

20 December 2020

Dear Families:

This Christmas Eve will be different, as has been true with so very many things this year. We will have one service with elements of both of the Family Service and the Lessons and Carols that we have celebrated in the past. As always, we will light candles and sing *Silent Night*. But the one thing we won't have is the opportunity to get together and act silly while telling the traditional Christmas story. If you will miss that, this packet is for you.

On the following pages, you will find the story from Luke that we usually tell on Christmas Eve (and indeed, I am telling it this year, too), as well as a script of the story, and most especially—templates for *masks*! Cut them out, color and decorate them, tie on some yarn, and act out the story just as we always do. Wear your masks to the Christmas Eve service and act out the story there. Get online and show your masks to family and friends. Have fun!

Monday, December 21 is the winter solstice, and so the days will begin to lengthen, and the light will slowly but surely return, just as the light at the end of the pandemic tunnel is just barely beginning to glow. I wish you all good things this holiday season, I miss you, and I think of you all the time.

Blessings & Love.

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Luke 2:1-20, New International Version

2 In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ² (This was the first census that took place while^[a] Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴ So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

The Birth of Jesus

Double up on characters as and if you wish. There is a template for a star and for the masks for all the characters on the following pages:

Mary	Joseph
Angels (2 or 3)	Donkey
Baby Jesus	Shepherds (2 or 3)
Sheep	Three Wise Men

A long time ago, in the town of Nazareth, lived a young woman named Mary. Mary did her chores, was kind to others, and loved God very much. She was engaged to be married to Joseph, who was a carpenter.

An angel appears to Mary.

Angel: Mary you are favored by God and he is with you everywhere you go.

Mary: What do you want?

Angel: Please do not be afraid.

Mary: Why are you visiting me?

Angel: God has sent me as he has found favor with you. You will have a baby boy and you are to give him the name Jesus.

Mary: I'm confused.

Angel: The Holy Spirit will perform a miracle, and your baby will be called the Son of God.

Mary: I don't know what to say.

Angel: It's ok, Mary.

Mary: I am the Lord's servant, and I hope everything that you are saying will come true.

The angel disappears and Mary is left alone Then Joseph walks in.

Mary: Joseph, what is wrong?

Joseph: We must go on a long journey.

Mary: But why?

Joseph: We must go to Bethlehem, to register you as my wife.

They take their belongings and their donkey and begin the long journey to Bethlehem.

Mary: Joseph, I'm very tired, we need to find somewhere to stay.

Joseph: The Inn Owner said they are full. He told me to go away. But a local peasant has a barn we can use. His animals are in it, but he says it is warm and there's plenty of straw to lie on.

Mary and Joseph: I am so tired. Thank you.

They go to the barn where Mary lies down on the straw, and during the night, she has her baby.

Shepherds, who lived near Bethlehem, were out at night in their fields watching over their sheep.

Shepherd 1: Look everyone, look at that!

Shepherd 2: What is it?

Shepherd 3: I don't know!

Shepherd 1: It's an Angel!

Shepherd 2: Not just one Angel, many Angels!

Angel 3: Don't be afraid!

Angel 1: We are here to bring you good news for all the people.

Angel 2: Tonight in Bethlehem a baby has been born.

Angel 3: He is the one that will save the world.

Angel 1: You will know this baby because He will be wrapped in cloth and laying in a manger.

Angels: Glory to God, and peace to all people here on earth.

The angels float away, leaving the shepherds amazed and excited.

Shepherd 1: Does everyone know this news?

Shepherd 2: I think it's just us.

Shepherd 1: We must tell everyone about this baby.

Shepherd 2: We must go to see this baby that the angels are talking about.

The shepherds follow the star and find Mary, Joseph, and the Baby Jesus in the barn.

Shepherd 1: This is the baby that the Angels were talking about.

Joseph: Please be quiet my friends, my wife needs to sleep.

Shepherd 2: Now we must tell everyone.

As soon as they leave they begin shouting in the streets.

Shepherd 4: The King of kings has been born.

Shepherd 2: Yes. The King of Kings, the one who will save us.

Three Wise Men are walking along.

Wise man 1: What is that bright light in the sky?

Wise man 2: It's a star isn't it?

Wise man 3: Yes, it's a star.

Wise man 2: It's the star we have been looking for!

Wise men: Yes, the star that means the King of the Jews the One who would save the world has been born.

Wise man 1: How are we to find this baby? We don't know exactly where this baby is.

Wise man 2: This is what we will do, at night we'll follow the star to the east.

Wise man 1: Yes, that's a great idea and soon we will find him.

Angels appear to the Wise Men.

Angels: Take the baby very special gifts, gifts that you would give to a King.

Wise men: Yes we shall do what you ask of us.

The Angels disappear and the Wise Men continue on their journey.

Wise man 1: Look, we are here.

Wise man 2: We have come to welcome our New King.

Wise man 3: We have brought gifts for our King.

Wise man 1: I have brought GOLD for my King.

