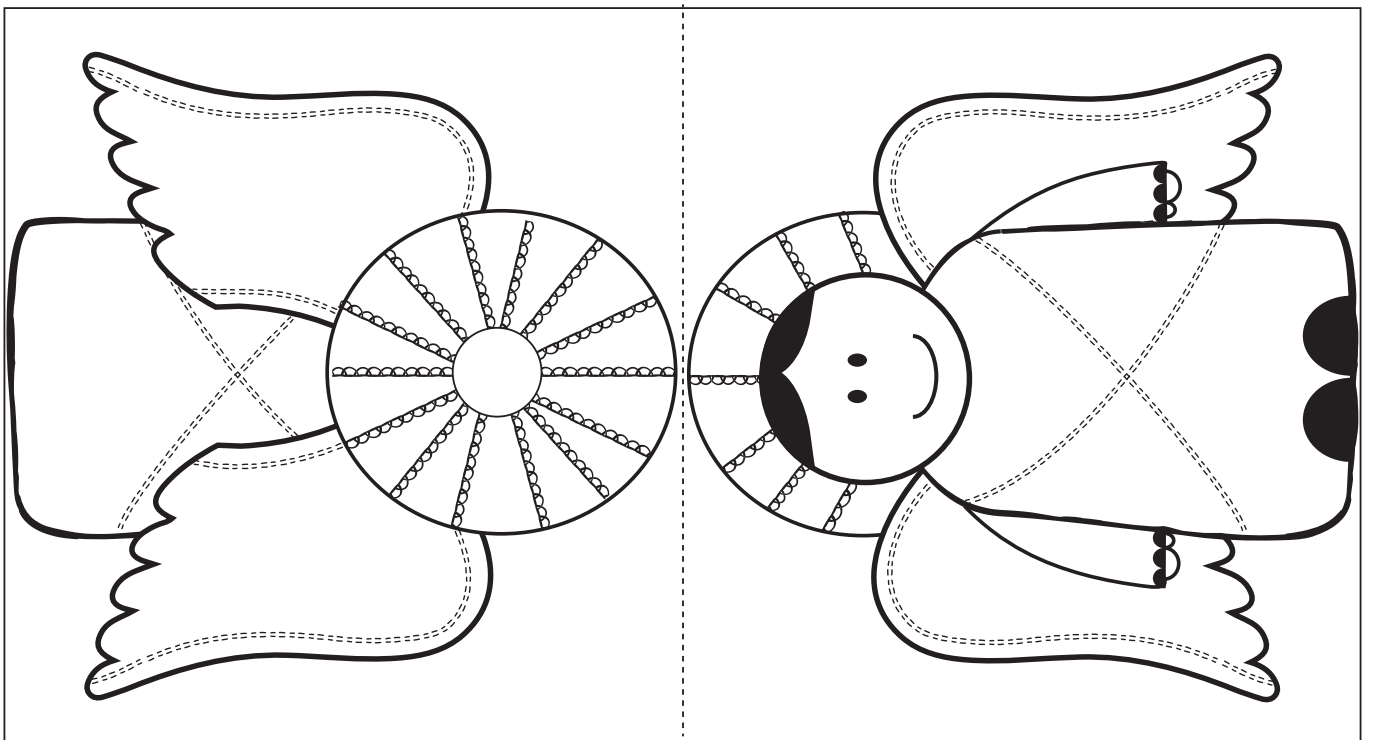
ON THE MOVE

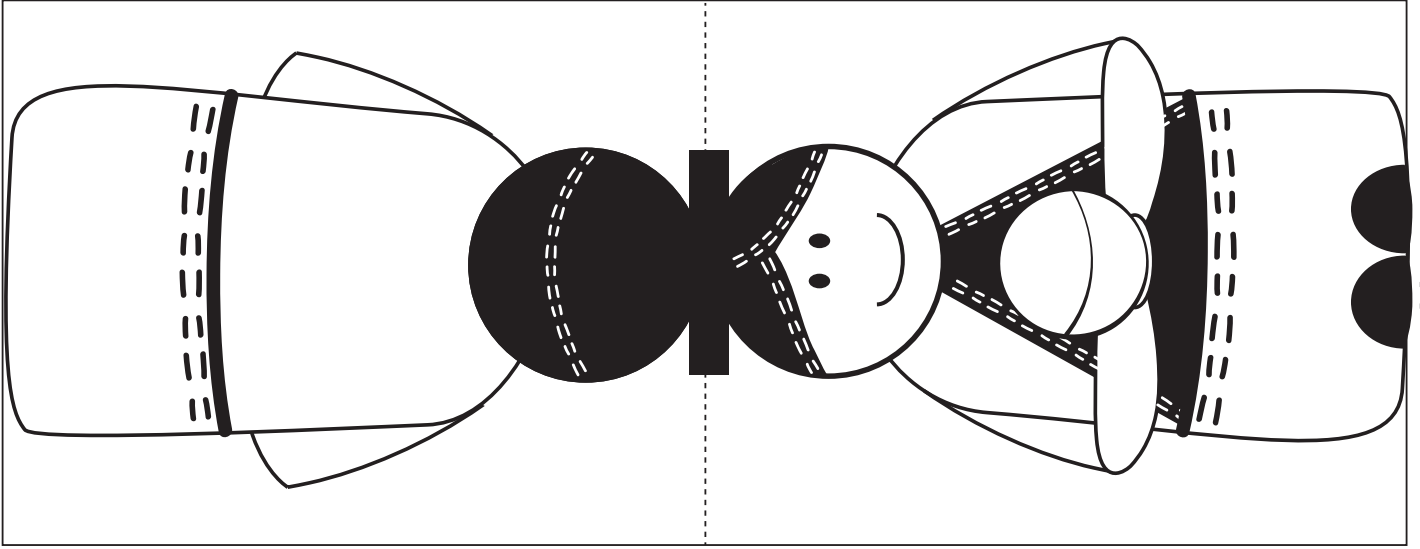
Sheep



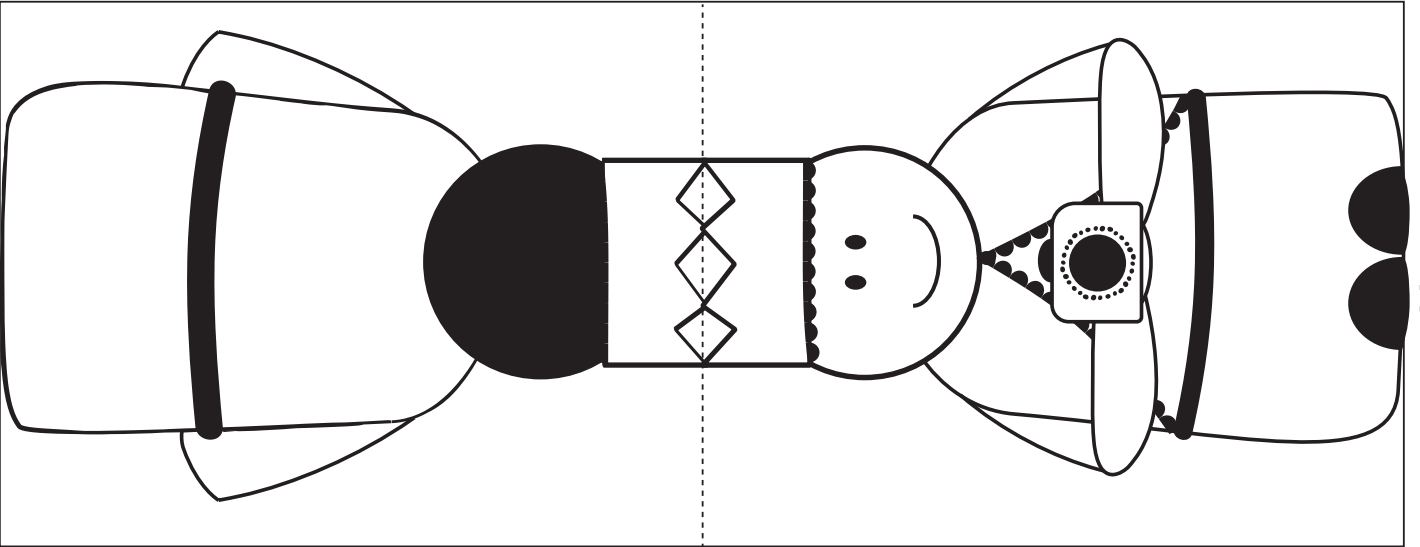
