

DOCTRINAL STATEMENTS AND THEOLOGICAL OPINIONS (DSTO)

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Guidelines for inter-church marriages

Adopted by the Commission on Theology and Inter-Church Relations, August 1988.

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1. Sometimes a pastor of the Lutheran Church of Australia [LCA] is invited to take part in a marriage service conducted by a minister of another denomination, or he is asked to let a minister of another denomination take part in a Lutheran marriage service. In such situations the pastor's actions will be guided by the principles set out in the 'Theses on Joint Prayer and Worship' (Theses of Agreement, II).
2. In accordance with these principles, it will be the exception rather than the rule for pastors of the Lutheran church to
 - participate in an official capacity in marriage services conducted by churches not in altar and pulpit fellowship with the LCA;
 - invite clergy from such churches to take part in marriage services conducted by LCA pastors. In either situation, invitations should be extended or accepted only after consultation with the President of the District of which the pastor is a member.
3. When a LCA pastor is invited to take part in the marriage service of another denomination, it may be appropriate for him to read the word of God, give the address, or pronounce a blessing on the couple, provided that the liturgy and prayers of the service do not contain doctrinal aberrations.
4. For confessional reasons, a Lutheran pastor will not invite a minister of a church which is not in altar and pulpit fellowship with the LCA, to preach at a marriage service conducted by the Lutheran pastor. However, such a guest minister may be invited to read from the word of God, and to give a blessing or greeting.