***Ash Wednesday***

*Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart,. . .  
rend your hearts and not your clothing.*  
—Joel 2.12-13

**Rend Your Heart**

To receive this blessing,  
all you have to do  
is let your heart break.  
Let it crack open.  
Let it fall apart  
so that you can see  
its secret chambers,  
the hidden spaces  
where you have hesitated  
to go.

Your entire life  
is here, inscribed whole  
upon your heart’s walls:  
every path taken  
or left behind,  
every face you turned toward  
or turned away,  
every word spoken in love  
or in rage,  
every line of your life  
you would prefer to leave  
in shadow,  
every story that shimmers  
with treasures known  
and those you have yet  
to find.

*In the light of all that is going on*

*in your life and/or in our world, --*

*what does this Lenten poem offer you?*

*Is there a line or phrase that captures*

*your attention?*

*Or anything else you want to share?*





It could take you days  
to wander these rooms.  
Forty, at least.

And so let this be  
a season for wandering,  
for trusting the breaking,  
for tracing the rupture  
that will return you

to the One who waits,  
who watches,  
who works within  
the rending  
to make your heart  
whole.

—Jan Richardson