

ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SANTA CLARITA
THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY
10:00 A.M.
JANUARY 16, 2022

The Altar flowers are given to the glory of God.

Prayer of Meditation

Before the service begins, we encourage you to use the following for meditation.

Lay down your expectations at Jesus' feet, put your hands together and receive the sustenance that Jesus desires for you. Jesus has come to transfigure our expectations and help us realize our vocations as children of God. This is the rock and the foundation on which God is building the Church. -Br. Jim Woodrum, SSJE

Prelude

If I Can Help Somebody Alma Irene Bazel Androzzo Thompson

Please stand as you are able.

Entrance Hymn #7

"Christ whose glory fills the skies"

Ratisbon

1. Christ, whose glo - ry fills the skies, Christ the true, the on - ly Light,
 2. Dark and cheer - less is the morn un - ac - com - pan - ied by thee;
 3. Vis - it then this soul of mine! Pierce the gloom of sin and grief!

Sun of Right - eous - ness, a - rise! Tri - umph o'er the shades of night:
 joy - less is the day's re - turn, till thy mer - cy's beams I see,
 Fill me, ra - dian - cy di - vine; scat - ter all my un - be - lief;

Day - spring from on high, be near; Day - star, in my heart ap - pear.
 till they in - ward light im - part, glad my eyes, and warm my heart.
 more and more thy - self dis - play, shin - ing to the per - fect day.

THE WORD OF GOD

Priest: Blessed be the one, holy, and living God.

People: **Glory to God for ever and ever.**

Collect for Purity

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Priest and People:

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

The Collect of the Day

Priest: The Lord be with you.
People: **And also with you.**
Priest: Let us pray.

Almighty God, whose Son our Savior Jesus Christ is the light of the world: Grant that your people, illumined by your Word and Sacraments, may shine with the radiance of Christ's glory, that he may be known, worshipped, and obeyed to the ends of the earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Please be seated.

THE LESSONS

The First Reading Isaiah 62:1-5

Reader: Mary Bennett

A Reading from the Book of Isaiah.

For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication shines out like the dawn, and her salvation like a burning torch. The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the Lord will give. You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. You shall no more be termed Forsaken, and your land shall no more be termed Desolate; but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her, and your land Married; for the Lord delights in you, and your land shall be married. For as a young man marries a young woman, so shall your builder marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.
People: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 36:5-10

Reader: Julie Hagerty

- 5 Your love, O Lord, reaches to the heavens, *
and your faithfulness to the clouds.
- 6 Your righteousness is like the strong mountains,
your justice like the great deep; *
you save both man and beast, O Lord.
- 7 How priceless is your love, O God! *
your people take refuge under the shadow of your wings.
- 8 They feast upon the abundance of your house; *
you give them drink from the river of your delights.
- 9 For with you is the well of life, *
and in your light we see light.
- 10 Continue your loving-kindness to those who know you, *
and your favor to those who are true of heart.

The Second Reading 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

Reader: Julie Hagerty

A Reading from the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. You know that when you were pagans, you were enticed and led astray to idols that could not speak. Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says "Let Jesus be cursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit. Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Please stand as you are able.

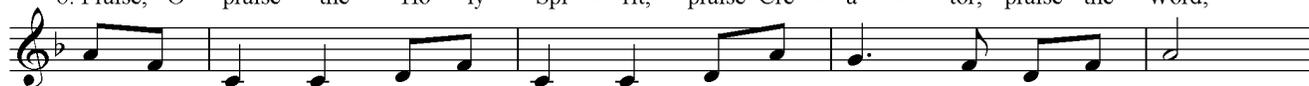
Gradual Hymn #507

“Praise the Spirit in creation”

Julion



1. Praise the Spi - rit in cre - a - tion, breath of God, life's or - i - gin:
2. Praise the Spi - rit, close com - pan - ion of our in - most thoughts and ways;
3. Praise the Spi - rit, who en - light - ened priests and pro - phets with the word;
4. Tell of how the a - scend - ed Je - sus armed a peo - ple for his own;
5. Pray we then, O God the Spi - rit, on our lives de - scend in might;
6. Praise, O praise the Ho - ly Spi - rit, praise Cre - a - tor, praise the Word,



