

## It's that Time Again

by Rev. Dr. Robin Hawley Gorsline

There is something deeply satisfying about Ash Wednesday that undergirds all the talk about fasting, praying, abstinence, not making a show out of your piety, not focusing on economic advantage—and that is the egalitarianism inherent in all of us.

If we each and all come from dust and return to dust, our shared origin is the same and our shared fate is the same.

As someone engaged in human and civil rights advocacy (including writing the book I hope to publish next year), I deeply appreciate this shared ground of our being.



I wrote this poem some years ago, and continue to tweak it. It reminds me that we are all in this thing called life together, and what keeps us alive and holds us together is the never-ending love and care of God. In all, for all, to all, **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

### It's That Time Again

It was just Christmas and Epiphany  
seems almost a race to Easter  
but now it's that time again  
to fast pray celebrate ashes dust to dust  
give something up maybe  
or just pray and prepare to receive new life  
forty days hence and beyond and even now  
opening ourselves to quiet contemplation  
giving away what we no longer need  
turning around away from sin  
keeping us distant from God and each other  
confessing the hurt we do our neighbors  
the hungry ones we do not feed,  
hands out on busy streets  
shivering ones we do not clothe

huddled outside train bus stations  
the shackles we do not remove,  
still more Black men in jail and dead.

Then to call on God  
to be reconciled heart to heart  
life to life with God and all God's people  
to enter God's courts with praise thanksgiving,  
even joy no sackcloth no groveling,  
but honest truth-telling  
not for show but for soulful health,  
restored inside out to give more of ourselves  
sharing all God gives us  
trusting the Holy One to provide more,  
accounting for all our blessings  
as we yield more, storing up less,  
rending our hearts not our clothing  
living a holy sacrificial blessed joyous Lent  
to the glory of The One who is all in all.  
Praise God from whom all blessings flow!