

Lutheran Church of Australia: Commission on Worship

STATEMENT 9

MARRIAGE IN A GARDEN SETTING

Adopted by the Department of Liturgics, February 1986. The statement is a response to the trend at the time to hold weddings in gardens, and a request from pastors for advice.

Reformatted and revised: 1 May 1998

We advise that a Christian wedding be held in a church building, or possibly, in certain cases, in the home. The church building is a focal point in the corporate and personal life of Christians. Marriage is not purely a private affair, but involves the community, and Christian marriage involves God and the Christian community, the church.

However, we recognise that in some cases pastors may consent to conduct the marriage of baptised persons in an outdoor or other setting, for good pastoral reasons. The specifically Christian nature of the service and of the pastor's function will then need to be clearly expressed in word and symbol. Premarital counselling will leave the couple in no doubt concerning the presence of the crucifix and its significance both on the day and for their married lives. The altar and the people of God gathered there are much more relevant than the garden.