Spi - rit, mov - ing on the wat - ers quick-ening worlds to life with - in,
who, in show - ing us God's won - ders, is him - self the power to gaze;
his the truth be - hind the wis - doms which as yet know not our Lord;
how a hun - dred men and wo - men turned the known world up - side down,
let your flame break out with - in us, fire our hearts and clear our sight,
Source, and Truth, and In - spi - ra - tion, Trin - i - ty in deep ac - cord:



source of breath to all things breath - ing, life in whom all lives be - gin.
and God's will, to those who lis - ten, by a still small voice con - veys.
by whose love and power, in Je - sus God him - self was seen and heard.
to its dark and fur - thest cor - ners by the wind of hea - ven blown.
till, white - hot in your pos - ses - sion, we, too, set the world a - light.
through your voice which speaks with - in us we, your crea - tures, call you Lord.

The Gospel Reading John 2:1-11

Priest: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

People: **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward." So they took it. When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now." Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

Priest: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

Please be seated.

The Sermon

The Rev. Christopher Montella
Rector

A period of silent reflection follows the sermon.

Please stand as you are able.

Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Prayers of the People

Reader: James Webb

The glory of God has been revealed that we might see and believe. Trusting in God, let us pray, "Jesus Christ, Light of the world, in your light we see light."

Blessed God, through the Spirit you have given to your Church varieties of gifts. Bind us together as your body and then use us, we pray, to show forth your great light.

Silence

Intercessor: Jesus Christ, Light of the world,

People: In your light we see light.

Blessed God, your righteousness is like the strong mountains and your justice is like the great deep. May all the peoples of the earth look to you for salvation.

Silence

Intercessor: Jesus Christ, Light of the world,

People: In your light we see light.

Blessed God, restore desolate lands. Renew your creation to bring forth life and growth.

Silence

Intercessor: Jesus Christ, Light of the world,

People: In your light we see light.

May we desire the common good. We pray, blessed God, that you will teach us to love each other. We thank you for the diversity with which you have gifted the human family and bless you for the hope of unity.

The congregation may add their own thanksgivings.

Silence

Intercessor: Jesus Christ, Light of the world,

People: In your light we see light.

Continue your loving-kindness to those who know you, blessed God. Heal and restore those who are sick or weak in body, mind, or spirit.

The congregation may add their own petitions.

Silence

Intercessor: Jesus Christ, Light of the world,

People: In your light we see light.

Blessed God, with you is the well of life. By water and the Spirit, you accept us as members of your family. By the springs of your living water preserve us for life eternal.

Silence

Intercessor: Jesus Christ, Light of the world,

People: In your light we see light.

Priest:

O gracious God, accept the fervent prayers of your people; in the multitude of your mercies, look with compassion upon us and all who turn to you for help; for you are gracious, O lover of souls, and to you we give glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Confession

Let us confess our sins to God.

**God of all mercy,
we confess that we have sinned against you,
opposing your will in our lives.
We have denied your goodness in each other,
in ourselves, and in the world you have created.
We repent of the evil that enslaves us,
the evil we have done,
and the evil done on our behalf.
Forgive, restore, and strengthen us
through our Savior Jesus Christ,
that we may abide in your love
and serve only your will. Amen.**

Absolution

Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through the grace of Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. **Amen.**

The Peace

Priest: The peace of Christ be always with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Members of the congregation who are present are encouraged to remain at their seats to pass the peace.

Members of the congregation who are joining us via livestream are encouraged to post "Peace be with you" in the comments or to use the "like" or "love" reaction button to take part in the virtual exchange of God's peace with the rest of the congregation at this time.

Please be seated.

Welcome and Announcements

We are pleased to celebrate the following birthdays: David Warburton on January 11th, Diane Sayre on January 13th, Mary Anne Deuschle on January 17th, Renee Schluter on January 18th, Marianne Zinkewicz on January 20th, Cheryl Sena and Julie Johnson on January 21st.

Offertory Prayer

The People remain seated and say together:

Loving God, you alone are the source of every good gift. Everything we have, and all that we are, comes from you. Now, help us to be grateful, accountable, and, with praise and thanksgiving, to give of ourselves generously, through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Offertory

Please stand as you are able.

