

Through the years I learned that micromanaging a church and leading a church were far from the same thing. In fact, I learned that:

### **Micromanaging puts a lid on your own vision!**

The vision for an effective church must always be bigger than the person, or even the persons, who develop that vision because we believe that Christ, that God and the Holy Spirit are the center of an effective vision. Somewhere, somehow, we have to give room for God to work through other leaders, people, groups and systems, etc.

In the quote below, Andy Stanley said something a few years ago that changed how I did ministry.

### **“Leadership includes giving other people tasks to do that you know they won’t do as well as you do.”**

That’s how people learn, that’s how the life of the church expands and that’s how we discover the miracles in people that we did not know were there. That’s how a church becomes healthy and a place God can work in and through in unique and surprising ways.

Another book I read that really helped me, even changed the direction of how I led and how the church did ministry was *The Permission-Giving Church* by Bill Easum. This does not mean we just let everyone do what they want willy-nilly. There were procedures and processes, but I learned good things were not just the things I was passionate about but the passion even the Holy Spirit could be in other people, staff and laity. It took a great deal of trust here, and sometimes things did not turn out or failure might have been the result, but other times miracles and amazing things were discovered and took place that I had nothing to do with other than saying, “Let’s give that a try.”

It was here in the early days of First Mansfield’s growth where the life and mission of the church really took off. From small things that few people were involved in, to interactive mission and ministry that hundreds were involved in and thousands were impacted by.

Often things that required little from me, once I gave up control and became just the cheerleader and support person:

- I learned that control issues are serious issues and can come from a lack of trust and even faith;
- I learned that the most effective leading often includes following;
- I learned that here I discovered the miracles in the church and people I would never have experienced;
- I learned to respect the gifts and graces of others that often supplemented my own;
- I learned that God has a vision for the church bigger and better than my own;
- I learned that humility and respect were the keys to long-term leadership;
- I learned that this type of leadership is healthy and prepared a church for succession and new leadership.

When we micromanage a church, we are usually managing it down, making things where we can control it and attempting to create personal security. The end result is always going to be less than it would be if we led a church — inspired, influenced, supported, encouraged and allowed God to do the things He wants to do. It's here we discover the miracle God puts in people, in us and in the church. After all, Christ is the head of the Church, I am just one of the leaders.

Oh, if you follow this pattern, prepare for the occasional chaos, a little more anxiety and a dependence on faith, but also prepare for growth and not decline as we lead instead of manage.