



## St. Luke's East Hampton

### Reflections from Fr. Ben

July 18, 2025

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#### From the Rector

Today, Rabbi Joshua Franklin and I will continue our Jewish/Christian Dialogue in a new series “Same Text, Different Lens.” Our first topic will be the Ten Commandments. Before we approach current issues such as of posting the Ten

Commandments in schools, we will be addressing questions such as “Are they commandments in the first place?” and “Are there actually ten of them, and if so, which ones count?”

People often describe the Ten Commandments as foundational to our society and our rule of law. When they say this, however, I wonder which of the commandments they are referring to.

In the Hebrew scriptures (the Old Testament), God seems most offended by violations of the first and second commandments – to have no other gods and to not worship idols. Our society seems to have no problem worshiping idols such as money, success, and power. In our culture sports heroes, entertainment personalities, financial gurus, entrepreneurial leaders, and even elected officials are sometimes given god-like status.

In the Christian scriptures (the New Testament), one of the biggest complaints against Jesus and the disciples is their violation of the fourth commandment by working on the sabbath. How many of us think nothing about working on weekends or checking emails or texts on days off? How many take true days off to begin with? Most Americans do not take their full vacations and even on vacations continue to log in. That’s not even getting to the “keeping the Sabbath holy” part. Two Catholic Dioceses recently excused parishioners from the requirement of going to Mass every week. I’m not sure needing a bishop’s permission to take a Sunday off ever crossed the minds of most of those reading this post!

Intrigued? Want to dig a little deeper and look at the Ten Commandments from a different perspective? Join Rabbi Franklin and me at 11am on Friday morning for “Same Text, Different Lens.” You may be surprised at what you see.