Presentation

Old 100th

Praise God from whom all blessings flow, Praise God all creatures,
here be - low. Praise God, you hosts in heav'n a -
bove; Praise God the Trin - i - ty of Love. A - men.

Priest: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.
Priest: Lift up your hearts.
People: We lift them to the Lord.
Priest: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Worship and praise belong to you, God our maker. Out of nothing, you called all worlds into being, and still you draw the universe to its fulfilment. Day and night celebrate your glory till time shall be no more. In Christ, your only-begotten Son, you have revealed yourself to the world. By the guiding of a star, you made him known to the nations as the son of David and king of Israel; that in following him, we might be led from darkness and into his marvelous light.

Filled with the Spirit, who descended upon your Son at his Baptism in the Jordan, we who are baptized in his name strive for his heavenly kingdom in whose radiance we are transfigured and the earth is transformed.

As children of your redeeming purpose who celebrate the manifestation of your Son, we offer you our praise, with angels and archangels and the whole company of heaven singing the hymn of your unending glory:

Priest and people say together:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Glory and thanksgiving be to you, O Giver of Life. In Jesus the Messiah you have come to us. Our hope is built on him in whom you are well pleased. Having been shown to the world as your beloved Son, he proclaimed the good news of your kingdom. The blind received their sight, the lame walked, the lepers were cleansed, and the captives set free. At his word, water became wine, the hungry were filled with bread, and the dead were raised.

Before he was given up to suffering and death, desiring to complete the work for which he came into the world, at supper with his disciples he took bread and offered you thanks. He broke the bread, and gave it to them, saying: "Take, eat. This is my Body: it is broken for you."

After supper, he took the cup, he offered you thanks, and gave it to them saying: "Drink this, all of you. This is my Blood of the new covenant; it is poured out for you, and for all, that sins may be forgiven. Do this in remembrance of me."

We now obey your Son's command.

We recall his blessed passion and death, his glorious resurrection and ascension; and we look for the coming of his Kingdom.

Made one with him, we offer you these gifts and with them ourselves, a single, holy, living sacrifice.

Hear us, most merciful God, and send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon this bread and this wine, that, overshadowed by his life-giving power, they may be the Body and Blood of your Son, and we may be kindled with the fire of your love and renewed for the service of your Kingdom.

Help us, who are baptized into the fellowship of Christ's Body to live and work to your praise and glory; may we grow together in unity and love until at last, in your new creation, we enter into our heritage in the company of the Virgin Mary, the apostles, and prophets, and of all our siblings living and departed.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory be to you, Lord of all ages, world without end. **Amen.**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.**

The Breaking of the Bread

A period of silence is kept.

Priest: Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

People: Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

The Gifts of God for the People of God.

Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

*All are welcome to receive communion. The table we set belongs to God.
Wherever you find yourself on your spiritual journey you are welcome to receive the Bread made holy.*

The church teaches that temporal isolation cannot constrain the sacrament's ineffable power. Calling us to "massive, corporate, spiritual communion,"

The Invitation to Holy Communion

A spiritual communion is a personal devotional that anyone can pray at any time to express their desire to receive Holy Communion at that moment, but in which circumstances impede them from actually receiving Holy Communion.

Priest and People say together:

My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. I love you above all things, and long for you in my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. As though you have already come, I embrace you and unite myself entirely to you; never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

Please be seated.

Please follow usher instructions for taking communion.

Communion LEVAS #120

Sweet, Sweet Spirit

Doris Akers

1. There's a sweet, sweet Spi - rit in this place, _____ and I
(2. There are) bless - ings you can - not re - ceive _____ 'till you
(3. If you) say he saved you from your sin, _____ now you're

know that it's the Spi - rit of _____ the Lord. _____ There are sweet ex -
know him in his full - ness, and be - lieve. _____ You're the one to
weak, you're bound, and can - not en - ter in, _____ you can make it

pres - sions on each face, _____ and I
pro - fit when you say, _____ "I am
right if you will yield; _____ You'll en -

know they feel the pres - ence of _____ the Lord. _____
going to walk with Je - sus all _____ the way." _____
joy the Ho - ly Spi - rit that _____ we feel. _____

Sweet Ho - ly Spi - rit, sweet Heav - en - ly Dove, stay right here with us, _____

fill - ing us with your love. And for these bless - ings _____ we lift our hearts in

praise; with - out a doubt we'll know that we have been re - vived when

we shall leave this place. 1.2. _____ 3. _____
2. There are you place.
3. If you

Please stand as you are able.