Shepherd



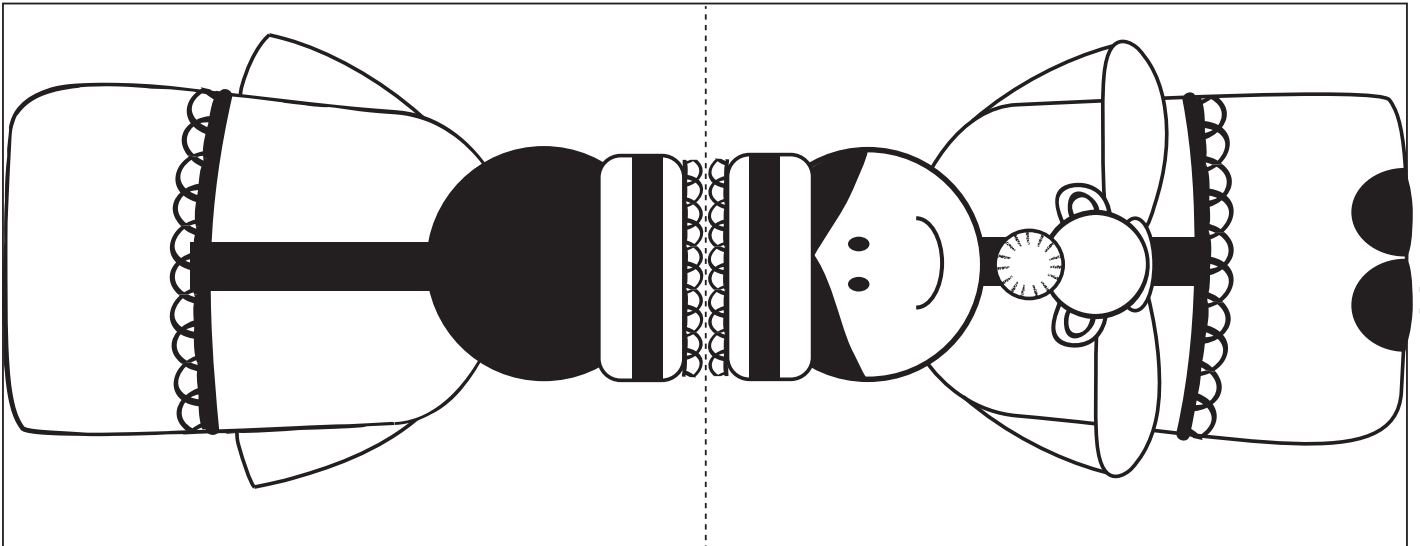
Angel



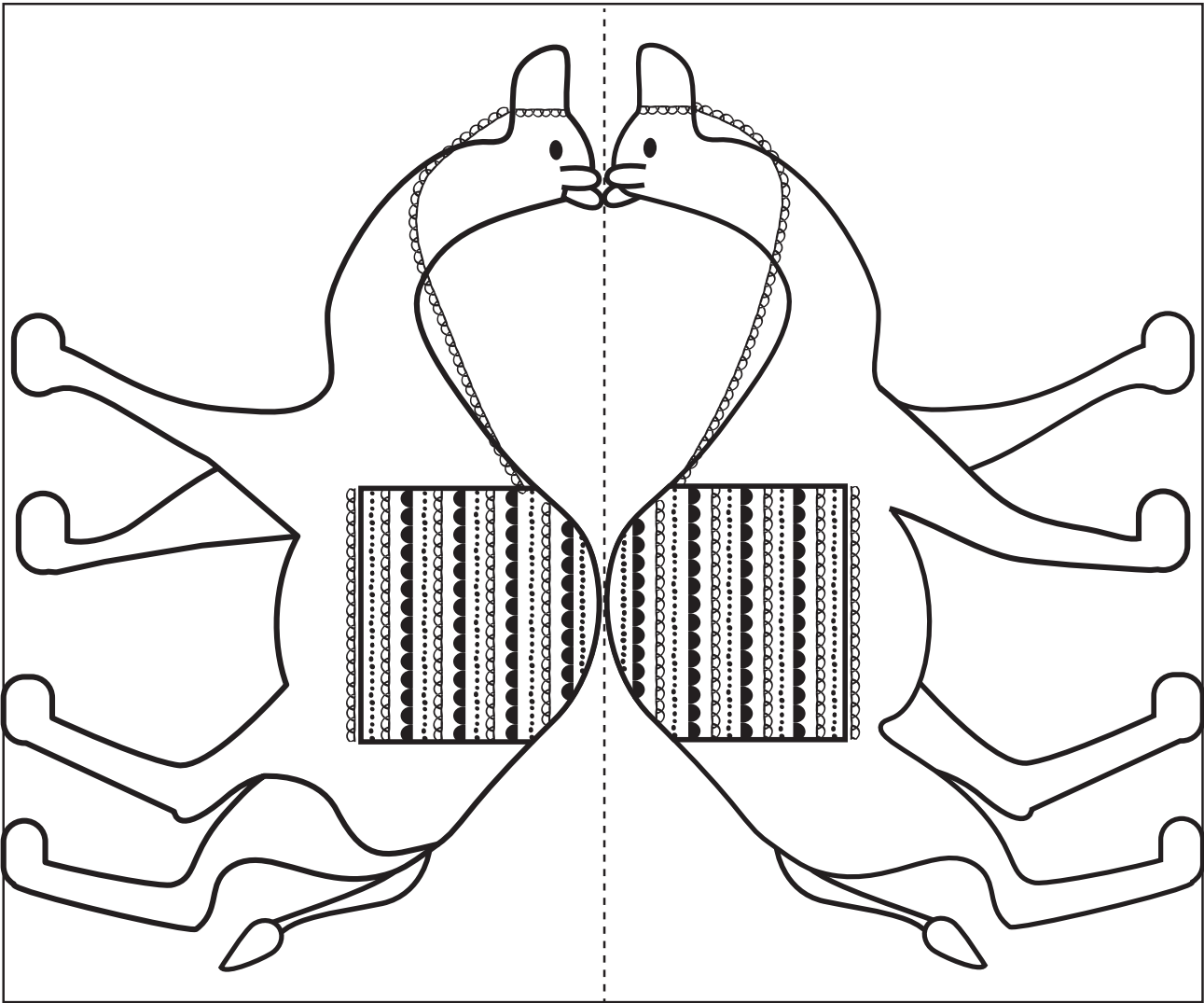
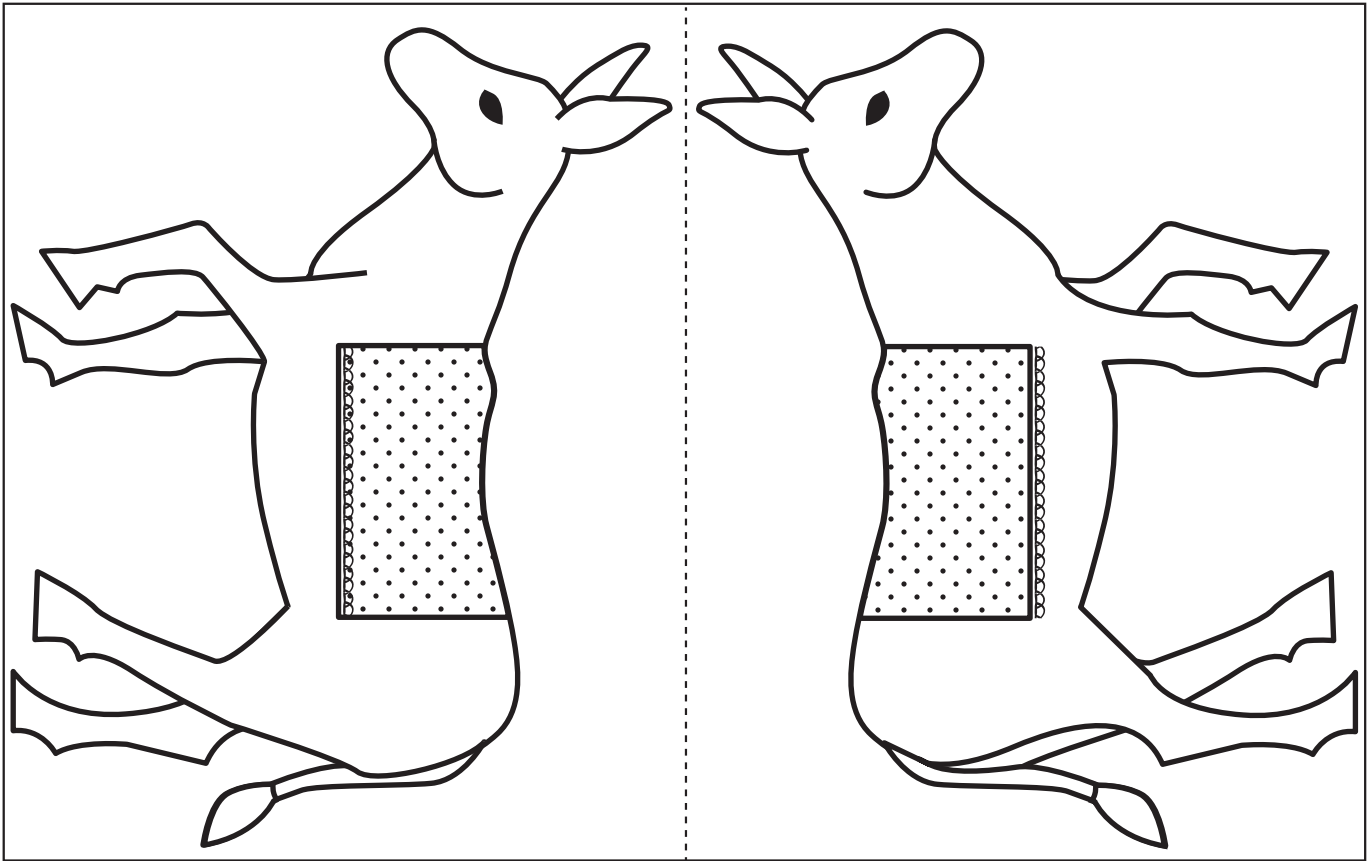
Magi