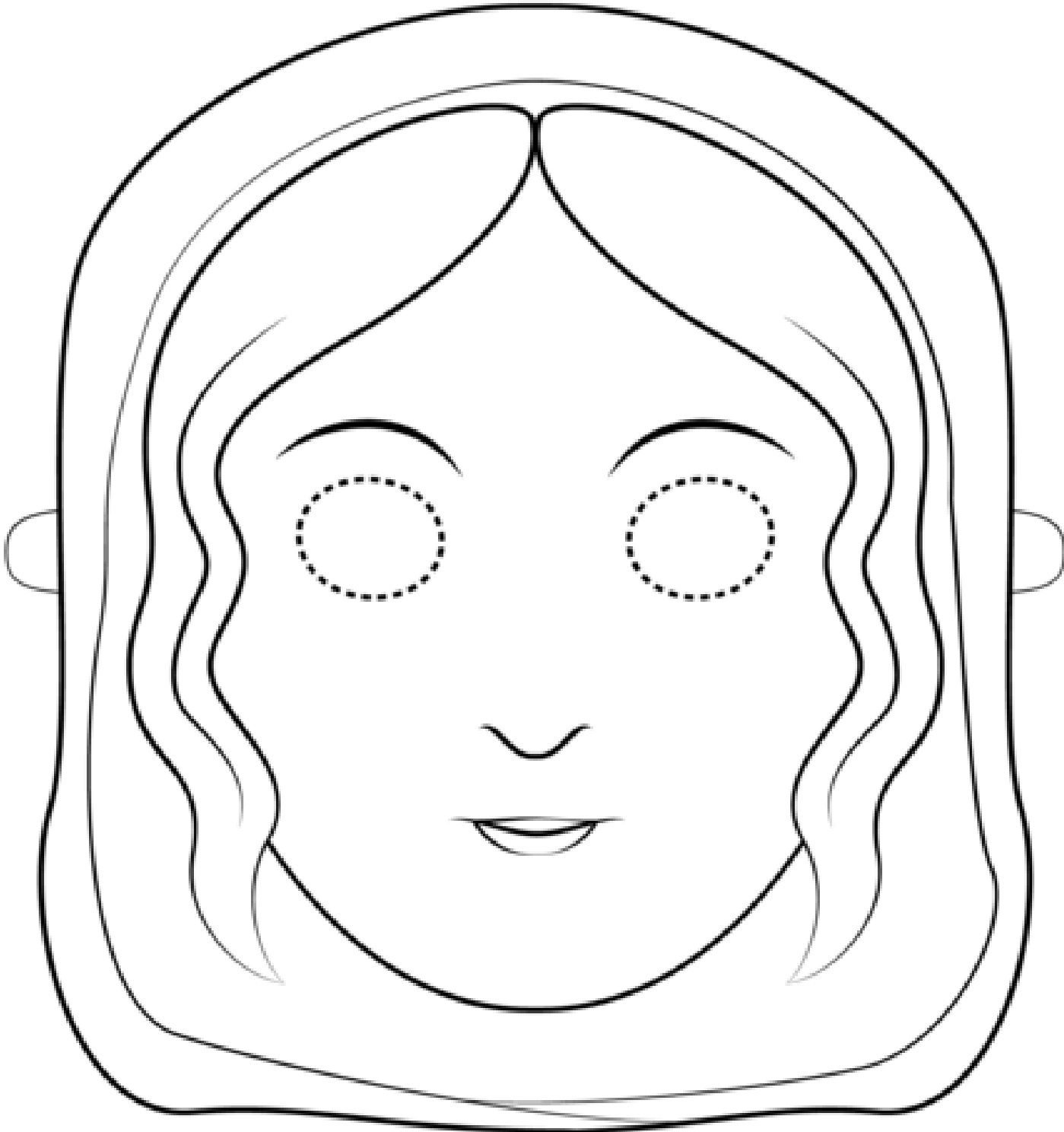
Wise man 2: I have brought FRANKINCENSE for my King.

Wise man 3: And I have brought MYRRH for my King.

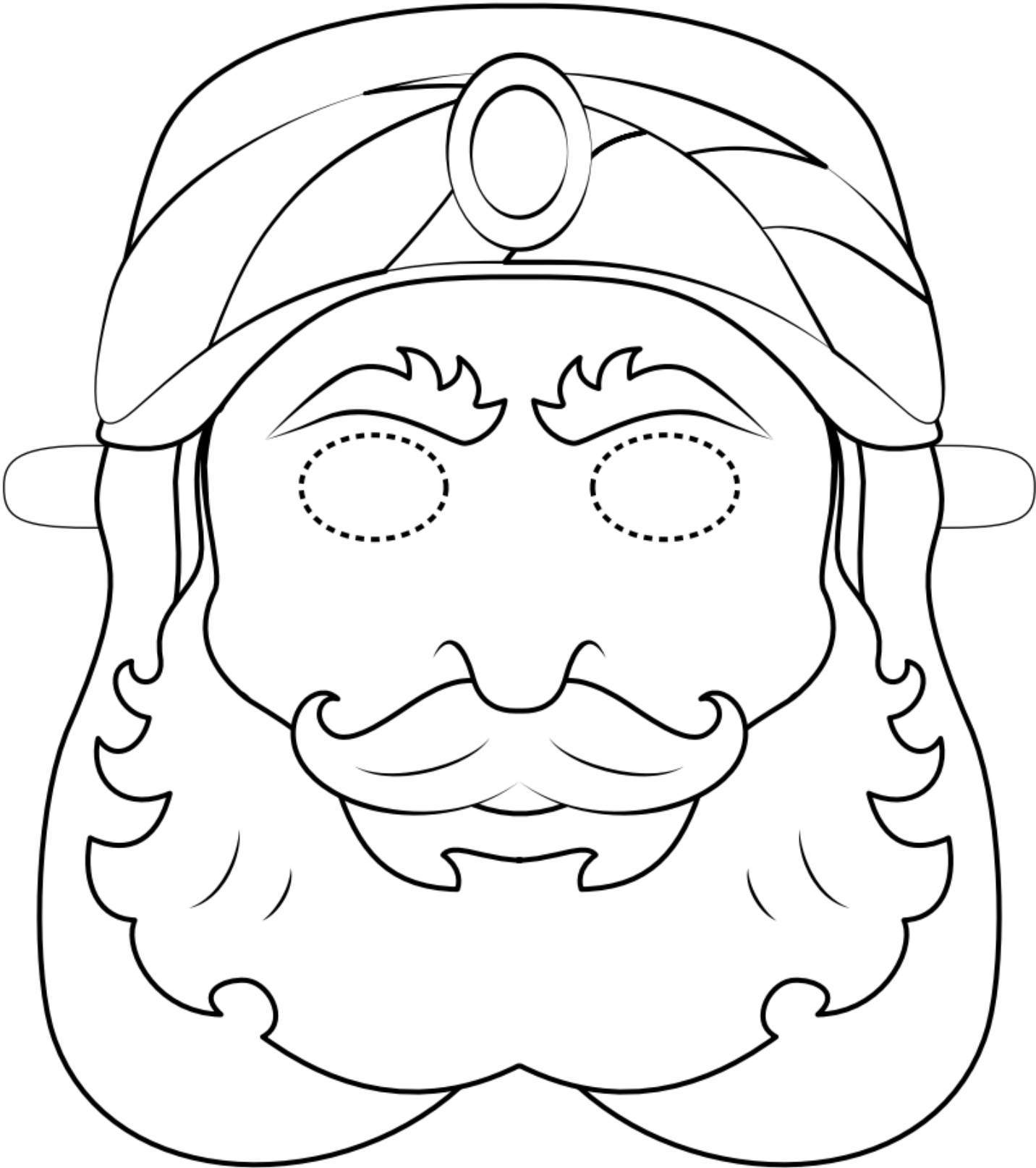
Mary: Thank you bringing these gifts for Jesus.