Post Communion Prayer

Let us pray.

**Infinite, intimate God,
in this Eucharist
we have celebrated your presence with us.
May we grow in the divine life of Christ
who humbly shared our human life.
Fill us with joy and send us out
to share this good news with others.
We ask this through Jesus Christ Emmanuel. Amen.**

Blessing

May God,
who led the wise men by the shining of a star
to find the Christ, the Light from light,
lead you also in your pilgrimage to find the Lord.

May Jesus,
who turned water into wine at the wedding feast at Cana
transform your lives and make glad your hearts

May the Holy Spirit,
who came upon the beloved Son
at his baptism in the river Jordan,
pour holy gifts upon you
who have come to the waters of new birth.

And the blessing of God Almighty,
the one, holy and undivided Trinity be among
you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Closing Hymn #542

“Christ is the world’s true light”

St. Joan

1. Christ is the world's true Light, its Cap-tain of sal - va - tion,
 2. In Christ all rac - es meet, their an - cient feuds for - get - ting,
 3. One Lord, in one great Name u - nite us all who own thee;

the Day - star clear and bright of ev - ery race and na - tion;
 the whole round world com - plete, from sun - rise to its set - ting:
 cast out our pride and shame that hin - der to en - throne thee;

new life, new hope a - wakes, for all who own his sway;
 when Christ is throned as Lord all shall for - sake their fear,
 the world has wait - ed long, has tra - vailed long in pain;

free - dom her bond - age breaks, and night is turned to day.
 to plough-share beat the sword, to prun - ing - hook the spear.
 to heal its an - cient wrong, come, Prince of Peace, and reign.

Dismissal

Priest: Alleluia, Alleluia! Let us go forth in the name of Christ.
 People: **Thanks be to God.** Alleluia, Alleluia!

From *The Hymnal 1982*: #7 “Christ whose glory fills the skies”, Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788). Music: *Ratishon*, melody from Feystliche gesangh Buchleyn, 1524; adapt. att. William Henry Havergal (1793-1870); harm. William Henry Havergal (1793-1870), alt. #507 “Praise the Spirit in creation” Words: Michael Hewlett (b.1916), alt. Music: *Julion*, David Hurd (b. 1950). #542 “Christ is the world’s true light”, Words: George Wallace Briggs (1875-1959), alt. Music: *St. Joan*, Percy E. B. Collier (b. 1895).
 From *Lift Ever Voice and Sing II*: #120 *Sweet, Sweet Spirit*, Words: Doris Akers (b. 1922). Music: Doris Akers (b. 1922). Copyright © 1962. Renewed 1990 MANNA MUSIC, INC. 25510 Stanford Ave., Suite 101, Valencia, CA 91355. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved.
Doxology – Music: Old 100th, melody from *Pseumes octante trois de David*, 1551, alt.; harm. After Louis Bourgeois (1510?-1561?).

Prelude - If I Can Help Somebody - by Alma Irene Bazel Androzzo Thompson

The testament of Alma - How a Phoenix woman's gospel song became Martin Luther King Jr.'s most famous last words

When longtime Phoenix resident Alma B. Androzzo Thompson wrote the gospel song “If I Can Help Somebody” in 1939, she could not have realized she was penning words that would feature prominently almost 30 years later in Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s well-known and prophetic sermon, “The Drum Major Instinct.”

But she was.

On February 4, 1968, two months before his assassination, Dr. King delivered “The Drum Major Instinct” at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia. Using Jesus' life as an example, Dr. King exhorted the congregation that true greatness is not found in accolades or awards, but in servant leadership, full of love and grace.

Dr. King then told the congregation that at his funeral, which in fact would occur just months later, he wished to be remembered as a leader who fought for justice, served others, fed the hungry and clothed the naked.

He ended his sermon with a rhetorical flourish, expressing a desire that his living would not be in vain:

If I can help somebody as I pass along, If I can cheer somebody with a word or song, If I can show somebody he's traveling wrong, Then my living will not be in vain. If I can do my duty as a Christian ought, If I can bring salvation to a world once wrought, If I can spread the message as the master taught, Then my living will not be in vain.