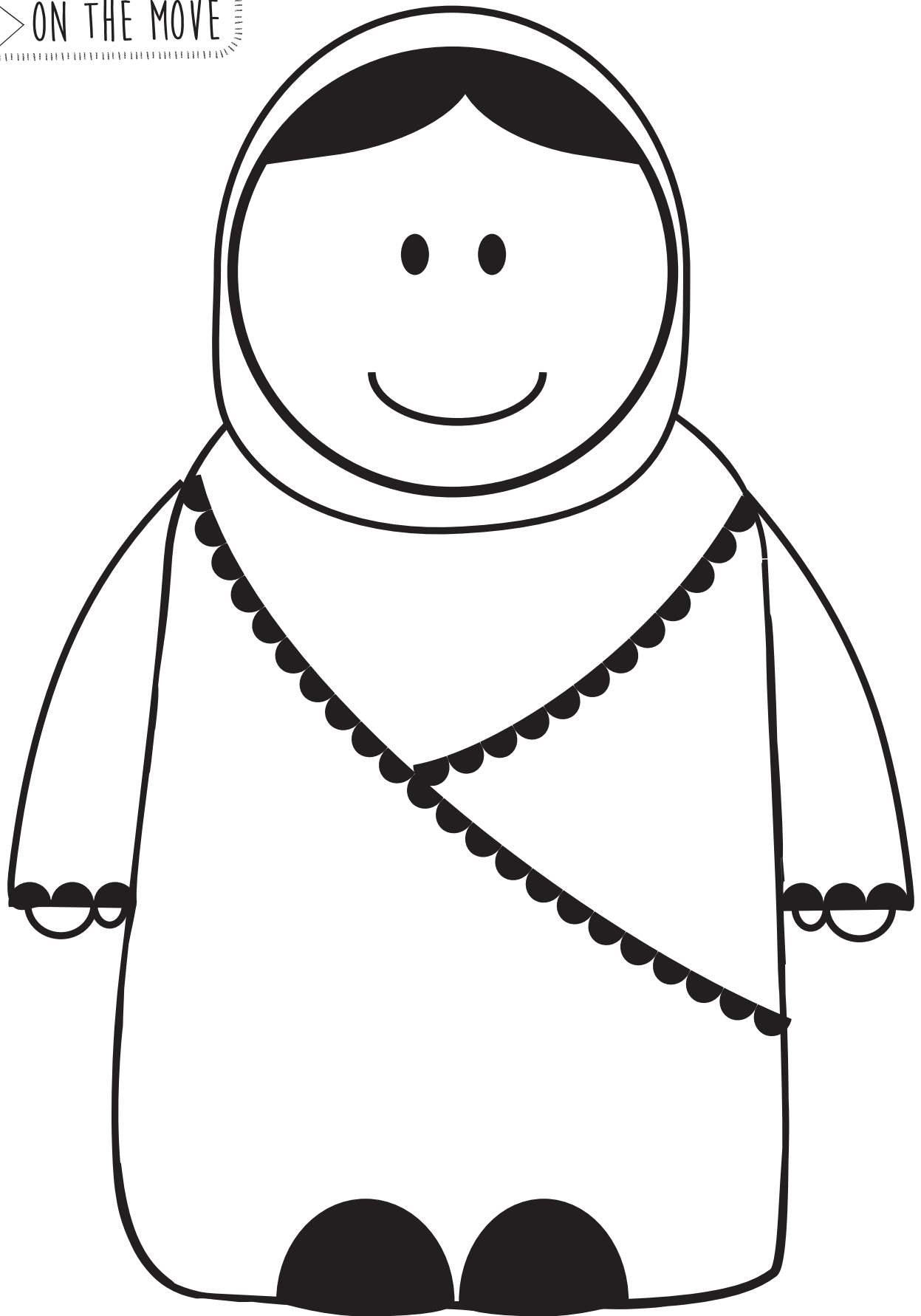


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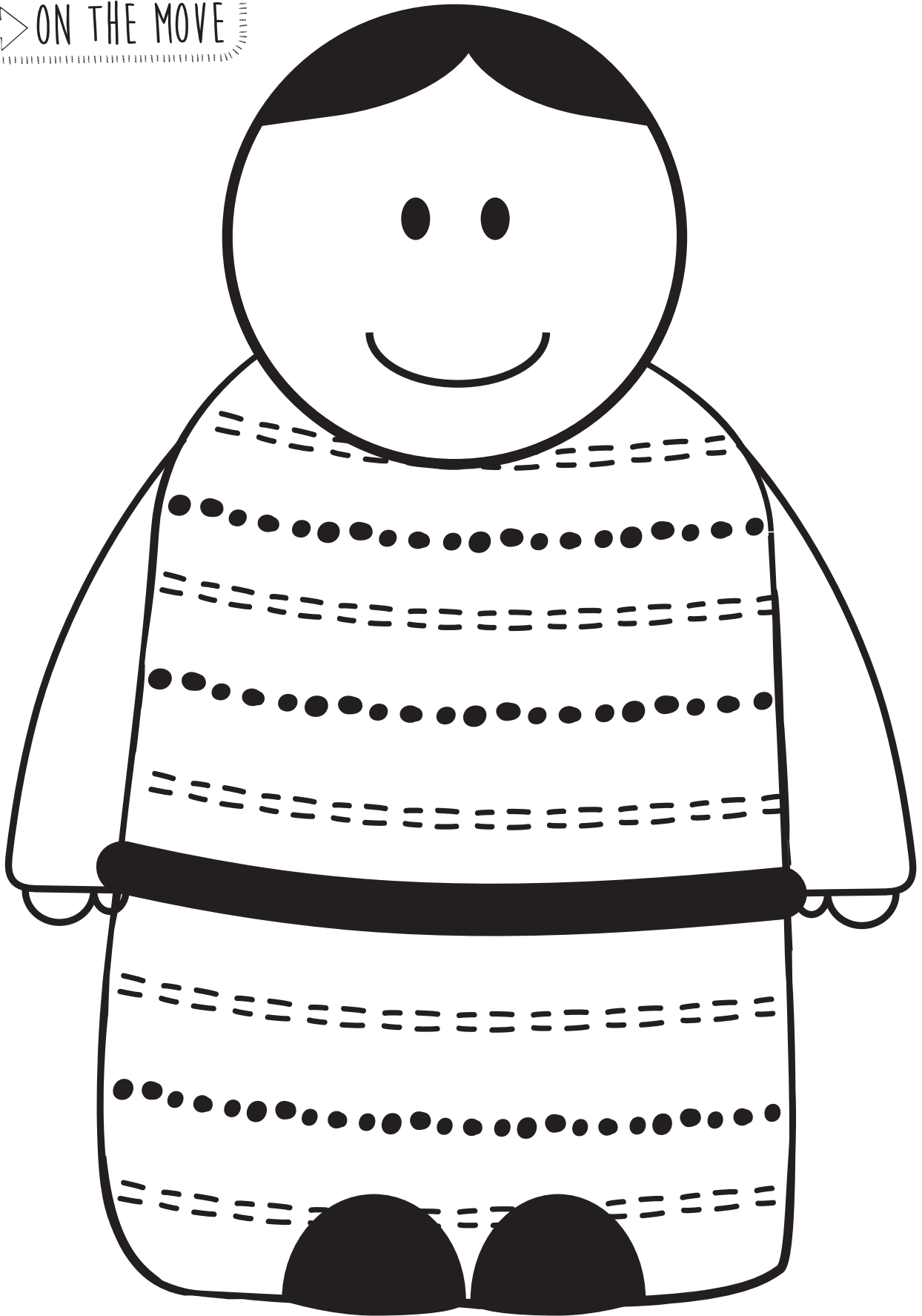


