

CHRIST CHURCH

VESTRY MINUTES

June 25th, 2023

01. Call to Order & Quorum

- a. Present were: Karla Fowkes; Mark Reneau; Jennifer McKinney; Danese Sizer; Charlotte Boatwright; Susan Brooks, Jr. Warden; Troy Eichenberger, Sr. Warden; and Fr. Will Levanway, Priest in Charge.
- b. Apologies: None.
- c. Upon declaration that a quorum was in attendance, the meeting was called to order at 12:31 pm.

02. Opening Prayer

Fr. Will Levanway.

03. Previous Minutes

- a. Any additions or modifications were solicited. A **motion** was made to approve the minutes from the May meeting. After a second, **motion passed**.
- b. Fr. Will noted that the term "Safe Church" is already in use for our denomination-wide policies and procedures for handling abuse and neglect. A **motion** was made to change the name of the Safe Church Committee to the Church Safety Committee. After a second, **motion passed**.

04. Finance (See Appendix I)

- a. **Compensation.** Fr. Will brought up the need to review our compensation for Adrienne Cox, our organist, and Brian Henry, our parish administrator. Fr. Will said he would like the finance committee to pull together the numbers for the total cost of increasing Adrienne's salary in line with her current duties and having the choral scholar program again, and talk through options at the next meeting.

Danese asked about Brian. Fr. Will said he would like to get the parish admin job description in order and have a review of what we pay, what benefits we offer, what hours we expect, and what we think is reasonable and fair.
- b. Troy expressed thanks to Seth Sizer, Ray McMillan, and Aline Ingle for serving as our audit committee this year. Danese noted that Seth said they had a very good first meeting this past week.
- c. Charlotte suggested we have a board in Fox Hall about all the projects we have going on and what their associated costs are, to help raise involvement and funds.

05. Buildings & Grounds

- a. **Choir Room Dedication.** Karla said she has someone in mind to make the plaque for the choir room dedication. She is sending around wording to make sure everyone is happy with it, and suggested it be 11x14.
- b. **Building Issues.** Susan said she is working on a list of building issues to prioritize, noting that some things are non-negotiable safety issues, like repointing the walkway in the garden and dealing with water intrusion. She said she needs to meet with the finance committee to discuss funds for the upcoming projects. She said the next big thing is to have the Canterbury Building roof evaluated to see where water is leaking in from, as well as repairing all the water damage in the front room of the Project Canterbury space. Susan noted this is the third time in ten years we've had roof problems with this building.

Karla asked if there was Junior Warden notebook of sorts, where each Jr. Warden could look back through and see what projects had been done in the past and who did the work. Susan said there had been some in the past, but she thinks it was destroyed in the tornado damage. There is not currently one.

- c. **Sunday School Room Use.** Fr. Will noted Allie has been using one of the upstairs Sunday school rooms for music recording, and one of her friends Meg Settle has been using it for recording a podcast called [State of Conflict](#), and said we will get a shoutout in the podcast for letting her use the space. Susan said she would love to see us expand on that, utilizing that space better during the week.
- d. **Canterbury Upstairs.** Danese asked if the upstairs rooms in Canterbury were rentable as well. Fr. Will responded no, that they were in pretty bad shape. Susan expanded on that and also expressed dismay at how badly it's damaged the archives that are kept up there between the water damage, moisture, and sunlight. She noted she'd prefer to move them to one of those rooms over Fox Hall as well where they might be safer. She also said there's also the issue of Joel King's stuff being everywhere upstairs in the Canterbury. Fr. Will said he thinks we need to have a project to clean up all that stuff soon.
- e. **Cleaning Service.** Susan also noted she will get bids for a new cleaning service soon. Danese asked how often they clean. Susan said they're supposed to clean once a week, but when they do show up, they are doing far below what they are contracted to do, and that's if they show up at all.

06. Nominating Committee

- a. A **motion** was made to charter the Nominating Committee. After a second, **motion passed**. It will be made up of the departing vestry members Charlotte, Troy, and Mark, plus an at-large member who is to be determined.

07. Safe Church

- a. Fr. Will reminded folks that if they have not yet completed their Safe Church training to please do so soon.

08. Security

- a. Jennifer said she has a group of folks who have agreed to be on the Church Safety committee, and she plans to meet mid-July after she is back in town.