Joseph: Yes, thank you so very much.

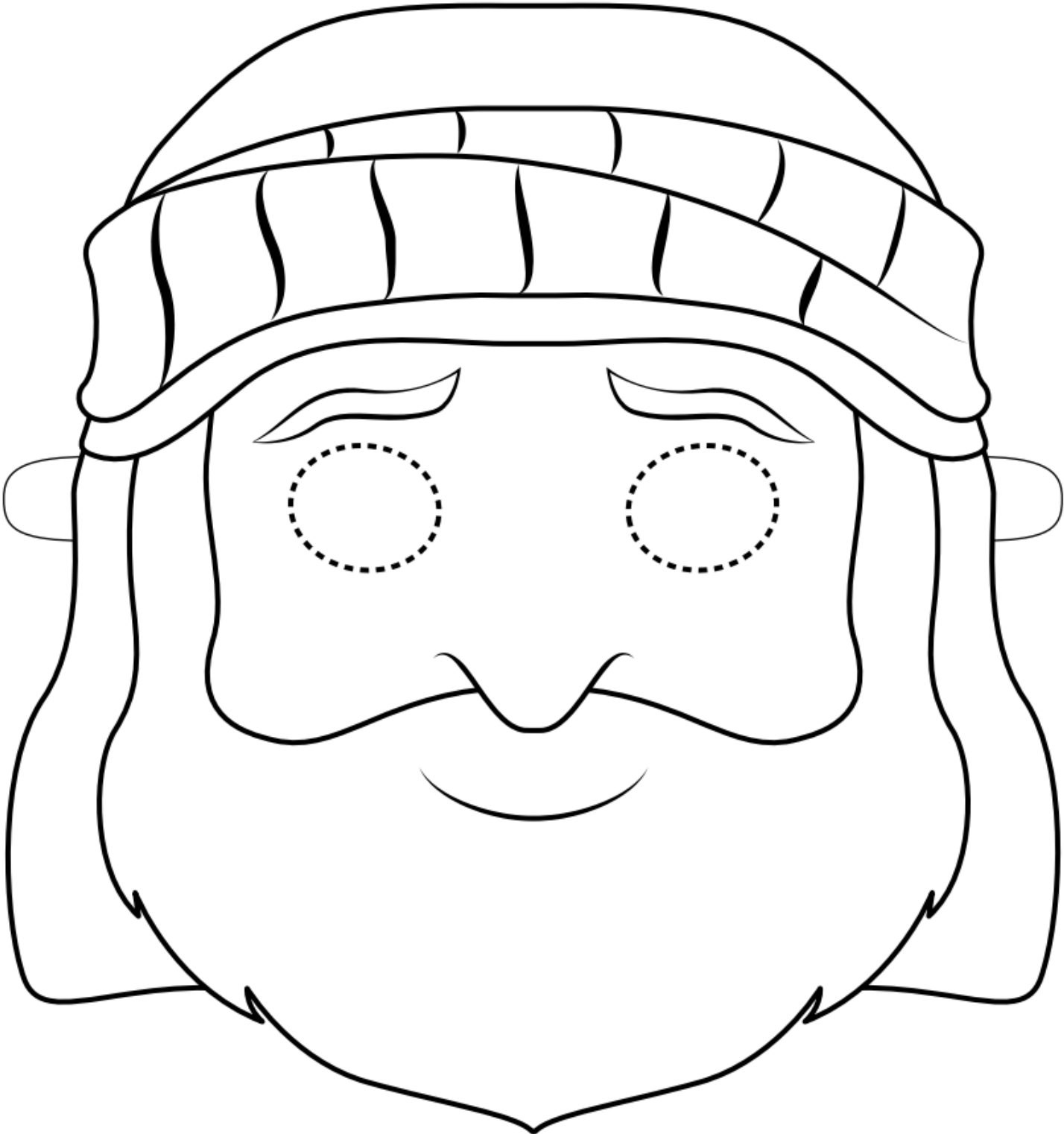
Mary



