

ST BART'S



More about Dean Wolfe

The Right Reverend Dean Elliott Wolfe, D.D. is the Ninth Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Kansas, where he oversees 44 congregations, two campus ministry centers, two social service agencies and a secondary school. Bishop Wolfe became Bishop Diocesan in 2004 and is in the 14th year of his episcopate. He is an accomplished preacher, teacher and retreat leader, and seeks to draw people from diverse backgrounds into Christian community. He says, “The Christian imperative is to seek to know Christ and to make Christ known.”

Growing up in Southern Ohio, Wolfe worked as a carpenter’s apprentice, house painter, ditch-digger, concrete tester, pharmacy delivery person and retail clothing salesman. After college, he worked in sales and marketing for two large consumer packaged goods companies prior to attending seminary. He served as an Episcopal priest for 10 years, assisting in parishes in Berkeley, Boston and Dallas before he was elected Bishop of Kansas.

Dean was born in Dayton, Ohio, to Bill and Millie Wolfe. His parents grew up in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. After serving in the Navy in World War II, his father worked as a final inspector for the National Cash Register Company, and his mother worked inside the home as a child care provider, a consummate baker and, briefly, as a local television commercial actress. Dean was the first person from his family to attend college and credits his parents for their many sacrifices to make that dream come true.

Over the past decade, Bishop Wolfe has focused on theological bridge-building, seeking to discover common ground between people who hold diverse faith perspectives. He enjoys working with youth and young adult ministries and worked in those ministries for many years before being ordained.

Wolfe says he particularly enjoys welcoming people who haven’t felt comfortable in traditional church environments. “Church should be a place for single parents, married and divorced persons, members of the LGBTQ community, older people, younger people, people of different races and cultures, rich, poor, and anyone and everyone who has ever felt marginalized or unwelcomed,” Wolfe said. “This kind of inclusivity is very much at the heart of the Gospel.” He added, “Episcopalians don’t ask, ‘What would Jesus do?’ We look at what Jesus actually did.” Wolfe said, “I was deeply drawn to the strong tradition of offering radical welcome and hospitality at St. Bart’s.”

He is a 1987 graduate of Miami University of Ohio, with degrees in political science and religion. He graduated from Virginia Theological Seminary in 1992, and he received an honorary doctorate from the seminary in 2004.

Dean likes the outdoors and enjoys hiking, fly fishing and travel. He has been married for 36 years to Ellen Frantz-Wolfe, a mother, businesswoman, and community and church volunteer. They have a son, William, who works for the Covington & Burling law firm in Washington, D.C. Their son is a *cum laude* graduate of Sewanee: The University of the South. The family's yellow Labrador, Kylie, is looking forward to the excitement of urban life.