09. Eucharistic Visitors

- a. Fr. Will said he met with Danese, and they are going to put on a refresher course for folks who have done it in the past, and try to get that program back up and running by the first week of August. Fr. Will said he would like to have the course after our monthly potluck, and in general would like to utilize that time after potluck for various things.

10. Mutual Ministry Review (Appendix II)

- a. Fr. Will asked what has stuck with folks from that meeting. He noted he himself felt quite happy about it, noting there was no big surprises, and mostly in agreement on the areas we needed to be working on. There was discussion about the progress made on the developmental goals and the handling of conflict.
- b. Fr. Will said he was going to send out the current Developmental Goals for the vestry to review, as they begin to think about what our new goals will be.

11. Invite, Welcome, Connect

- a. Fr. Will said he feels we've made good strides on the invite portion, but that we have some work still to do on the welcome and connect fronts, and noted he was going to ask Jerry Askew, the archdeacon, to come and help us work through some of that. He also said we need to work on better communicating our committees and how to join them.
- b. Susan said she feels we should use our lanyards and nametags again.
- c. Fr. Will also suggested we need to be putting the Exsultet to better use, including more updates in it about things that have been going on or tidbits from Fr. Will or vestry members.
- d. Fr. Will spoke about starting up one or two weekly discussion groups in the fall, potentially using Let's Do Theology by Laurie Green to start off with.

12. Questions to Clergy & Wardens

- a. Mark asked how often people fill out the visitor cards in the pews, and if we send them a note. Fr. Will said they're filled out occasionally, and he contacts them after we get the cards, but it could be nice if someone from the vestry wanted to reach out as well.

13. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 2:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Brian J. Henry

Appendix I
Finance Report

January through May 2023

The in-depth finance appendices are available upon request to the church office.

Summary Highlights:

- I. Total Operating Income- 17% higher than budget expectation (\$20,700)
 - a. Non-Pledged Income and Plate Offering- 20% higher than budget (\$2,300)
 - b. Pledge Income- 8% lower than budget (-\$2,200)
 - c. Yates Trust Distribution- 23% higher than budgeted (\$19,400)
2. Total Operating Expenses- 1% higher than budgeted (\$850)
 - a. Diocesan Commitment- 20% higher than budgeted (\$2,000)- due to timing of quarterly payments to the diocese vs. report timing
 - b. Property & Liability Insurance- 13% higher than budgeted (\$700)- due to timing of payment vs. report timing
 - c. Compensation- 7% lower than budgeted (-\$3,800)- due to timing of payments vs. report timing
 - d. Musicians- 353% higher than budgeted (\$4,200)- budget shortfall to be provided by Music Fund
3. Net Operating Revenue- 93% better than budgeted (\$20,000)- entirely due to the favorable Yates Trust Distribution
 - a. Projects to \$47,000 loss at Year-end vs. Budgeted \$68,000 loss, with the difference attributable to the favorable Yates Trust Distribution

Phil Johnson

Finance Committee Chair

Appendix II

MMR Slides



Christ Church Chattanooga

Mutual Ministry Review

June 4, 2023

Come on in, we will get started soon.



Hello and Welcome!

- Name
- Years you've been a part of Christ Church
- What keeps you coming back?



Mutual Ministry Review

What is it?

