

## **Richard Winkler and Jacqueline Mach:** The Gift of Marriage



Richard Winkler and Jacqueline Mach on their wedding day, 22 September 2018. Photos courtesy of Lisa Thompson Photography 2018.

Richard and Jacqueline met at their university orientation day and were married at St Mark's on 22 September 2018. They both studied Materials Science, with Jacqueline also undertaking a Biomedical Engineering degree.

Christianity and St Mark's have long been part of Richard's life. Growing up nearby, his family regularly attended St Mark's services and he was baptised at the church.

Jacqueline and Richard were required to complete the church's Marriage Preparation Source before their wedding, and they both thoroughly enjoyed it. The course is held before the 5.30pm Sunday Contemporary Service and it is led by Rector Michael Jensen. Couples engage in exercises together and with others.

The couple express gratitude for the Marriage Preparation Course and the church's genuine interest in making relationships as strong as possible. The course highlights the seriousness of marriage; although a wedding is joyous and fun, a marriage is a life-long commitment.

Jacqueline explains that the course reminds couples to appreciate one another and the little things partners do for each other. Richard also highlights the necessity of curiosity in a marriage. It is important to express genuine interest in your partner's personal goals and beliefs.

As Richard is part of the St Mark's reading group, he recognised many lessons and tools taught in the Marriage Preparation Course. The reading group discusses the Bible, marriage, relationships, among many other topics.

When considering the impact of Christianity on their marriage, Richard explains that it is imperative for couples not to uphold their spouse as a God-like figure. People are fallible; acceptance and the power of forgiveness are undeniable aspects of a marriage.

Richard believes marriage is symbolic of the relationship God has with his people and that Jesus has with the world. Love and forgiveness – two key qualities that underpin marriage – were first exemplified in the relationship between God and his people. Marriage is a shared experience and a celebration of this relationship, he explains.

Support is a key theme in their marriage. Richard and Jacqueline have different religious backgrounds, but they have always made the effort to respect and appreciate each other's beliefs.



Their shared ethics and values keep them on the same path. They aim to elevate each other's needs above their own wants. Marriage is a gift, explains Richard. It brings him enormous joy.

Jacqueline's favourite memory from their wedding was a moment of calm amidst the chaos. During the photo-shoot, the couple were able to pause and appreciate each other, albeit only for a moment.

Richard and Jaqueline attend the 8am Sunday Service at St Mark's.