



**North/West Lower Michigan Synod**  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

## **Synod Office Move FAQs**

### **Where is the new Synod Office located? What is it like?**

Physical Address: 240 South Bridge St., Suite 120, Dewitt, Michigan 48820

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 517, Dewitt, Michigan 48820

Phone: 517-321-5066

The lower level, 800 square-foot office suite includes a large “Synod Office,” a small office for the bishop, and a conference room that seats four. The office building is located right off Highway 127 in Dewitt, MI.

### **Why is the Synod leaving St. Stephen’s Lutheran Church?**

St. Stephen’s Lutheran Church held its last worship service in May 2022. St. Stephen’s building is too large for the Synod’s needs; owning and maintaining the building is more expensive and necessitates additional staff. Therefore, the congregation listed the building for sale.

### **Why is the Synod Office in Lansing?**

The Synod Office has been in Lansing since the Synod was established with the ELCA. In 2013, Bishop Satterlee was encouraged to leave the Synod Office in Lansing for the sake of the administrative staff. Since Bishop Satterlee, Ann Stavros, and Rebecca Bossenbroek all live in the Lansing area and use the Synod Office the most, the Synod Office remains in Lansing.

### **Why isn’t the Synod Office moving to another church?**

The Synod Staff was blessed to have our office at St. Stephen. We also learned that housing the Synod Office in a church building is a blessing and a challenge for both the Synod Staff and the pastor and congregation. It was determined that, at this time, the best path forward is to follow the example of many other synods in the ELCA and return to an office building, as our Synod did prior to 2009.

### **Who decided on the location of the new Synod Office?**

The Bishop, Vice President, Treasurer, Synod Attorney, Office Manager, and Director of Finances decided on the new office with input from the Synod Staff. The Conference Deans were also kept informed at a high level.



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**What if the next bishop wants to move the Synod Office to a different location?**

The current lease runs until August 31, 2025, which is the same day that the current bishop's term ends. All synod employees are co-terminus with the bishop and so the next bishop will have the option to relocate the Synod Office, if desired. The Synod Office is also transitioning its paper files to digital files, making a virtual office possible.

**Will the Synod Staff return to the office for regular office hours?**

The Synod Staff has no plans to return to regular office hours. Many of the administrative staff have "day jobs" and do not work for the Synod during regular office hours. The deployed staff will not routinely come to Lansing, partially in response to our Synod's commitment to combat climate change. Also in response to climate change, and because it is proven more effective, the Synod Staff will continue to use Zoom as their default meeting method. In keeping with the lease agreement, large in-person meetings and gatherings will be held at other locations, including congregations, and not at the Synod Office. Bishop Satterlee expects to work from the office several hours a week.

**Why was information about the Synod Office's move not publicized sooner?**

There are a number of moving pieces associated with transitioning the Synod Office to a new location. This includes the closing of St. Stephen's, negotiations and modifications to the new office suite, acquisition of movers, and transference of telephones and technologies. It also was an opportunity to review relationships with outside vendors and reduce expenses. All of these negotiations concluded in late June.

Instead of making announcements before negotiations were settled and contracts were finalized, Bishop Satterlee and the Synod Staff thought it best to provide a general statement that the Synod Office would be relocating with more information to come after the move was completed. This decision was not made to be secretive about the move, but as a way to avoid sharing premature information and ensure that the Synod received all of the information about the new Synod Office at the same time.

Bishop Satterlee and the Synod Staff understand that some feel they should have received advance notice and had input in the decision. Bishop Satterlee and the Synod Staff respect this perspective and appreciate your patience and understanding during this transition.