



Theme artwork by
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**Lent at Lakeside:
My Heart as Sanctuary
My Life as Prayer
Devotion for Wednesday,
March 21, 2018**

**Where I'm From
By Andy Barker**

I come from a place:
Where days start later.
When you're on the west side of the Appalachians
It takes the sun a little longer to rise.

Days were filled outside until the streetlights came on-
Your signal to hightail it home to meals together, well prepared by a Mother
Who was a master of making ends meet. And resourceful from
Wheaties pocketbooks, Sunday comic jewelry, patched jeans, and feathered oatmeal
pill-box hats.
Just like Jackie's.

Families were the foundation- but when the headstone died,
Pastors, youth leaders, teachers, coaches, friends saw the guidance was filled.
I come from a Family, extended, challenging sometimes. But always a family of God.

From a place where fun was made. Bikes had playing card mufflers- at least going
downhill.

Homemade go carts and station wagons. A dozen kids going to a carpool pool, Horse
Krickers, Scouts, ball practice, VBS. Drive in for 19 cent Pal's burger or big screens
outdoors. Kids were never alone- friends were always around. We might fight with our
friends but heaven help an outsider who confronted us.

Summers were for water. Sprinklers, creeks, waterfalls, and lakes kept us tanned, cool, and shirtless for months. Forts in the woods, tree houses, caves, dogs. Always dogs. Allowances were earned. Spending cash came from Grit newspapers, eggs delivered, blackberries with chiggers, lawns, pumping gas, picking up trash. Lifeguards- what a life!

Neighbors cared for neighbors. Churches were at the circle. Youth were supported with leagues, uniforms, facilities, camps. Efforts were recognized. Friday nights were for the Indians- everything closed for the stadium. Punishment was corporal and swift. Administered by teachers, officials, or another parent during a sleepover. The forsythia was too close.

I come from a place who cares. From a major employer who cared for a large middle class, who took care of Families. Camps, sports, entertainment, anticipated bonuses and a stable, fair living. You would trust a felon before you would trust a dismissed Eastman employee.

Girls played with dolls and easy bake ovens, but also held their own in the outfield. A corrugated refrigerator box made a great club house for weeks, or a zoo for captured wildlife - until an angry mother raccoon or a thunderstorm wiped us out.

Music was vibrant. Church choirs, glee clubs, madrigalian, crystal sets, transistor sisters. Stacks of wax gingerly handled on the living room furniture. Oh! The guitars and brother's harmony. Sears Silvertones for the silver throated- we thought. But the papagallos liked it.

A place where faith was in God and Country. Be Prepared. Clear truth. Values. The Lord will provide, but to those who help themselves first. Prayers preceded all events. We prayed for our Country, our safety, forgiveness, understanding, Each other.

I come from a place that still makes my heart smile.

Philippians 2:1-11

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,
but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form,
he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross.

Therefore God also highly exalted him
and gave him the name
that is above every name,
so that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Prayer

Creator, open our hearts to peace and healing among all people.
Creator, open our hearts to protect and provide for all the children of the earth.
Creator, open our hearts to respect the earth and all the gifts of the earth.
Creator, open our hearts to end exclusion, violence, and fear among all.
Thank you for the gifts of this day and every day.

A prayer from the Mi'kmaq Nation of Indigenous People