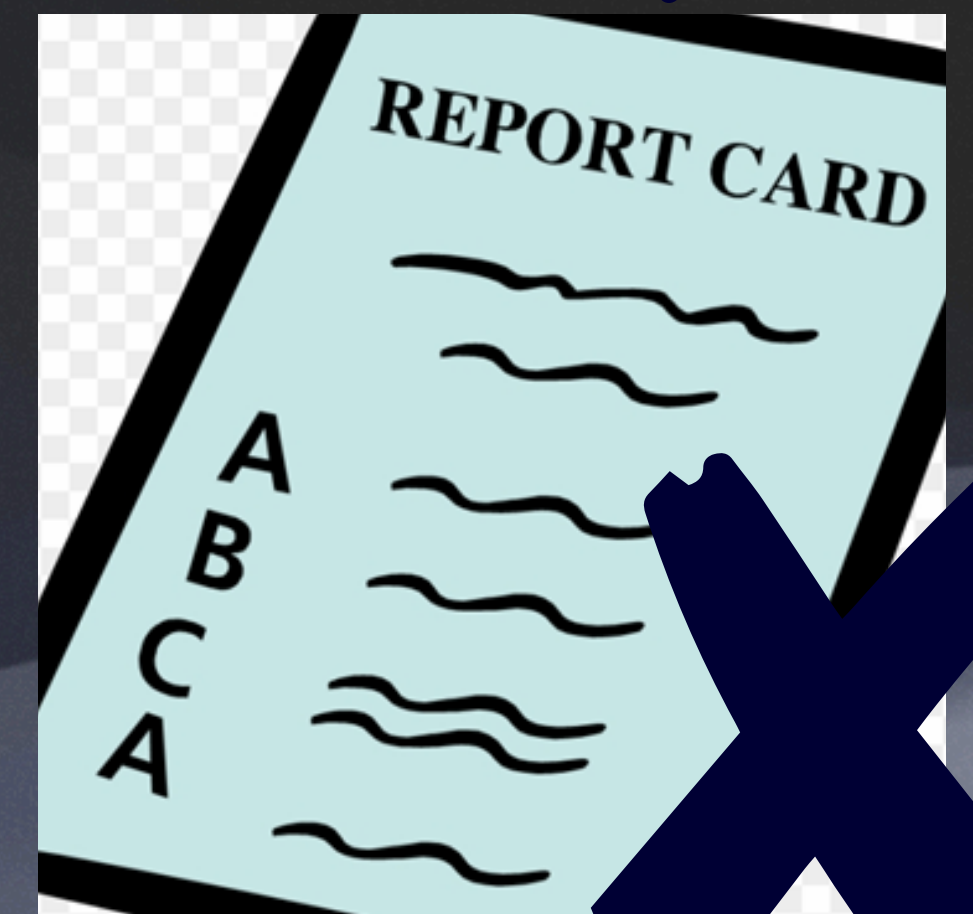
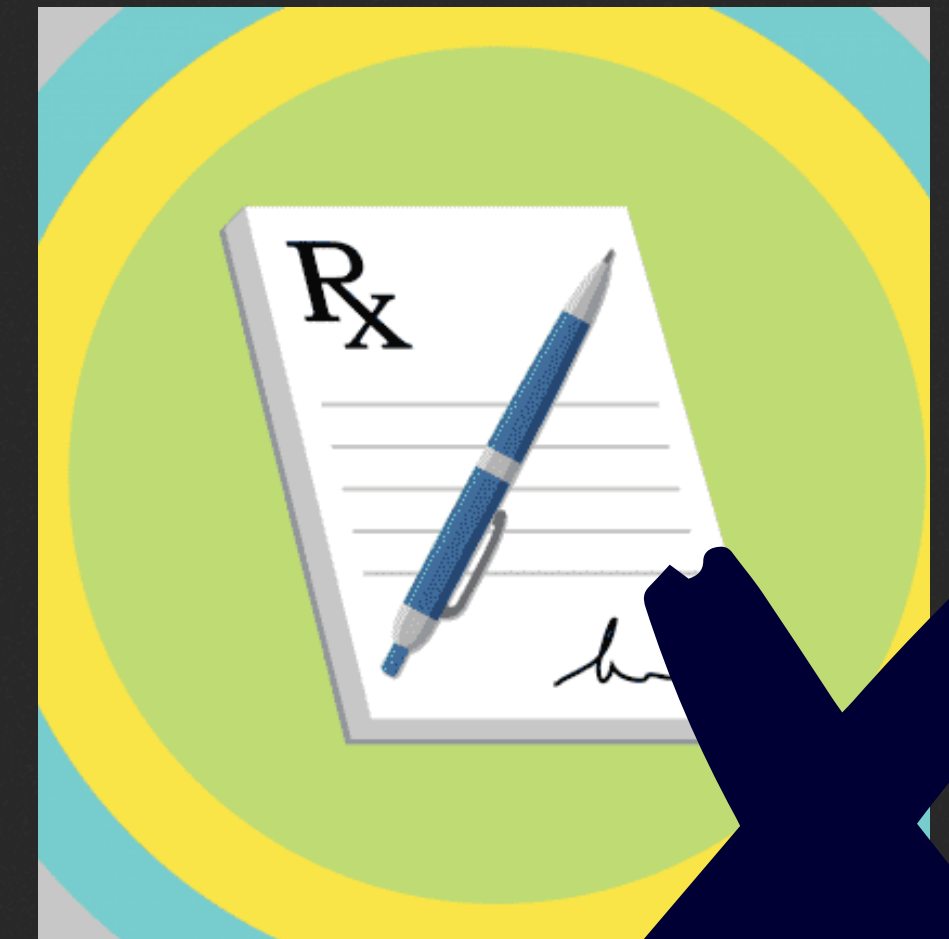