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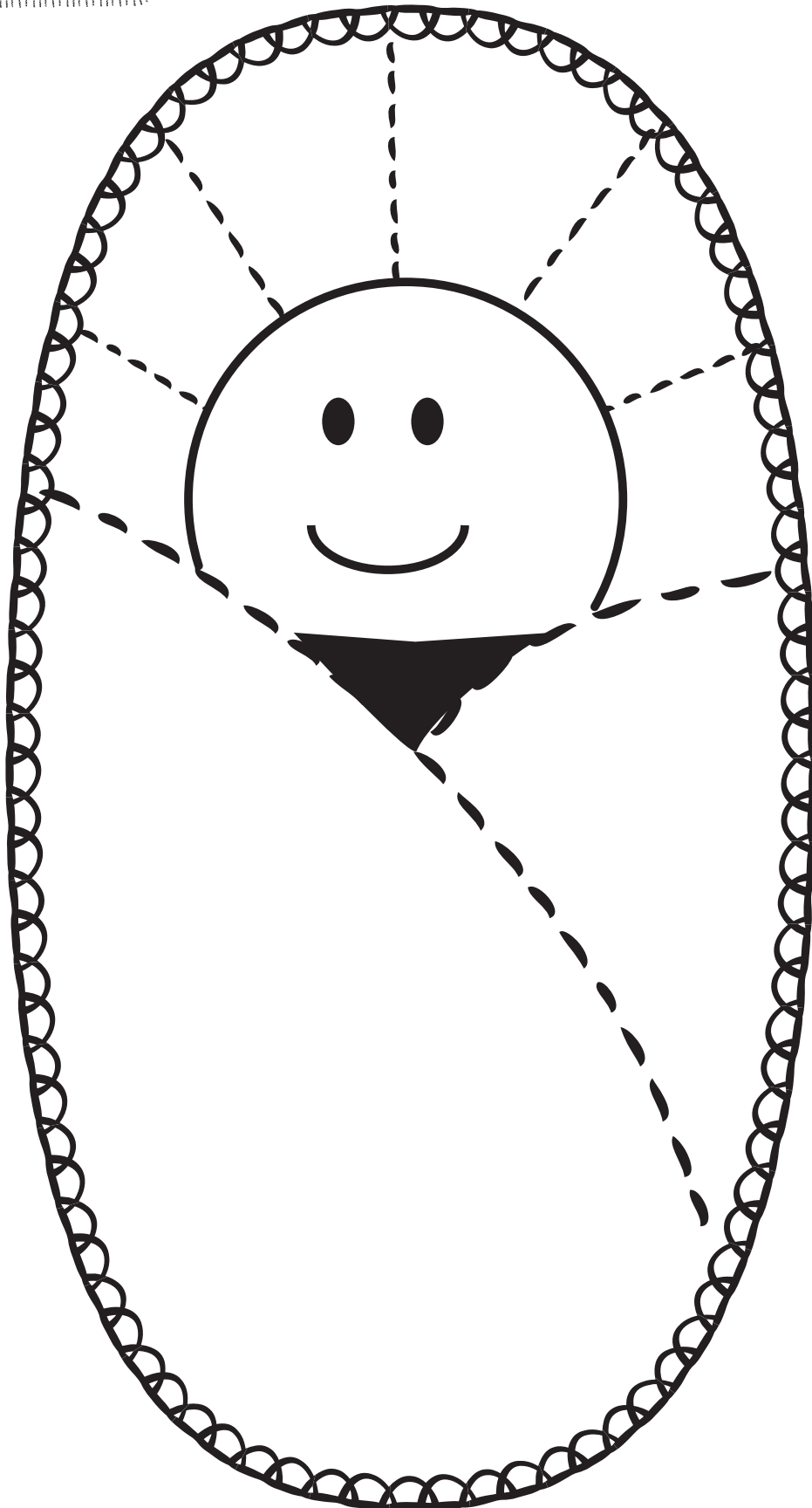