These final words did not come from Dr. King's pen. They came from Androzzo.

As explained by Arizona State University professor Dr. Keith Miller in “Voice of Deliverance: The Language of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Its Sources,” it was not unusual or in any sense improper for King to include lyrics in his oration without attribution.

But after reading Dr. King's sermon as a graduate student at Arizona State University, and learning from Professor Miller that Androzzo remained in relative obscurity despite the significance of her lyrics in Dr. King's important sermon, I could not help but wonder if there was more to her story.

With the help of genealogical records, newspaper archives, family stories, a preliminary email exchange with Androzzo's youngest daughter, Tanya, and a telephone interview with her eldest son, Donald, I started to piece together some of Androzzo's life story, the foundation for her words, and by extension, additional context to Dr. King's closing lines.

Alma Irene Bazel was born in Harriman, Tennessee on October 12, 1912 to Fred and Frances T. McLawler Bazel, who were active members of the Country Baptist Church. Alma was educated by her aunt in a one-room schoolhouse, and by 1930 she was living in Marion, Indiana while traveling the “AME (African Methodist Episcopal) Church Circuit” with her mother.

According to Donald, Frances, Alma's mother, was an accomplished elocutionist and would recite poetry while her daughter would accompany her on piano. Alma added the names Androzzo and Thompson through marriages, had five children, called Chicago her home during important parts of her career, and lived in Phoenix from 1966 through 1995.

Androzzo was a prolific composer and lyricist. “If I Can Help Somebody,” her best-known song, was first published and copyrighted in 1945 by Boosey and Hawkes Publishing and arranger George Zalva. Between 1946 and 1949, the song was recorded by several UK artists including Turner Layton, Dame Grace Fields and Robert Wilson.

The song became part of several BBC radio shows in the late 1940s and early 1950s but did not gain popularity in the United States until Androzzo's friend, the renowned gospel singer, Mahalia Jackson - a performer at the March on Washington and King's funeral - recorded it in 1951.

The National Tuberculosis Association chose the song for their Christmas Seals campaign in 1957, leading Billy Eckstine to perform it live on the last “The Nat King Cole Show,” which aired on December 17, 1957.

In a 1957 Chicago Tribune article related to Eckstine’s performance, Androzzo explained that she wrote the song in 1939 when “she was doing missionary work in the streets of Pittsburgh.” In a 1963 Associated Press Interview, Androzzo said the song, which took her about an hour to complete, was written during the Great Depression.

“I was living in Pittsburgh and I was very poor. Things were so rough and just about everybody was in the same boat. I remember going to the store and seeing some alcoholics. I tried to talk to them about making their lives better.”

So why should we think about Androzzo at a time when we remember Dr. King?

For starters, because the legacy of Dr. King and the lives of those connected to him remain all around us if we are willing to look. Androzzo lived in Phoenix for nearly 30 years in relative obscurity despite writing hundreds of gospel songs.

This song, written in poverty, motivated by her sense of mission and expressive of the ideals of Dr. King, remains alive. Equally important is that the words of many people like Androzzo became the words of Dr. King, just as the efforts of many people became the Civil Rights Movement. Martin Luther King Jr.’s sermon was made stronger by Androzzo’s words, and her words were birthed from the very experiences Dr. King fought to overcome.

In return, his choice to quote Androzzo’s lyrics and add his rhetorical power, gifted her song with historical consequence far beyond what she could have imagined in 1939.

This was cemented when a section of “The Drum Major Instinct,” which included the lyrics, was played at Dr. King’s funeral and broadcast live on national television. Like so many connected to Dr. King, Androzzo’s story is a tribute to his legacy and the legacy of the Civil Rights Movement.

It is a tribute that Dr. King himself would likely have wanted to “pass along...to cheer somebody with a word or song.”

Alma died in Chicago, Illinois on October 11, 2001.

Excerpted from the following:

Article from the Arizona Republic (Phoenix, Arizona) - Sunday, January 19, 2020, written by Bridgette Buckley, a graduate student at Arizona State University interested in the unknown voices of Irish literature and African American rhetoric.