

Faith Comment published in the Petersfield Post

15 February 2012: Jon Piper, Hope Church

Nobody Mentions the Cookie

I take the same bus to work every day.

I'm one of the first people to get on the bus and I ride it almost to the end of its journey. I see numerous people get on and off after me, so I can partake in a little people watching.

I love the way different people behave with each other in our little, travelling waiting room. Factory workers discuss grandchildren with Eastern European nurses. A college boy speaks to a group of young girls like an old, world-weary man. What other place can a boy in his early teens sit next to pretty college girls for 15 minutes without needing some serious emotional support afterwards?

We've even started to behave like a community together.

This transitional community can act positively - offering support for members when drivers don't stop as requested. We can also act in a more negative way. For example, we have collectively ignored the soggy cookie that has sat on the windowsill of our bus for several weeks. Nobody mentions the cookie, though it still remains, becoming steadily less edible.

I get excited about this little band of travellers because I believe there is value in community. I believe God sees value in relationships. Jesus suggests that when people get together, value each other and work for each other's benefit, good things happen. His instigation of the Church demonstrates this: an unbelievably broad community, working together to benefit its members and others in his name.

Is this the sort of community that you think of when you hear the word 'church'?