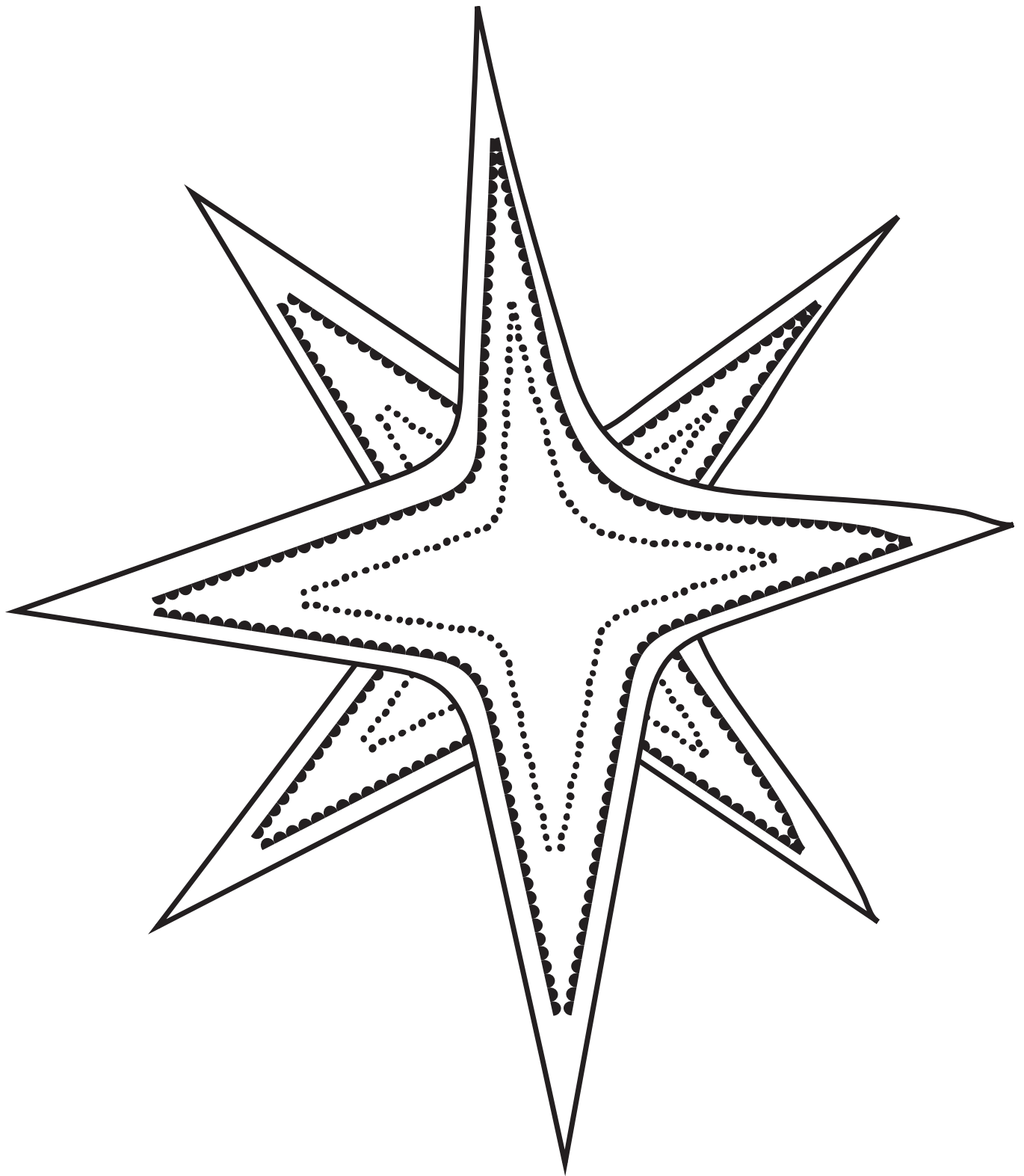
Mary



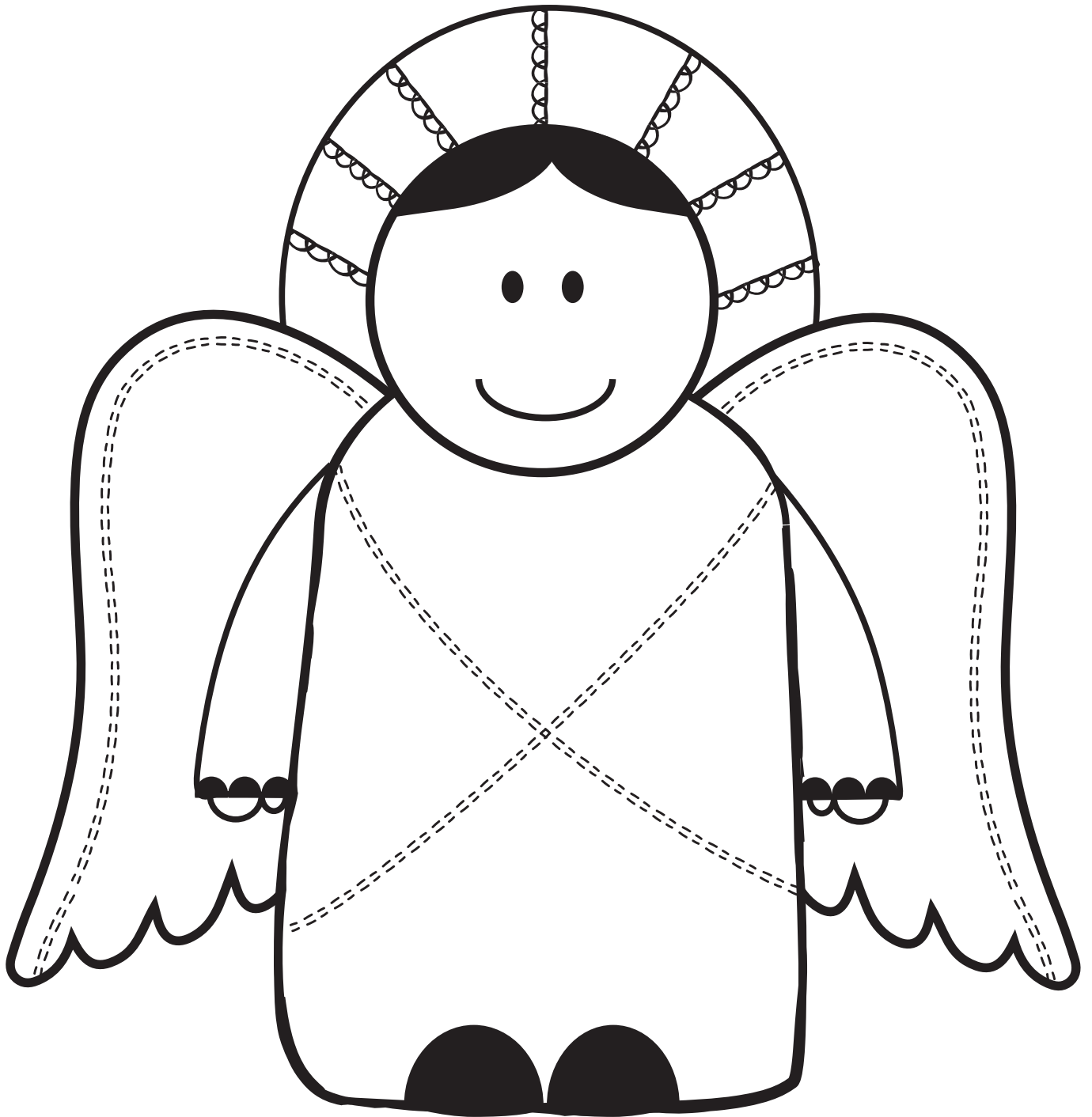
Joseph