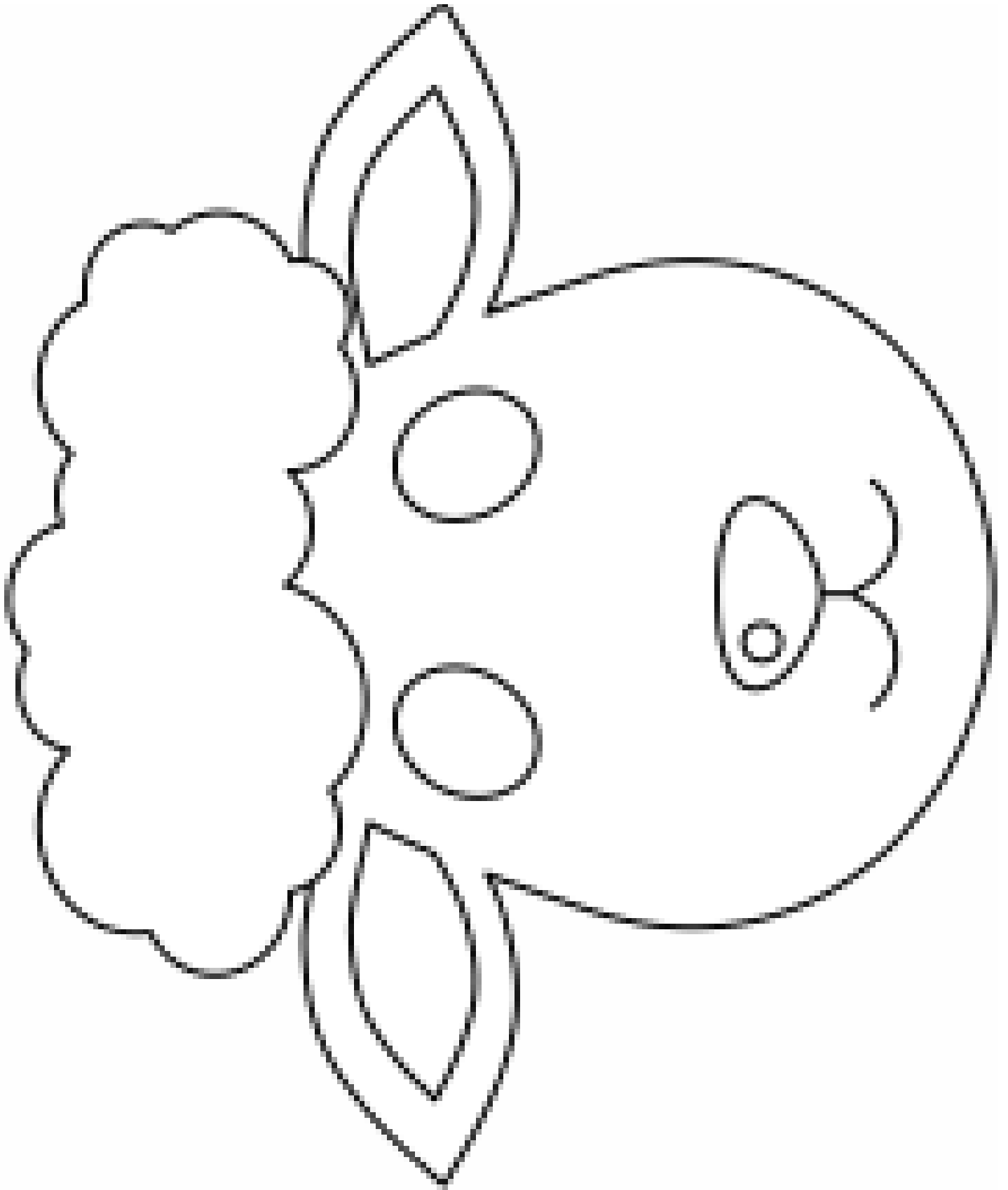
Joseph



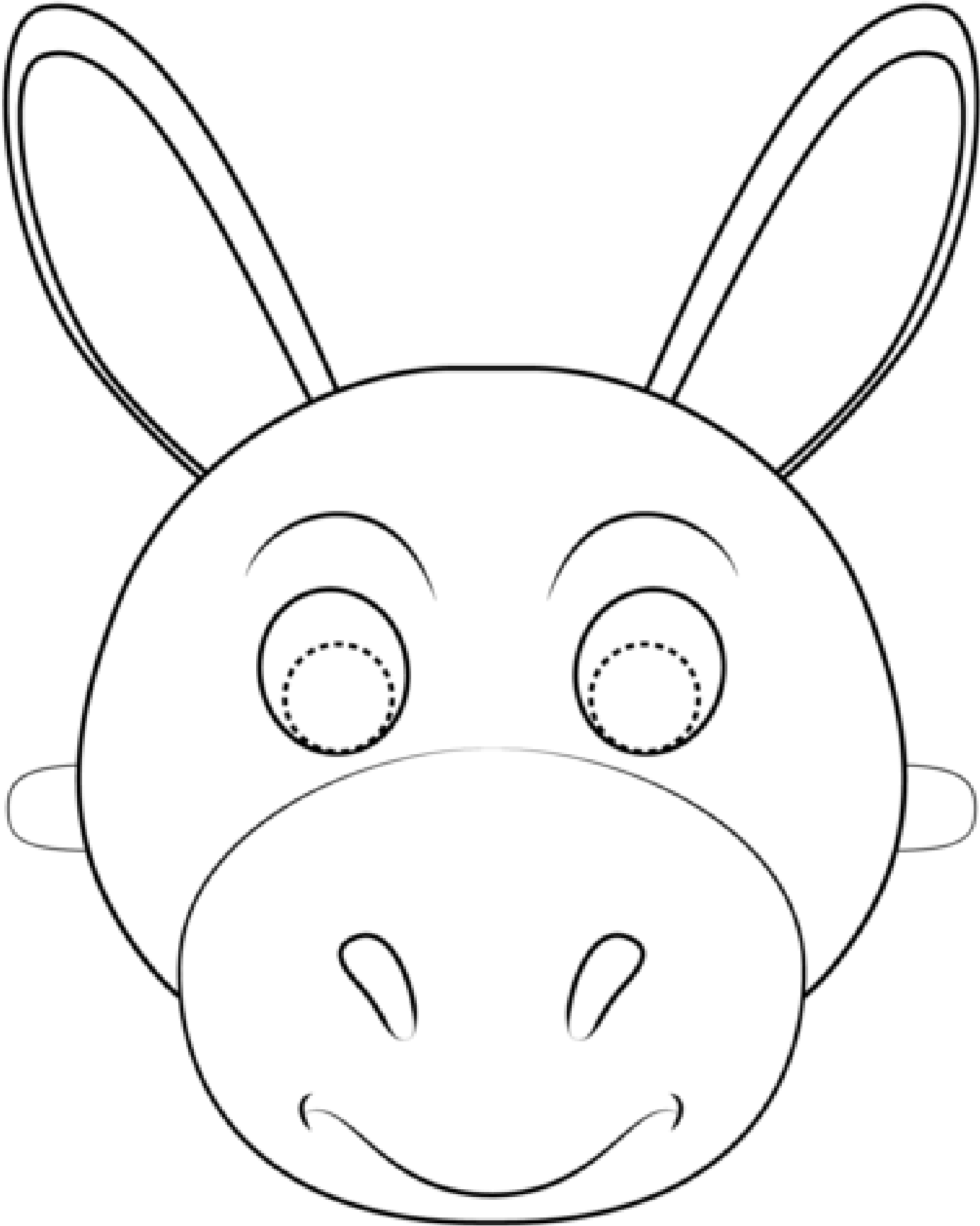
