

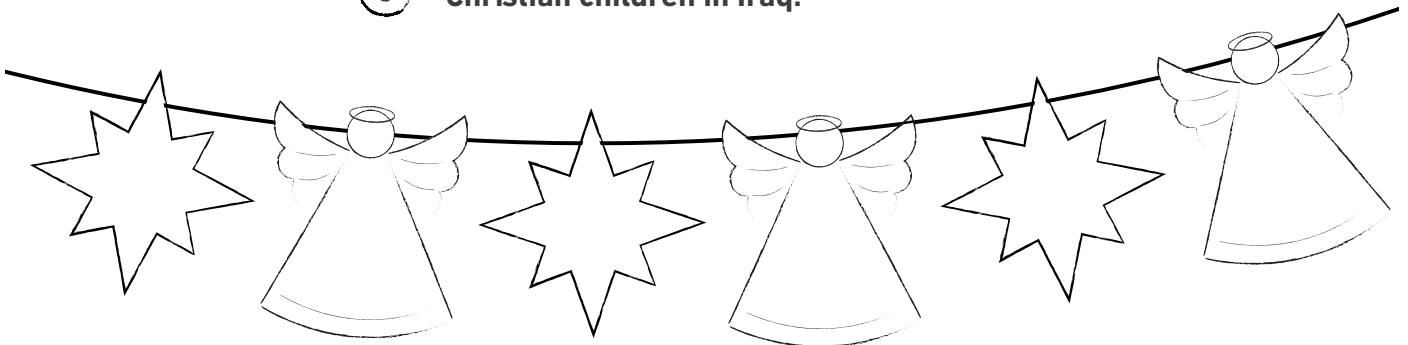
do ——— *
not be
afraid



Send a Christmas message of hope

Thanks for downloading this activity. Here's what we're going to do!

- 1 Read a bit from the Bible and think about how God helps us when we're worried or afraid.
- 2 Watch a video about Rafif, who lives in a place where it's dangerous to follow Jesus.
- 3 Write or draw a message and send it to Christian children in Iraq.





1

“Do not be afraid...”

Do you remember those words from the Christmas story? When the angel Gabriel visits Mary to tell her she will be Jesus’s mother, he says, “Do not be afraid...” (Luke 1:30)

Later, another angel appears to the shepherds in the fields and he says the same thing: “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.” (Luke 2:10)

Angels are mysterious beings. Their name comes from the Greek word *angelos* which means ‘messenger’. And it seems like this message – ‘Do not be afraid’ – was really important for people at that time.

And it’s still a really important message for us today.

Talk about it

- What kinds of things might make people afraid?
- Is there anything that you are afraid of? What helps you in those times?
- What if the angel came and gave you a message from God today? What would the angel say?

What do you think an angel might say if you are worried or afraid? Write it here:





2

Meet Rafif

Christmas should be a time of joy, not fear. Sadly though, many Christians live in places where following Jesus gets them into trouble.

Perhaps the government doesn't want them to be Christian. Or maybe their neighbours and community make things hard for them.

They are often bullied and even attacked because they are Christian. We call this kind of bullying 'persecution'.

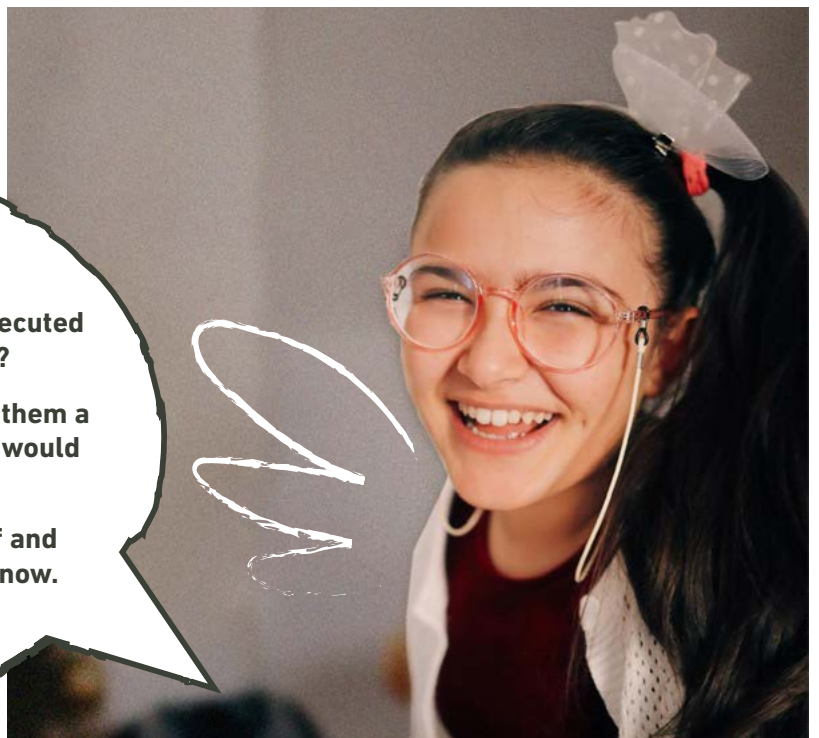
Watch

You can watch a video about one of these Christians [here](#). Her name is Rafif and, sadly, her father was killed protecting Christians from a bomb attack.