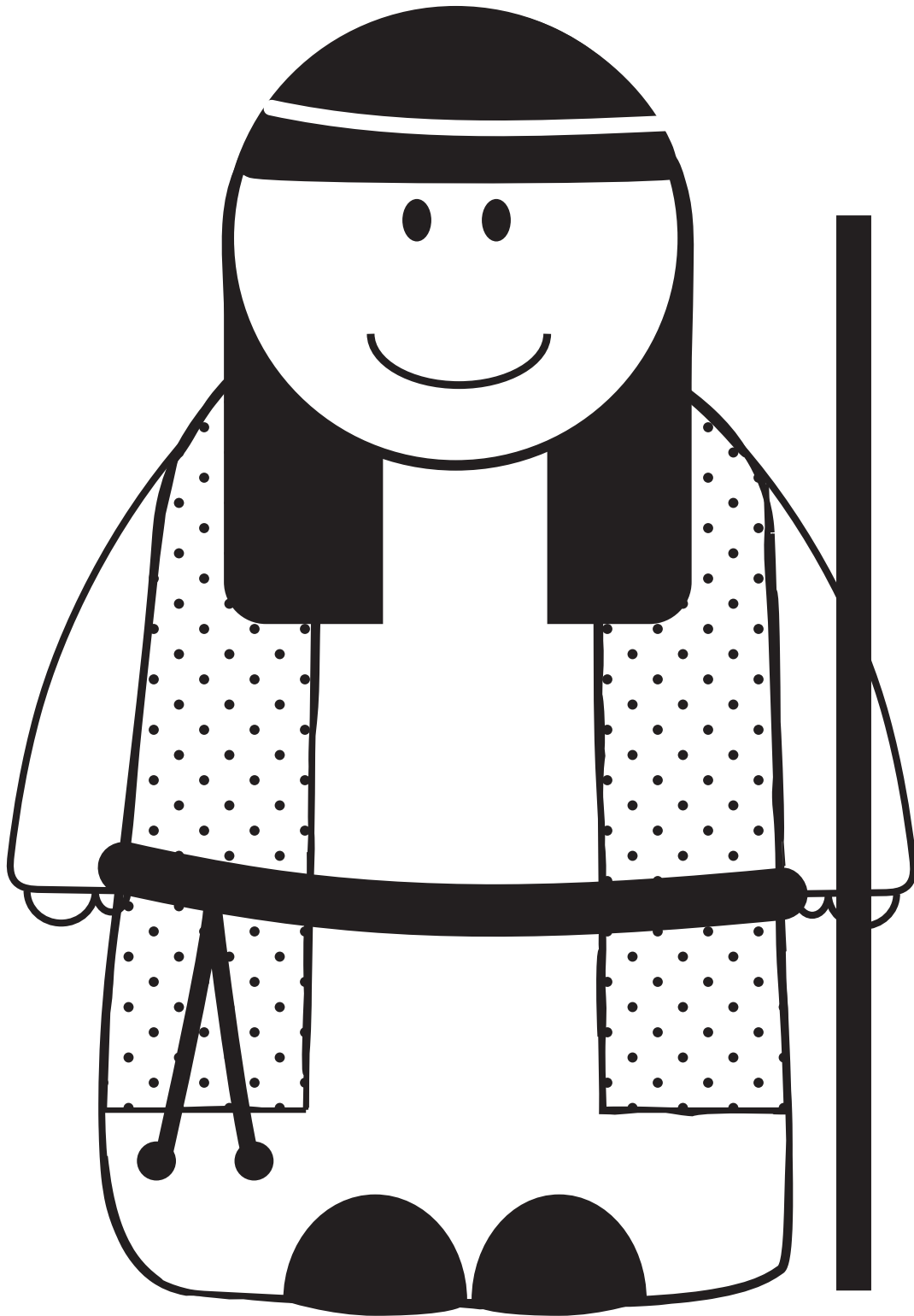
Baby Jesus



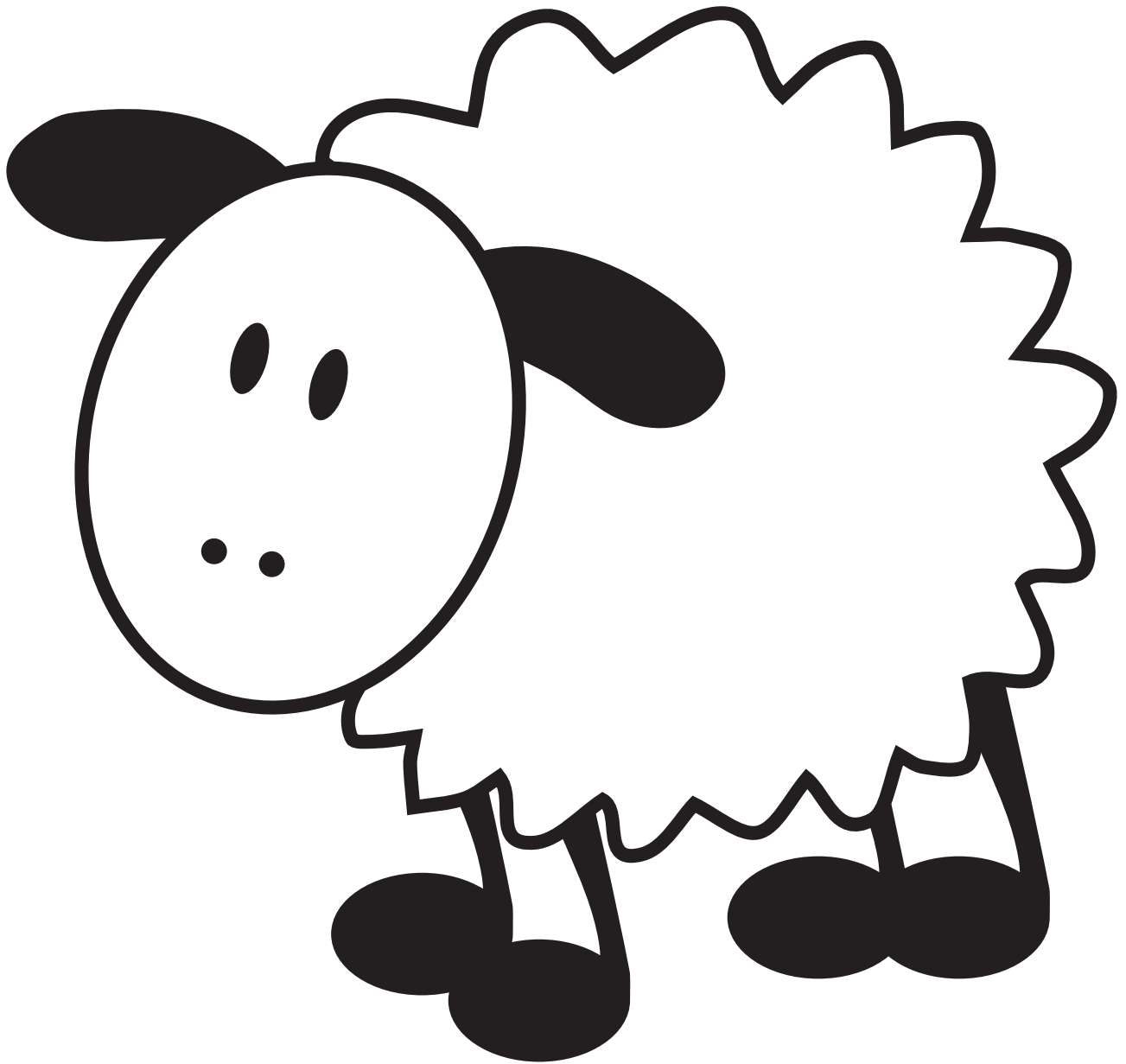
Star



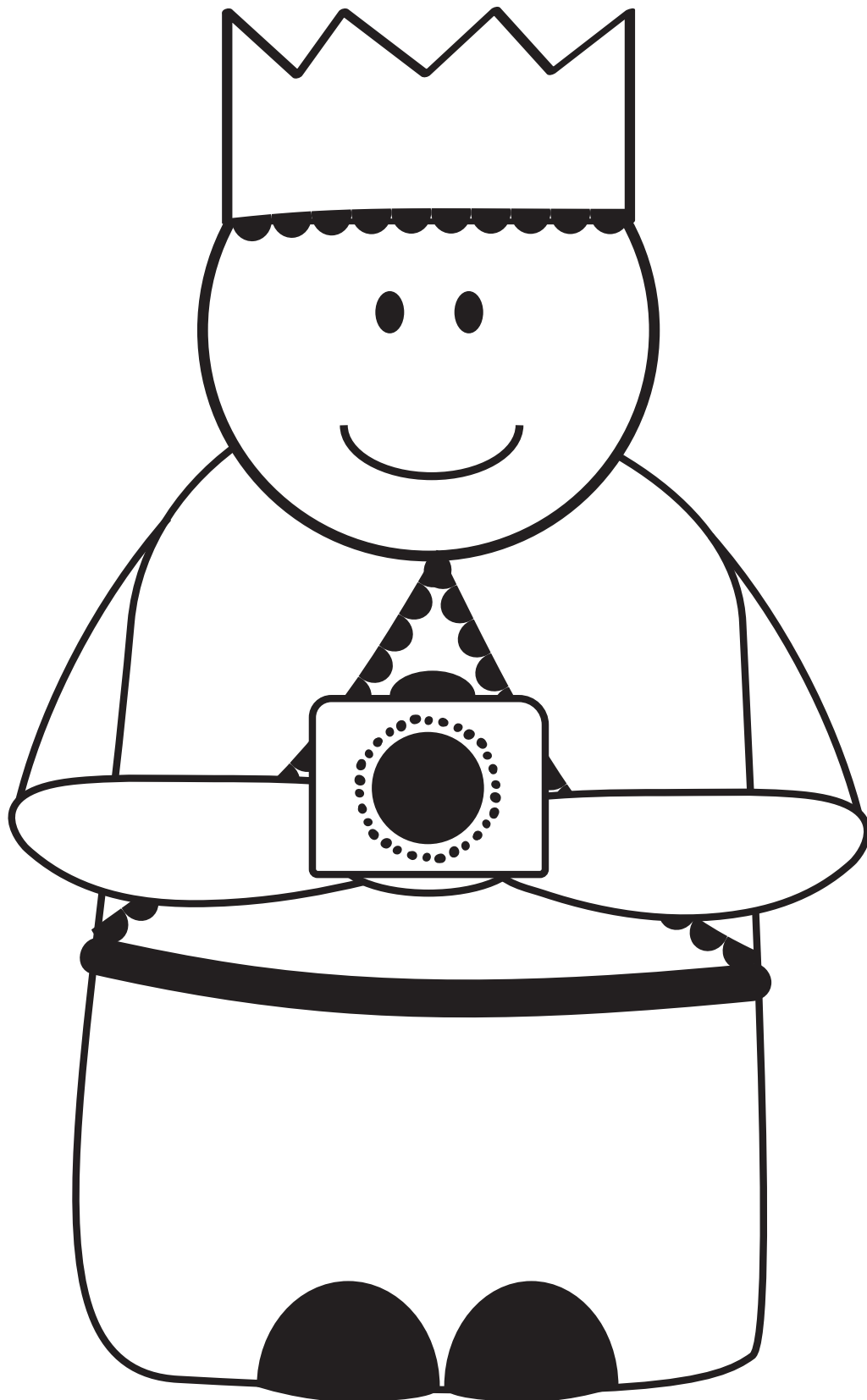