- A tool to enable congregations to review and strengthen their goals and ministries and assess how they are living out the Baptismal Covenant in shared ministry.
- An opportunity to discern God's will, to identify mutually agreed upon responsibilities, and a call for all ministers, clergy and lay, to be accountable for their ministry.
- An opportunity for the leadership of the church to learn and communicate about the work of the various ministries of the church and to set goals for supporting that work

Mutual Ministry Review

What it is NOT

- A reporting mechanism
- A method to resolve conflict or deal with problems or crises
- A performance review of any one
- A part of clergy evaluation, compensation discussion, or any other negotiations.





Mutual Ministry Review

Set up for a successful afternoon: our goals

- To celebrate what is going well and to identify what needs attention or change
- To give clear and reliable feedback; speak the truth in love
- To identify lay and priestly leadership development needs
- To minimize unrealistic expectations
- To renew and re-establish goals for the next period of time
- To deepen the rector / vestry relationship and enhance clear, concise communication



How are y'all doing?

72



0 terrible

terrific 100!

Attention

Low: 48 High: 84

We're doing "alright."



What is something you have learned this year about your daily life and work that has surprised you?

In your own words....

How to slow down and remain calm

My ability to break down tasks and organize them

Appreciate time with family and friends more

Unexpected kindness and generosity

My family of origin has more wounds than I realized

How busy and demanding it can be to work from home

More self-assured and outgoing

Very little surprises me anymore

How much I notice when I walk everywhere



How has your community been this 12-18 months?

In your own words....

Challenging

Growth

Loyal

Appreciative

Optimistic

Committed

Survival

Care

Active

Spiritual

Flexible

Reliable

Community-building

Steady

Constancy

Supportive

Frustration

Warm

Flexibility

Disappointment

Gratitude



**What is something you have learned this year about your faith community that has surprised you?
In your own words....**

How many ways people relate to our Church

How determined our community is

How long term members have left

Not surprised how we remain loving and fiercely committed

Deep commitment by some and unreasonable expectations by others

How children and young people / students take pride in serving the altar

Different meanings of worship
And how people have chosen
not to return

How people experience
connection here—it's varied.



Mutual Ministry Review

So we have established that you're all orbiting around the observation of the variety of connections in your community... let's celebrate where those connections are working well.



What?

Describe moments of success or fulfillment

- Potlucks together again-small but not small. Gives people a way to contribute and builds our community. Mingles and gets to know us-sits at different tables-cohesion.
- Choral scholars is glorious, music is always good, what will happen next? Worship and meaningful!
- How our little children are involved in the services. Warm and makes us smile.
- Loving having young families. Now people smile when the children make sounds. Serving is teaching children to attend with their whole selves. Opportunities for more
- Holy Week - we had our most regular attendees as the Project Canterbury students-very loyal to all the services and wanted to serve. And they were able to serve because there was a spot for it. Also we have been gracious when people came on. It is alive and living, not expecting perfection but is embodied with genuine devotion.



What else?

Describe moments of success or fulfillment

- Enjoy where we are now- after the pandemic some integral people left, and Will was new and it felt different.
- Openness, willingness and flexibility to be alive and embrace new people coming in because our welcome is genuine and caring, and we are growing.
- Excited about where we are headed, I like where we are.
- Not feeling fear, conflict, anxiety anymore. The triangulation seems to have gone away. Also is a TOP-down thing: helped us to feel better bc Fr. Will is even-keeled and models the patience and grace to navigate in community. “We feel like we can let our shoulders down” not defensive, and don’t lash out. Feels deeply good.



WHY??

Go deeper, what made them successful? Why were they fulfilling?