Talk about it

- What kinds of things might persecuted Christians like Rafif be afraid of?
- What if an angel came and gave them a message from God today? What would the angel say?
- Perhaps you could pray for Rafif and Christian children like her right now.



3

Be an angel

Can you remember what the word 'angel' means?
It means messenger.

Well, here's how you can be an angel – a messenger.

Because you can send a message to Christian children's groups in Iraq. In these groups, children are helped to learn more about God and how He is with them in times of trouble.

Here's what you have to do:

1. Write or draw your message using the angel or star shape below. You could do this as a group. Or you could do it as a family.
2. Send it to us at Open Doors. You can either post it to us at **Open Doors, PO BOX 6, Witney, OX29 6WG**, or you can scan it and send it to **angel@opendoorsuk.org**
3. We will then send it on to children's groups in Iraq.

They will find it really encouraging to hang your pictures as bunting in their classrooms!

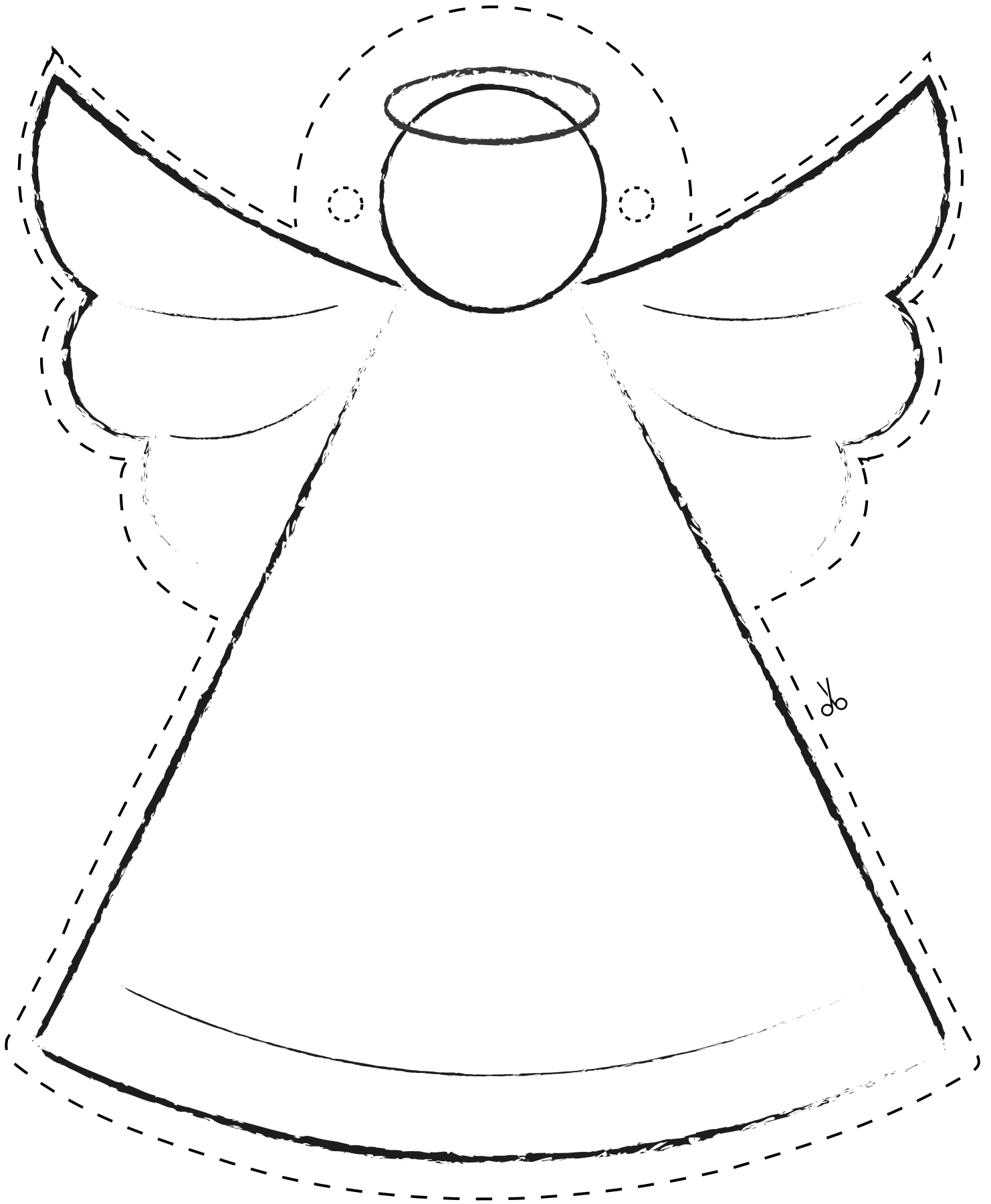
Emmanuel

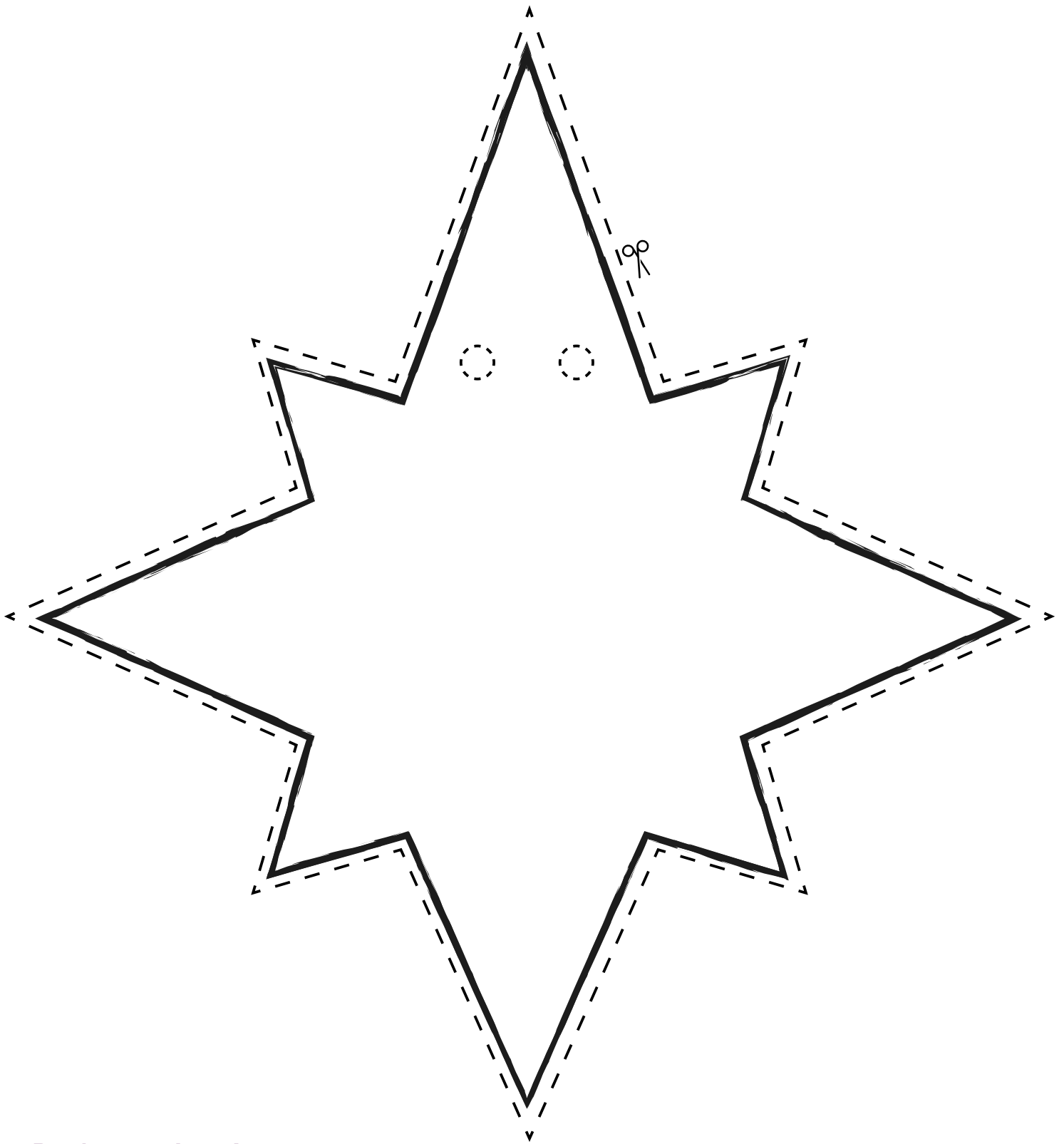
Did you know that Jesus has lots of names in the Bible?

Some of the Christmas readings in our churches use those names. So you might hear Jesus called 'Prince of Peace'.

Another name for Jesus is 'Emmanuel'. It means 'God is with us'.

And that's really important to remember whenever we are afraid. Whatever we go through, whatever difficulties face us, God is with us.





Don't stop there!

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If you want to, you can write to persecuted Christians around the world. To find out more about our latest letter-writing campaigns, visit opendoorsuk.org/act/letter

Thanks for being an angel this Christmas!

Wherever you are, and whatever you are doing, we hope you have a peaceful Christmas.

And remember: do not be afraid, because God is with us!