Shepherd



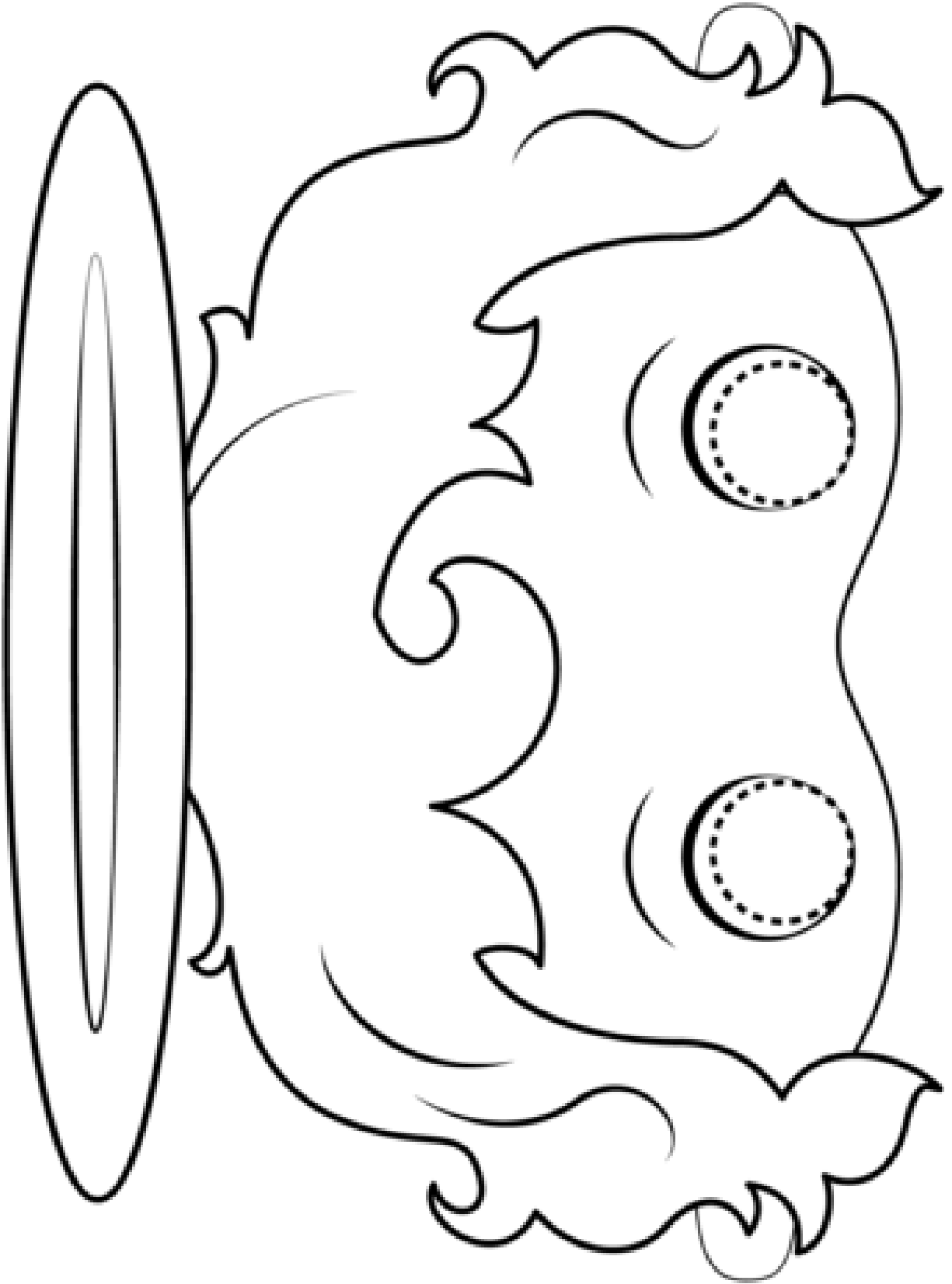
Sheep



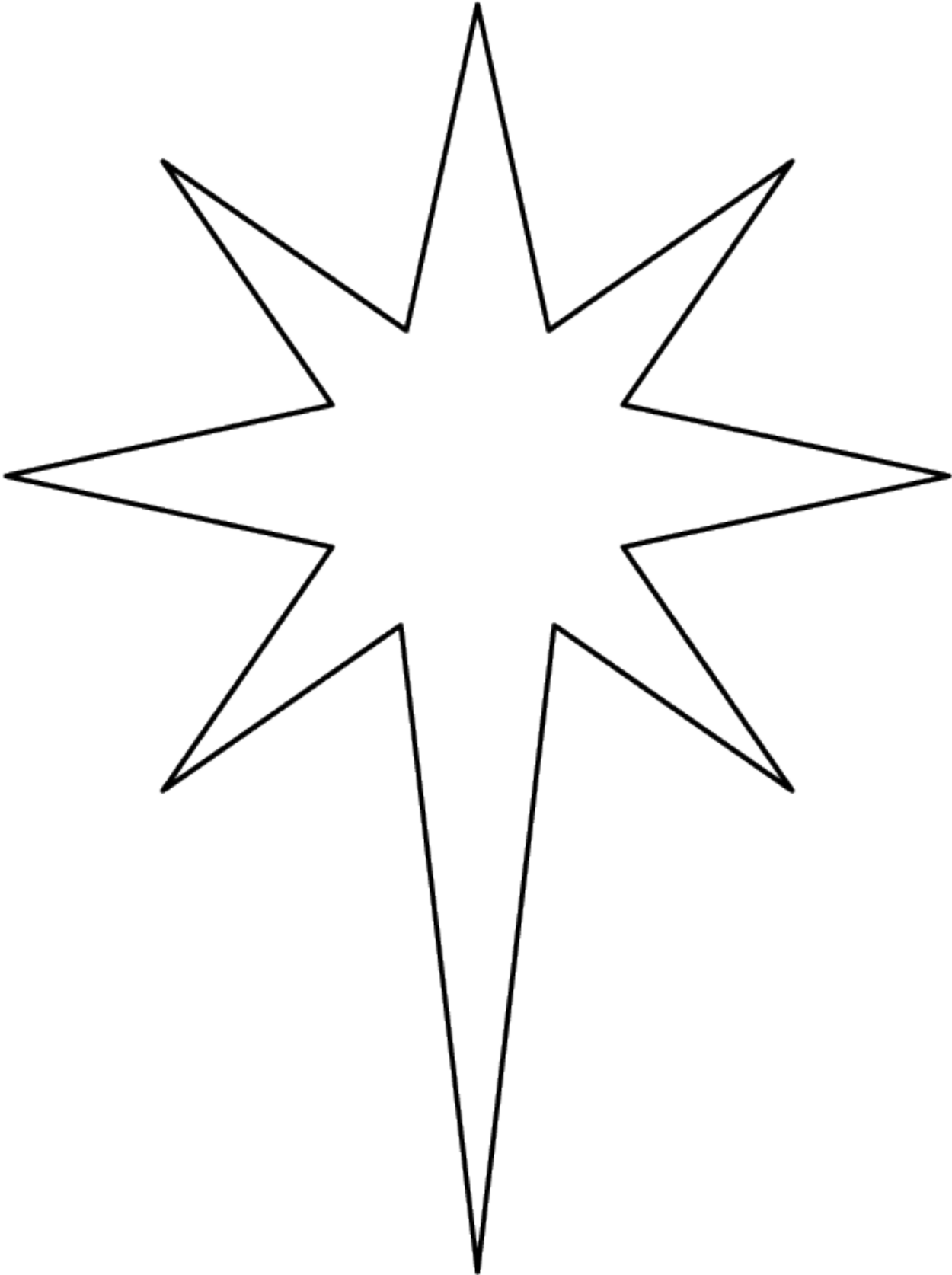