- Making space for people—
- Shift in the community is in the direction of being a belonging community before we are a believing community. Don't start with belief.
- Not a tendency to say “this is the WAY you have to show up here.”
- Not trying to build a shrine parish. Much more like a English country church and urban backstreet church that you get what you get.
- Don't get upset over lost coffee cups.
- The historical element has come to the fore.
- Willing to find the humor and laugh.
- You can come here and figure things out, don't have to figure it out first.
- Thought of ourselves as inclusive in the past but weren't as inclusive as we thought we were. Because we had “diversity” in whatever way, we felt inclusive, but “making space” was't our chief practice.



WHY?? PART 2

Go deeper, what made them successful? Why were they fulfilling?

- Invite Welcome Connect helped us to see we were not alone. We were seeing new people coming, that helped us to reveal our confidence to be who we are.
- We enjoy the richness of new people - and a criticality has lifted or left. Tension is gone- periods of “walking on eggshells” before.
- Don’t hear criticizing as more
- Connecting to the energy that is here.
- New people who arrive are actually a part of it.
- People want to step up and help and be a part of the solution.
- Had a sense of exclusivity- and now we have realized that high levels of ownership don’t create the space for people. Father Will has helped us to cultivate that for our community. Was terrifying in the beginning.
- Needed to stop being afraid so the energy could change.
- “Bloom and grow.”
- Your community deep spiritual practice. The people who show up and stick around have felt it to be truly genuine, and not worried about understanding it all.



WHY?? PART 3

Go deeper, what made them successful? Why were they fulfilling?

- New people who arrive are actually a part of it.
- Liberating to not have it nailed down. Not my job to control, dictate, how you're doing this thing, but I can enable and bless
- **ENABLE AND BLESS**
- Key thing about what it means to come and be a part of community.
- Model healthy give and take about what is core to us, the liturgy, then can flow into everything else.
- Comfortable being open.
- Sense of humor! Father Will's flexibility has brought a great deal to us.
- Growing in TRUST with each other.
- Trying to have healthy honest feedback, and listening, willing to express an opinion and to listen.

Break

Be back at pm



Roles of Vestry and Rector

**According to key documents from the Diocese of
East Tennessee**

East Tn Canons, Title IV Canon 1

Sec. 7 Rector

The Rector shall have the exclusive charge of all things affecting the **spiritual interests of the Parish** subject only to the Bishop. It shall be the duty of the Rector to take order concerning the **worship** of the Church, together with all that appertains thereunto. The Rector may appoint, from time to time, fit persons to assist in all duties which may lawfully be performed by Lay persons; shall be, at all times, entitled to access to the Church, to open the same for public worship, for catechetical or other religious instructions, marriages, baptisms, burials, and all other offices authorized by the Church; shall have **spiritual direction and control** of all Sunday Schools, Parish Schools, and other educational and charitable associations connected with the Parish; and shall **preside** at all Parish and Vestry meetings.

Sec. 8 Vestry

The Vestry shall administer the **temporal affairs** of the Parish; shall **elect** and **call** the Rector, unless otherwise set forth in these Canons, shall **provide for** the regular and well-ordered worship of Almighty God, and shall **cooperate with** the Rector in all efforts to develop the spiritual life of the Parish. The Vestry shall, at all times, **keep** the church in proper condition for its uses, and likewise **give proper care** to all buildings and grounds belonging to the Parish. A quorum shall consist of not less than a majority of all the members of the Vestry in office immediately before a meeting begins.



Diocese of ETn Letters of Agreement

Roles of Vestry and Rector / Priest-in-Charge

The respective roles of Vestry and Rector or Priest-in-Charge are broadly defined by the Canons of The Episcopal Church and may be modified by Canons of the Diocese of East Tennessee and the laws of the State of Tennessee. *All ministries other than those reserved to ordained leadership (such as administering the sacraments) are understood as shared by the Rector and laity of the Parish and shall be carried out in a mutually supportive manner.*



Communication in Conflict

Always Communicate Upstream

- Anytime someone has a complaint or a concern, it must be sent "upstream" where it can be resolved.
- One person complaining to another is pollution in the stream going down into the village.
- If the complaint is sent upstream to the person or group that can offer resolution, then that is like sending it to the water purification plant
- Communicating downstream sows discord. Communication upstream brings reconciliation.



