

## Intercessions for Sunday 26 December 2021 (Jane Woolf)

Wonderful. Counsellor. Mighty God. Everlasting Father. Prince of Peace.  
Father. Brother. Friend. Help us come and spend some time with you this Christmas – alongside the busyness and stress and anxiety. Calm our hearts and soothe our souls.  
*Lord, in your mercy...hear our prayer*

We pray for the church here in this place and throughout the world. We pray for the persecuted church and the people, the individuals, we mean when we say that. We pray for everyone who is scared and troubled at this time. May the church become the light shining in the darkness. Send your Spirit upon us and bring revival throughout our city and our country.  
*Lord, in your mercy...hear our prayer*

We pray for our friends and families, those that we love, and those we have yet to meet. We pray for everyone feeling lonely or abandoned this Christmas. We pray for those for whom Covid is unbearable. We don't know what will happen next Lord, and it scares us. Remind us that you are working your purpose out.  
*Lord, in your mercy...hear our prayer*

We pray for those who are ill, at this time whether in body, mind or spirit. We pray for healing upon them. And we pray for our NHS, we pray it will not be overwhelmed by the new variant. We raise before you everyone working their hardest in impossible conditions. We pray our politicians make good decisions for the good of the people they serve.  
*Lord, in your mercy...hear our prayer*

And we pray for those who have died, who are safe with you in glory. We pray for the families and friends left behind, grieving and in pain. Cover them in the shelter of your wings and bring them peace beyond measure.

I want to finish with these words from Reverend Daniel Brereton:

Don't keep Christ in Christmas.

Let him out.

Let him out of the box of decorations stored in the attic

Let him out of prayers you only say at Midnight Mass

Let him out of carols as background to your shopping.

Let him out of a sentimental story cleansed of violence and pain

Let him out of the creche, where he remains a helpless infant

... where the only woman present is silent and meek

... where poverty is romanticized with no threat and no smell

... and shepherds are cuddly and everyone is white

... and there is no messiness to obscure the miracle

Let him out of December's candle-lit coziness

... where his heat melts the wintry ice of our selfishness

... and his buds unfold amidst the mud of injustice

... and his flowers overtake the borders of manicured gardens

... and his harvest fill barns with fruits we never knew existed

Don't keep Christ in Christmas.

Let him out.

And then, when Christmas comes 'round again,

We won't have to "keep him in it",

For how could he not be "in Christmas" when he has been here, the whole time,

Keeping us? **Amen.**

Source: <https://revpacman.com/2018/12/09/dont-keep-christ-in-christmas/>