Donkey



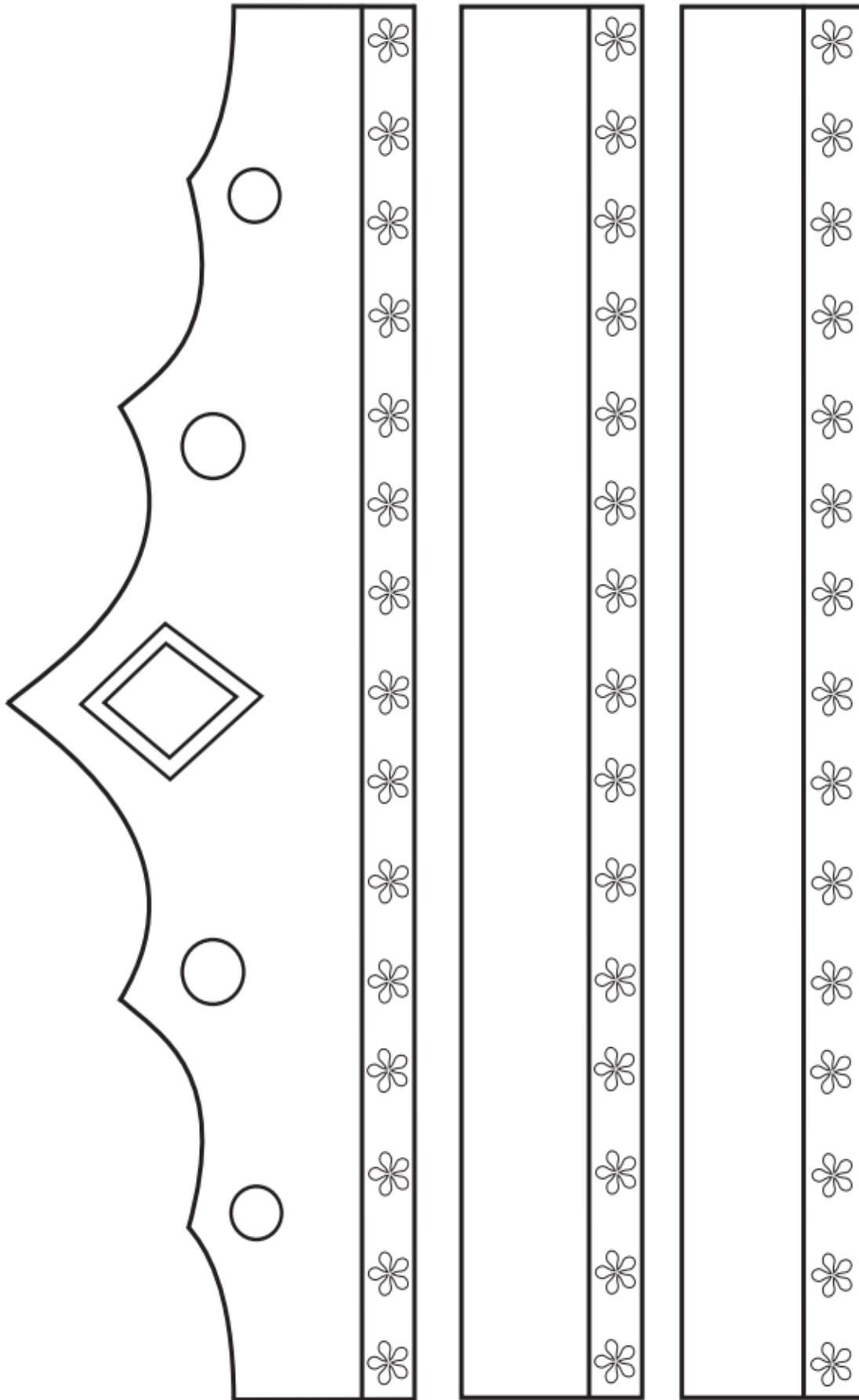
Angel



