

Glen Ridge Congregational Church
The Rev. John Sampson
“Open the Door”



Communion Bread, from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library.

Revelation 3:20
July 6, 2025

Will you pray with me?

God, may the words of my mouth and the meditations of all of our hearts be acceptable to you, our rock and our redeemer.

Amen.

We're going to sit at the welcome table. We're going to sit at the welcome table one of these days. Hallelujah. We're going to sit at the welcome table. Hallelu. Hallelu. Hallelujah.

That is my favorite communion hymn. It goes on and on. It talks about no fancy manners at the welcome table. All kinds of people at the welcome table.

This is the welcome table. The table of Jesus, the one we call the Christ, the one who is resurrected. And we, all of us, are welcome at this table. Long ago, there was a man named

Augustine, an early father of the church, and he said that a sacrament - and communion is a sacrament - a sacrament is a visible sign of an invisible blessing.

In these simple elements, in this bread from a local bakery, in this juice from a local supermarket, in these ordinary mass-produced things, our faith makes a crazy proclamation that they can be transformed into the very doorways to an encounter with the Christ and with God, that the simplest things can be transfigured into the deepest and most profound things. But we have to do something.

Jesus says, "I am here. I'm knocking on the door. I'm here in these elements, ready to meet you. You simply have to open the door. You simply have to open the door."

These elements can transform us if we are willing to be transformed. These simple things can change us if we open our hearts and our minds to being changed. If we see beyond their ordinariness and see their blessed extraordinariness. Today, before we come to the table, I'd like us just to take a moment of silence. Open yourselves to the possibility that you could be transformed in the eating and the drinking at this table. Open your hearts and your minds to the call of the resurrected one who lives even here and now among us.

Open yourself to the possibility that we as ordinary people could be transfigured into the extraordinary blessings that God is calling us to. Because this table is not the table of this congregation. This church doesn't own this table. I don't own this table. Christ is the one who owns this table. And he is calling. He's saying, "Open yourselves to me. And as you come and eat at this table, you will meet me. And I will share this meal with you."

Amen.