Angel



Shepherd



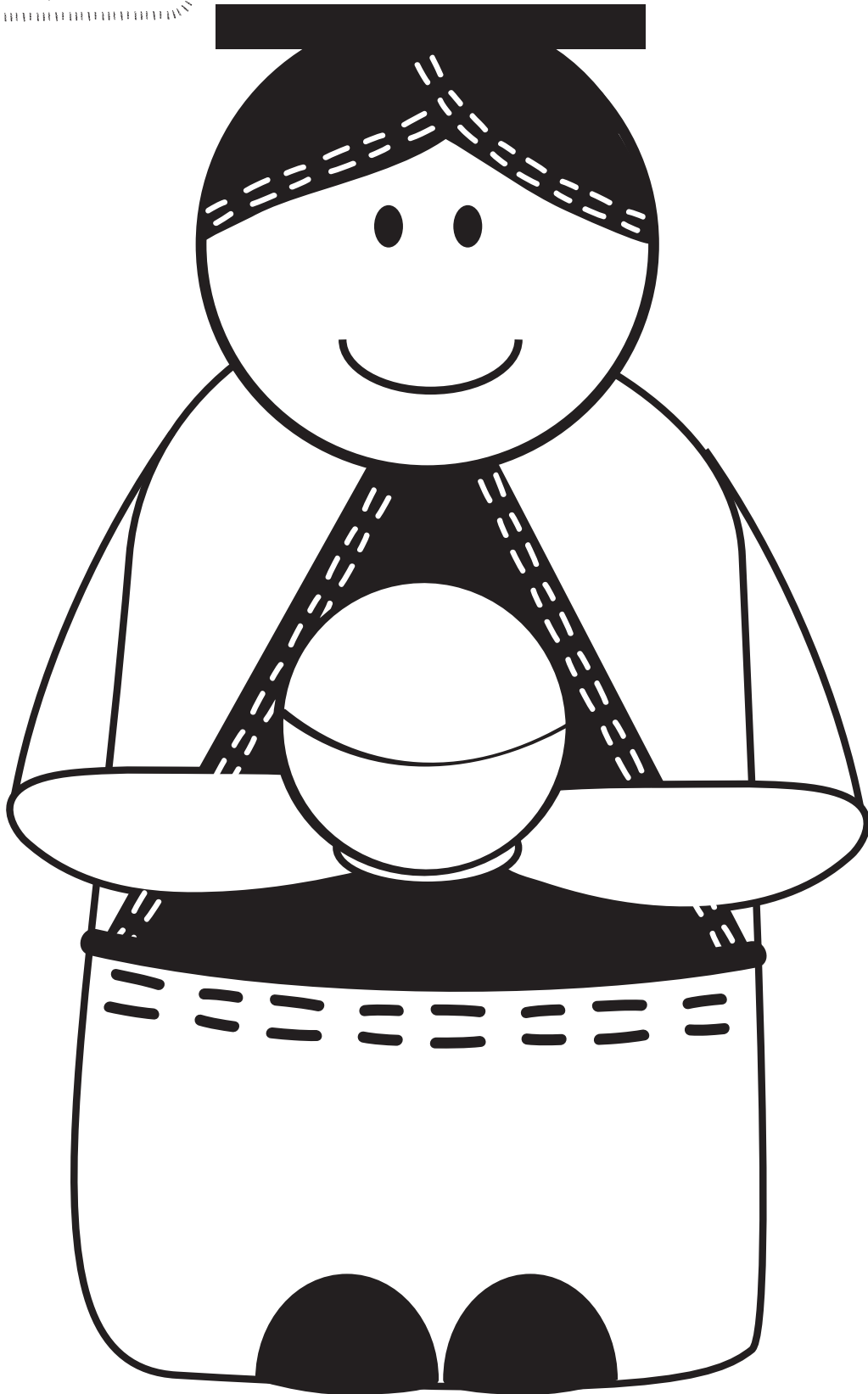
Sheep



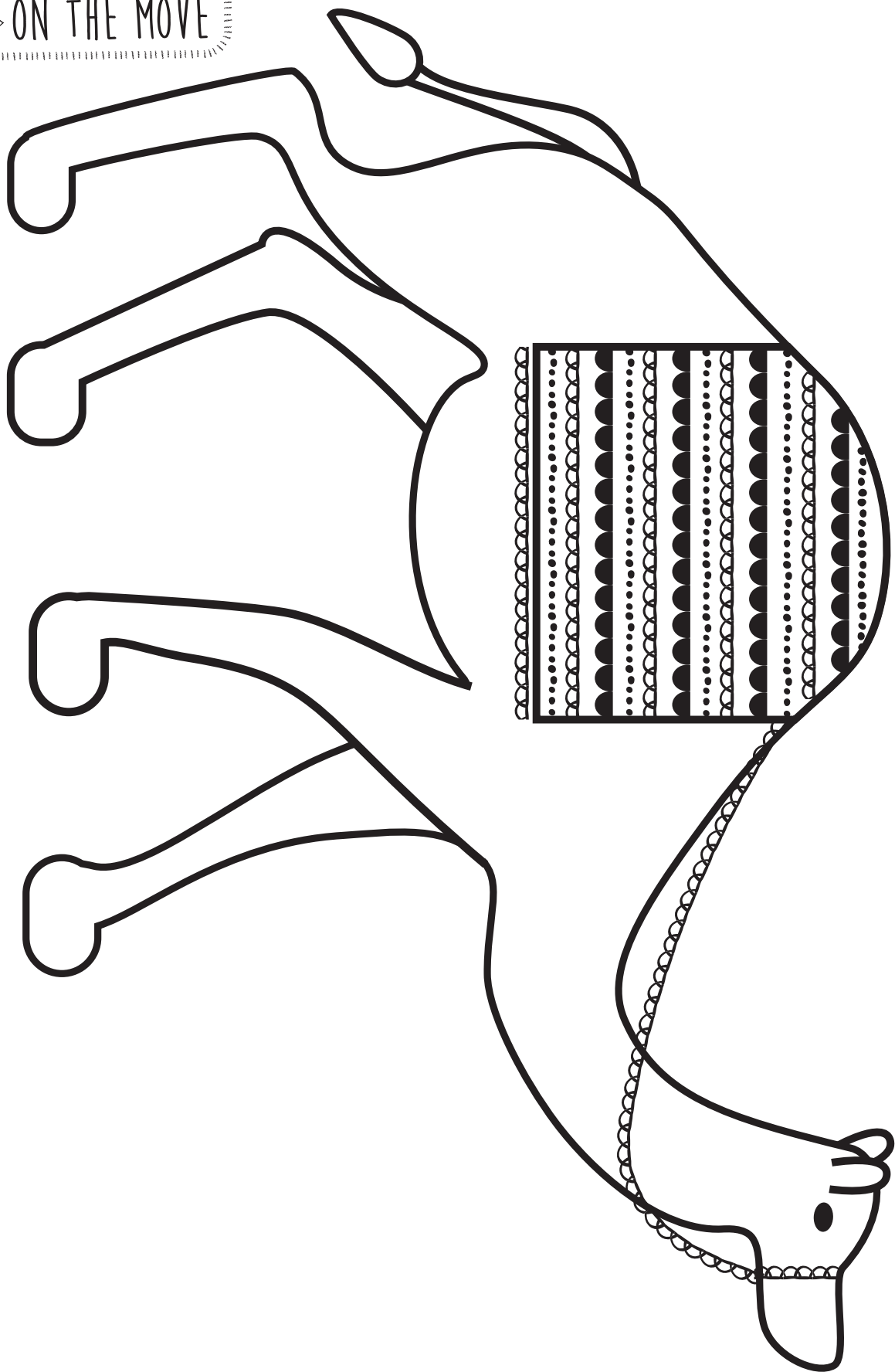