Additional resources

Visit

www.dioet.org > resources > vestry resources

MORE about Connect webinar on the convention website
www.dioceseconvention.org (workshops during lent)

Call Archdeacon Jerry Askew to discuss CONNECT work

Another webinar on the convention website is the mission and ministry audit. Especially important when taking on outreach ministry. (Consider this with the outreach committee and as a way to help reinvigorate that community- enable the community to make the decision.)



This enterprise is meant to be Collaborative!

So what needs attention: IDENTITY & STRUCTURE?

- Attending to vestigial structures or wondering if every vacancy needs filling. Make sure the structure we have meets the need we have NOW.
- Attending to appropriate succession plans and reasonable skill descriptions and “job” descriptions for named jobs (is the Senior Warden job a reasonable skillset?)
- Consider our IDENTITY and how it directs our ENERGY for mission and outreach
- Thinking about Time and Talents, growing in our own awareness of our gifts and talents and how the community embraces them. More open channel for lay ministry.
- Cultivating the habits that ENGAGE and BLESS people in taking on their own connections and ministry.
- Realistic about our size and our solutions- ministry audits to ensure that we are doing outreach at a sustainable level to meet the community needs before us-focus outreach locally? Lets talk about what we have and what meets our own missions.



This enterprise is meant to be Collaborative!

So what needs attention: **COMMUNICATION & CONFLICT?**

- Attend to communicating better with our parish.
- Experiments in communication
-
- Think about opportunities to bring in wider community input and listening.
- How should the VESTRY engage communication more
- How should Committees engage more?
-



This enterprise is meant to be Collaborative!

So what needs attention: CONNECTIONS?

- Eucharistic Visitor program, so that lay leadership is involved in visiting and encourages connections.
- Strengthening opportunities for connection overall. - how do we get someone into a committee when those are ad hoc or in progress. How to make the turn? Asking newer people to do things. Perhaps a little fear on finding the right timing for getting people into roles. Growth and getting people on board. What are reasonable levels of engagement and investment to get people involved?
- (They leave if they aren't a part of the action- need to feel they are a part of it).
- Attending to what pronouns people use about the community (y'all vs. we)
- Considering the risks around connection.



Your Top Priorities 2023-4

Ranked by frequency of mention

1. Growing the Community, Growing in ministry & meeting community needs
2. Older building / Fiscal Sustainability / Stewardship of our resources
3. Clarify Leadership: Vestry Succession Plans and Priest in Charge to Rector process

Others:

- Music Program
- Church Safety

- Expanding outreach
- Eucharistic Visitor program



What gets in the way?

Impediments to success

- Finances due to size
- Small number of us
- Engaging people to connect with us more deeply
- Small size and limited resources
- “We need more people”
- Our growth is real but may not be fast enough, we need resources to sustain our growth rate or even to increase it.



BE AWARE

What can you change?

- ~~Change culture of rising secularism~~
- Discovering the needs of your neighborhood
- Being as inviting as you feel
- Cultivating a culture of inclusion
- Connecting people to what you do well
- ~~Progress of aging, unexpected health challenges~~

**In a church like
yours, your
strength is
found in the
WHY? of your
successes!**



What's your deepest hope

For this community?

- To become a real laboratory for pursuing the Kingdom of God in Chattanooga so that people distant from Jesus can come to know him.
- That we can shake off what needs to be left behind to build upon our real strengths
- To truly embrace and be a beacon of Anglo-Catholicism in the region, worshipping meaningfully and also reducing suffering out in the community
- To continue to worship reverently and welcome all while having meaningful outreach that addresses real and identified needs
- To create meaningful lay ministry opportunities so we can all share the Glory of God
- To continue to grow spiritually and in our relationships with one another
- To engage members in new and exciting ways
- Shared ministry so that we can **GROW**



1 Peter 4: 7b-10

Serve one another

“Therefore be serious and discipline yourselves for the sake of your prayers. Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaining. Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, **serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.**”



Who to Thank

These people made this year work; be sure to appreciate them.

- Father Will
- Danese Sizer
- This whole Vestry is a dream team
- This Vestry- I will miss them
- Susan Brooks
- Brooke Montague
- Charlotte Boatwright, senior warden during COVID



Christ Church THANK YOU!

Mutual Ministry Review

June 4, 2023

MMRs are most effective conducted annually