

# Lutheran Church of Australia: Commission on Worship

## STATEMENT 11

### PRINCIPLES FOR THE TUNES OF HYMNS

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*Adopted by the Department of Music, September 1985, to provide guidelines for the preparation of the Supplement to Lutheran Hymnal. This statement is a revision of 'General Principles for New Australian Lutheran Hymnal', adopted 1951 or 1952, under 'The Tunes'.*

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- 1 Tunes must measure up to the standards of good hymnody, and must have real value for devotion and worship.
- 2 Music should be provided for each hymn. An exception may be made in the case of doxologies or short hymns of one or two verses. If the same tune is used for more than one hymn, consideration should be given to different keys and harmonies — but not to variations of melody.
- 3 Where, in most churches, tunes have become traditionally associated with a particular hymn, they should be used for that hymn. However, if such a tune is not of good musical standard, it should be discarded.
- 4 In Lutheran hymns, the traditional chorales should be used where practicable.
- 5 Consideration should be given to both the rhythmic and isometric settings of certain hymns, and each case should be treated on its own merits.
- 6 The suitability of pitch for congregational singing should be taken into consideration.
- 7 It is desirable that the melody line edition has one or more verses printed beneath the lines of music. Consideration should be given to the spacing of syllables in hymns where there is a difficulty.
- 8 Tunes by Australian Lutheran composers should be considered, also composers from current Lutheran hymnals and other Australian hymnbooks.
- 9 Where there is a marked difference of opinion among the members of the committee on the merits and inclusion of a tune, the opinion of an independent authority should be sought.
- 10 Current hymnbooks, eg *Lutheran Book of Worship*, *Lutheran Worship*, *Australian Hymn Book*, should be consulted as to current trends in the selection of tunes (and words), particularly with regard to the ecumenical scene.
- 11 Tunes must be suitable for congregational use, where possible have been subject to field testing, and match the text adequately, both rhythmically and melodically.