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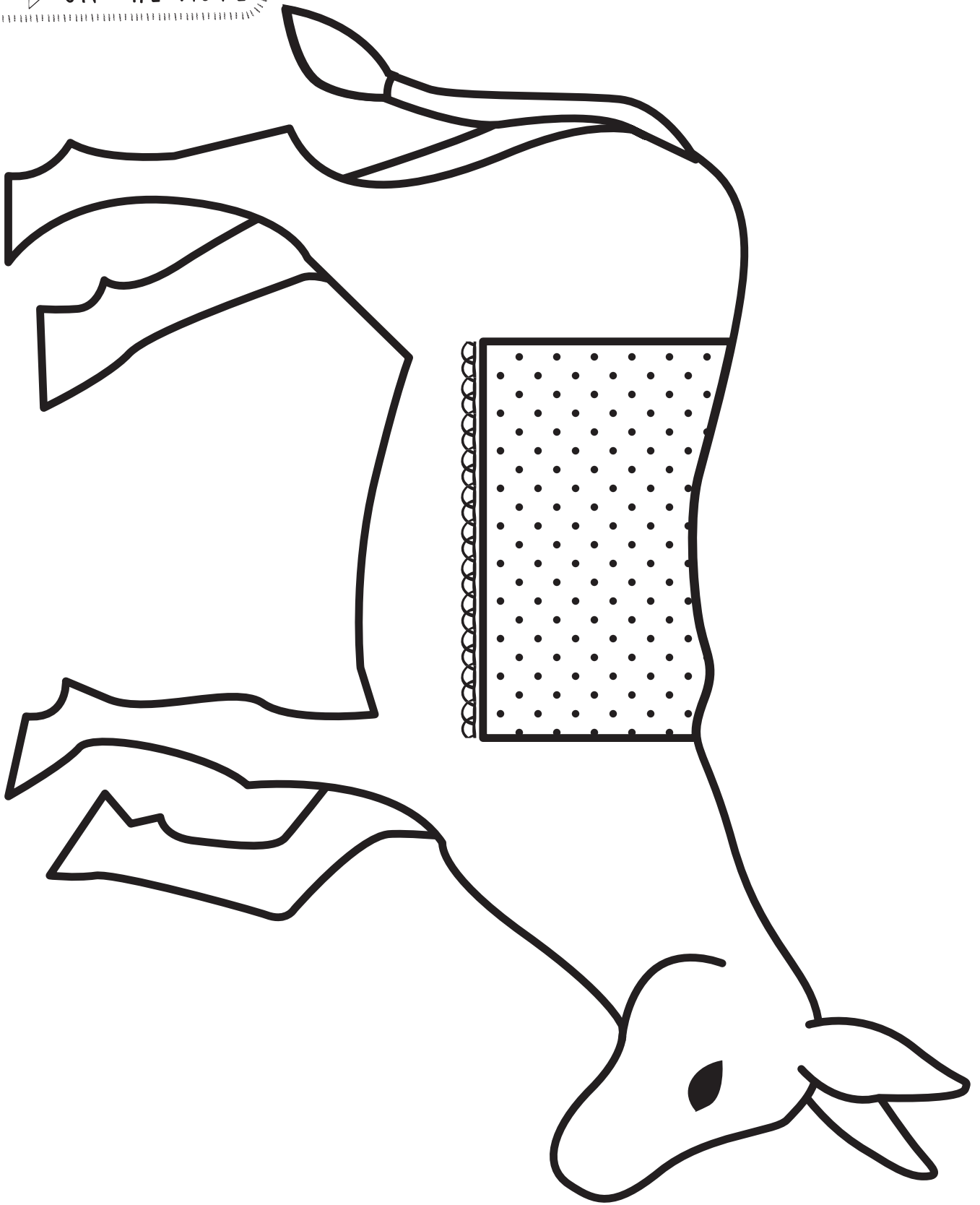
Magi



Magi



Camel



Donkey