

Pastor and author Paul Rees, “It is we who put shackles on God. We cannot keep him from managing the stars above us, but we can prevent him from managing the soul within us.”

O Lord God, we acknowledge and give thanks that you are an awesome God. You do manage the stars above. The sun and moon, the wind and rain, and the beautiful sun we enjoy this morning. And Lord, forgive us, for sometimes we do prevent you from managing our souls. We want to do things our way. We don't always want to follow your hard commands to love, to forgive, to serve. And we don't always put our full trust in you when we don't understand, or we don't like what is happening, or we wish things were otherwise, in our lives and in the world. But help us to remember your words to Job, when he complained, when he questioned, when he began to doubt your ways. You said to him, “Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Have you commanded the morning since your days began, and caused the dawn to know its place. Have you entered the storehouses of the snow or lifted up your voice to the clouds so that a flood of waters may cover you? Do you give the horse its might? Is it by your wisdom the hawk soars? Is it at your command that the eagle mounts up and makes its nest on high?” And after a while, Lord, Job answered you, and may we too echo his words, “I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted. Lord, you asked, “Who is this that questions my wisdom?” It is I who have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.” And so we ask today, Lord to help us to surrender ourselves to you once more. To trust you in all ways, knowing that out of your great love for us, you want to help us navigate our way through this life. And you want us to help others navigate their way, too

And it is in thinking of others, that we bring them to you, asking for you to be with them in whatever ways they need most. There are many in need. We pray for those affected by yet another senseless shooting. We pray for our country, and the continued tension and discord. We pray for the forgotten, who live in third world countries, in poverty, without clean water or adequate medical care. May we not forget their plight, as we acknowledge that we, as human beings are all made in your image, and are your children. There are specific people we wish to lift to you. You have heard those on our prayer list, but....

O Lord, for all these things we pray in the name of, and for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us a way in which to pray, as we say together...