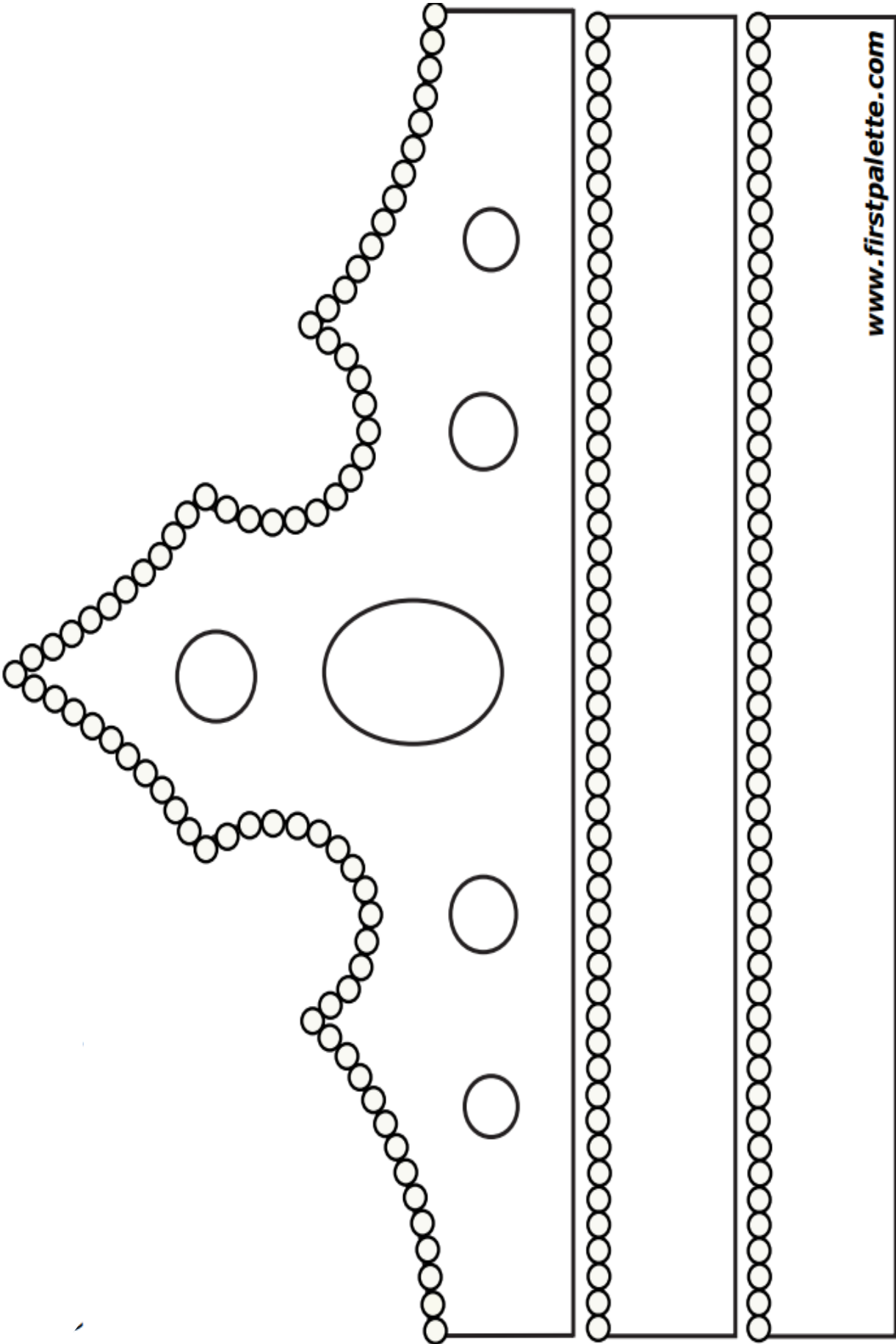
Star of Bethlehem



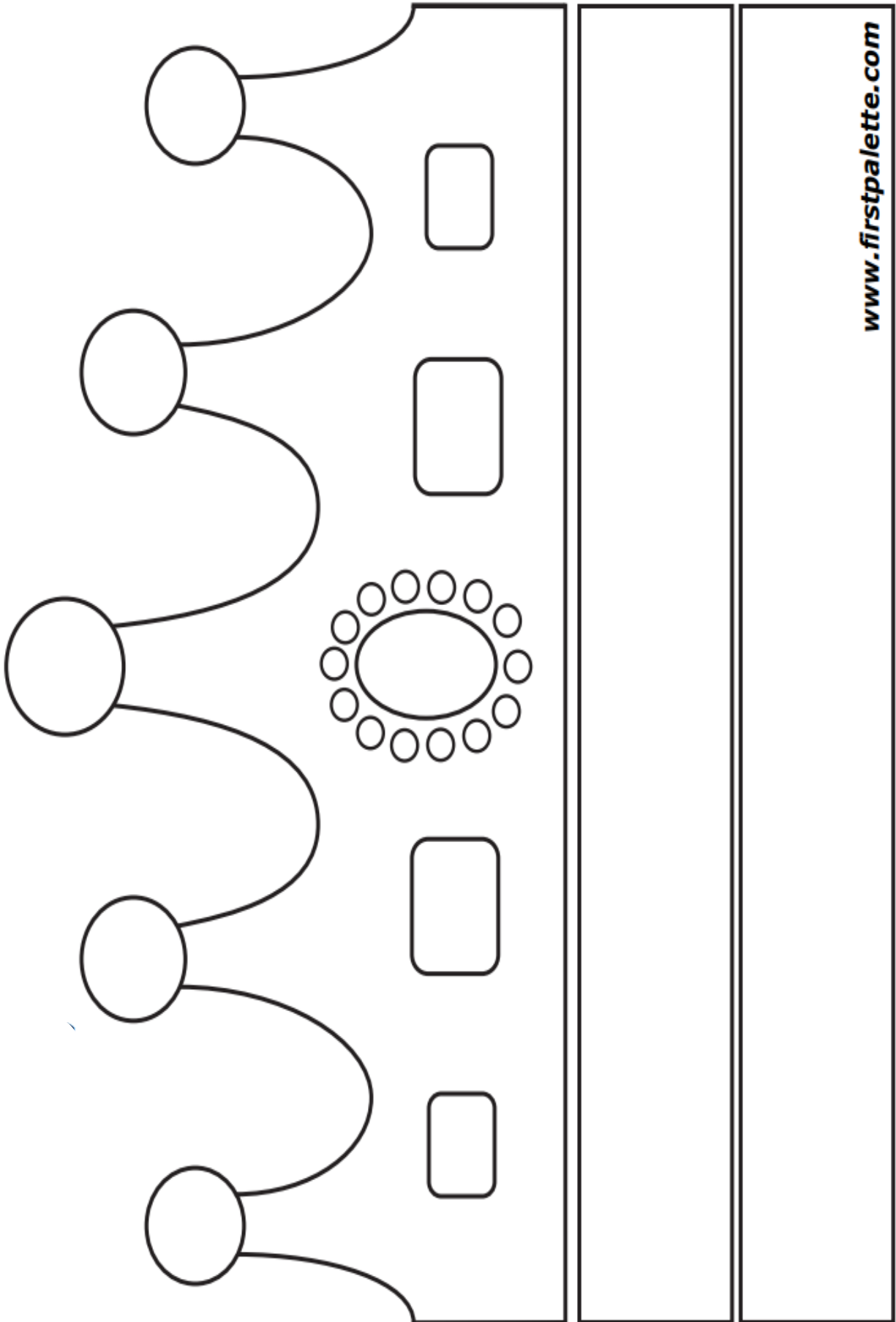
1st Wise Man's Crown



2nd Wise Man's Crown



3rd Wise Man's Crown



Baby Jesus

