

We helped addicts in Russia



The Rev Alice Wood with young mother in Russia

SHE was so moved by those suffering across the world that she gave up her time to support women battling addiction.

The Rev Alice Wood, assistant curate at Farlington, spent eight days this summer working with Love Russia, a Christian charity based in the Isle of Wight, which aims to reach out in love to orphans, those moving on from orphanages and mothers in crisis.

She was based at the Moses Centre, a Christian drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre in a refurbished church building, in Volhov, a town 80 miles east of St Petersburg.

"I was one of a group of

16 working with young mothers and their children to help them to get their lives back on track," Alice said. "Many of the women have tried other state-run rehab programmes but have gone back to drug and/or alcohol dependency.

"But the Christian message of love, forgiveness and hope for all which they receive at the Moses Centre is the difference which quite literally helps them turn their lives around. On average eight out of 10 women leave to live fulfilled lives."

Each day the women go into the town to do cleaning jobs and grow their own vegetables while their children are looked after at the Ragdula Assessment Centre nearby. Alice and the other volunteers led activities at the

centre daily for the children aged between three and 15. They played with them, read stories and acted out the story of the Prodigal Son from the Bible – although as it was a state-run centre they weren't allowed to be explicitly Christian, so the Bible story was adapted to focus on the message of caring for others.

Alice said: "The Moses Centre was a place of laughter and fellowship. Every night we worshipped God with the women, shared our stories of how Jesus was working in our lives, painted each other's nails and played with the children.

"I returned to Farlington, tired, grubby and deeply moved. My faith had grown through the impact faith in Jesus had made

to the lives of the women I met, and through meeting the band of volunteers who fund the centre."

Alice first heard about Love Russia when she used their Christmas CD and a script called *The Old Russian Shoe Maker* for a crib service in the 1990s at St Matthew's Church in Blackmoor, before she was ordained.

Her daughter Sorrel was the first to volunteer with the charity when she was aged 17. The experience transformed her. She quickly became a group leader for the organisation and her faith, sense of compassion, independence and leadership skills all grew.

In 2011 Alice invited Alex Cooke from Love Russia to come to St Alban's C of E Primary School,

where she was headteacher, to talk to the children about the lives of children in orphanages in Russia. The school then began supporting the charity through fundraising appeals.

This led to Alice volunteering with her husband and two daughters at a camp in Estonia. She had a break whilst she was training for ordination but now plans to volunteer regularly again.

Alice said: "Every time I listen to the news or turn on the telly I hear about the plight of so many people who suffer, sometimes I feel so helpless in the face of it all, going to a camp with Love Russia is my way of doing just a little to help."

For more details about Love Russia see: www.loverussia.org.

**RELAX! WITH UP TO 4,000 USED CARS
PRICE CHECKED DAILY, COMPREHENSIVELY
CHECKED AND GUARANTEED**

**YOU'RE SURE TO FIND
YOUR PERFECT CAR!**

<p>10 REG FIAT 500 1.2 LOUNGE START-STOP 3 DOOR WHITE 49K NOW ONLY £5722</p>	<p>BRAND NEW CITROEN C1 1.0 VTI FEEL 3 DOOR NOW ONLY £122.80 PER MONTH <small>48 MONTHS (9+47)</small></p>	
<p>09 REG NISSAN NOTE 1.4 ACENTA 5 DOOR SILVER 43K NOW ONLY £4291</p>	<p>60 REG VAUXHALL CORSA 1.2i 16V (85) SKI 5 DOOR RED RED 40K NOW ONLY £5268</p>	<p>10 REG FORD FIESTA 1.25 ZETEC 5 DOOR BLUE 53K NOW ONLY £5491</p>

PART EXCHANGE WELCOME **FULL HISTORY CHECK** **FLEXIBLE FINANCE AVAILABLE** **NATIONWIDE DELIVERY TO YOUR DOOR** **BRAND NEW CARS AVAILABLE ALL MAKES**

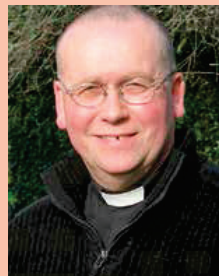
AUTOSAVE... SERVING THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY FOR OVER 35 YEARS

autosave Call 0845 122 6910 autosave.co.uk

*Based on personal Contact Hire (PCH) payment profile 9+47. Finance subject to status. Terms and conditions apply. Applicants must be 18 or over. Guarantee/Indemnity may be required. We can introduce you to a limited number of carefully selected finance providers. We may receive a commission from them for the introduction.

Let's learn to listen

the last word



by the Ven Peter Sutton
Archdeacon of the Isle of Wight

IMAGINE a world where people thought it more important to listen to each other's views before expressing their own.

Imagine a world where people of faith listened to people of other faiths before preaching their own.

Imagine a Church where Christians listened to each other before expressing what they are so sure is their own right, proper and orthodox view of the issue being discussed. Impossible?

In the Isle of Wight Prison recently more than 100 prisoners of different faiths and traditions came together for a Festival of Faith. It is an annual event for those for whom almost everything has been taken from them. So when they explain their faith, they get to the heart of what matters.

In Parkhurst Prison there were Anglicans, Catholics, Baptists, Sikhs, Buddhists, Muslims, Spiritualists, Rastafarians, Quakers, Pagans and Pentecostals. Each group had five minutes to share with

everyone else the nature of the faith that sustains them in what is an extreme situation. For some groups a single person came out to speak; for others it was a group who spoke or sang. One group even put into mime what they wanted to say.

This felt all the more pertinent because in prison, where men only have the basics of food, drink, clothing and shelter, faith becomes much more of a priority than it does for us on the outside. Our lives are frequently so busy that we only have time to say how it is for us and little time or inclination to hear how it is for someone else.

It was fascinating to hear

from each of these faith groups but what was most impressive was the way in which people listened to each other. It would not have been surprising to have heckling or comments thrown from the side, but not on this occasion. People were listening deeply.

Jesus was good at listening. The thousands who came out to hear him almost certainly wanted to share with him their stories, their troubles and their woes. Listening is what Jesus taught – as much by what he did than by what he said.

Imagine if we followed his lead and really listened to others as he did.