



Pastor's Page

“Little help from my Friend”

From the moment I was born I had a friend called Andrew. Well actually he was 7 days younger than me so I had to wait a week before I could start the relationship! Andrew and I did everything together, including, sawing down all the rhubarb in our back garden and then trying to sell it to the neighbours; eating mouldy bread off a council rubbish tip, and setting fire (by accident) to the fields behind my house! Despite being a week younger than me, Andrew always looked after me. If I was off school unwell he would call in with a bottle of Lemonillo (it was always Lemonillo, whatever the illness!) and when I first got lace-up shoes (at about 24!!) Andrew would tie them for me! When I was about 11 years old my mother came out with the prophetic statement; “Mark will always be alright in life, because there will always be an Andrew to help him!”

I reminded my mother of this last Sunday. Over the weekend some friends of mine came to visit me. For reasons I'm not completely sure of, they had decided to spend a couple of days working on my garden (I honestly didn't think it needed any work!!!) With dedicated single-mindedness (and wellies) they set about cultivating the Manse's private grounds! I continued doing things inside whilst they 'worked the land'. Half way through the evening my concentration was interrupted by the sound of the front door bell. Going downstairs I was greeted by their 9-year old son who said “The fire people are here” Thinking it must be a kind of junior school joke, I smiled and went to the door. On opening it I was greeted by 3 burly, 6 foot tall local Firemen! “Have you got a fire in your garden sir?” they inquired “Yes” I hesitantly said. “We've had complaints, can we come and look at it?” they asked. I didn't feel that I had a choice so said “sure”. They marched through the house and out to the back garden to be greeted by the site of a roaring furnace of Babylonian proportions! I thought I was in big trouble,(I had given this couple permission to have a fire) But as the firemen began their interrogation this friend just calmly answered all their questions and assured them it was all under control. After they went the kids fried some marshmallows and my friends apologised profusely. However, despite this rather embarrassing incident these friends of mine did an amazing job, painting the shed, emptying the summer house and transforming my entire garden (check it out, it's better than the Botanical gardens!)

I still don't really know why these folk gave up most of a weekend to do such a kind act for me but interestingly, the man's name was Andrew! (My mum was right!)

You may not have your own “Andrew”, but if you're a Christian you have the Lord who says; *“Fear not for I have redeemed you I have summoned you by name: you are mine. When you pass through the waters I will be with you and when you pass through the rivers they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire you will not be burned the flames will not set you ablaze. For I am the Lord your God.”* (Isaiah 43:1-3a)

Now that is a friendship worth having!

30th September 2007