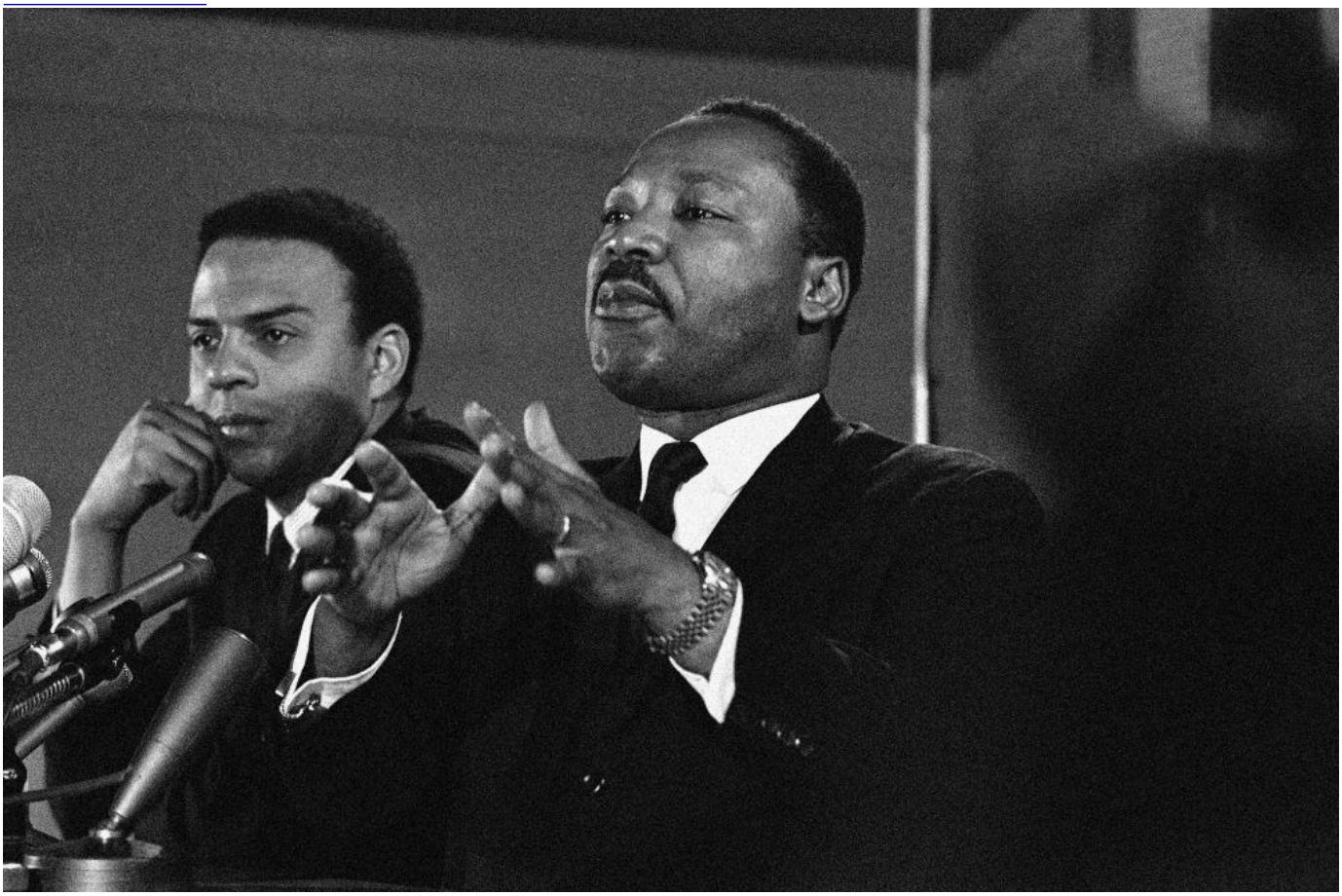
Opinion
Guest Voices



The Rev. Andrew Young, executive vice president of the Southern Conference (left), appears with Martin Luther King Jr., president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, on Feb. 7, 1968. (AP)



by John Dear

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On this week's episode of "The Nonviolent Jesus Podcast," I speak with civil rights legend the Rev. Andrew J. Young to mark the Dr. Martin Luther King holiday.

Born in 1932, Young was King's No. 1 lieutenant. He was later elected to Congress, named ambassador to the United Nations by President Jimmy Carter, and then elected mayor of Atlanta for two terms, helping organize the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta. Today, he lives in Atlanta with his wife, Carolyn, and is the father of three daughters and one son, a grandfather of nine and a great-grandfather of two.

We spoke mainly about King and his experiences organizing the Civil Rights Movement.

"What I learned from Martin King is what he learned from his parents and grandparents: It's all about the history of a people," Young said. "We are constantly reminded of visions for a way out of no way. In moments of despair, I still sing."

"We didn't talk much about Jesus, but it was a prayerful movement because we didn't know what we were doing. It's a mystery how the spirit of nonviolence moves through the earth," he added. "Here it is 2,000 years later, and what Jesus taught is still relevant and powerfully important for us as we deal with the day-to-day crises in our lives."

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Young spoke of the day Fred Shuttlesworth came to him and King and told them his house had been bombed, and asked King to come to Birmingham.

"We need to make nonviolence more aggressive," Young said. "We need to build a nonviolent movement."

Contrary to today, he said, "It wasn't a time of despair or depression. Preparation for our campaigns was very important. Nowadays, we don't take the time before our demonstrations to prepare for them, and we should."

Listen to the full episode here.

This story appears in the **The Nonviolent Jesus Podcast** feature series. View the full series.