



*Organization made this big service project work and made it fun. The youth in the Highland Utah West Stake took on a lot of small tasks that made a big difference.*



**By Mike Lasky and Janet Thomas**

*It's amazing what you can do when your cleaning crew numbers over 600.*

**H**ow many dust cloths, spray bottles, brooms, and hours spent pushing vacuums does it take to clean 23 meetinghouses in a single day? The Highland Utah West Stake can answer that question.

On a cold Saturday afternoon in February, 542 teens and 113 youth leaders showed up to help with one big service project. They would be the muscle behind the plans for deep cleaning the meetinghouses in their stake and in six neighboring stakes.

First, the youth leaders were trained by the group responsible for meetinghouse maintenance in exactly how the buildings should be cleaned. Then the leaders trained the young people. To give everyone a burst of energy, the group gathered to receive instructions, assignments, and food. Daryl Chadwick of the Highland 10th Ward said,



# THE MEANING

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“Being asked to serve was so much fun, especially on a full stomach. With as many hands as we had, it made it easier. No one was sitting around. Everyone wanted to serve because they knew their friends would be there.”

Detailed checklists were given to each group on exactly what needed to be cleaned with which cleansers or tools. Teens took great satisfaction in checking off each item on their lists. In fact, the groups cleaned in places that dust barely touched, such as between the pedals on the piano and along the decorative wood around the podium. All the folding chairs and tables were wiped and even the light switches and door handles were scrubbed. It seemed like everything was wiped, dusted, or vacuumed.

As with every activity that includes a lot of teens, most had a great time. Chelsea Heaton of the Highland 23rd Ward was one of those. “It was very satisfying to work hard and know it is appreciated. It reminded me that God’s house is a house of order, and we

*When you are with friends, even the task of cleaning 23 meetinghouses in a single day seems possible.*



# of CLEANING



*Thinking about cleaning helped these teens understand more about respect and repentance.*

helped to keep it orderly and clean," she said.

Tanner Bishop of the Highland 35th Ward said, "I know I will treat our buildings with greater respect and appreciation now that I've had this chance to clean our buildings. It makes me want to encourage my family and friends to take better care of these wonderful facilities we've been given."

At first, it may not seem like cleaning classrooms and cultural halls and chapels could teach spiritual lessons, but every good effort provides lessons that can be learned. Elise Leavitt of the Highland 23rd Ward found a deeper meaning in the service project. She said, "I discovered that while the buildings appear clean on the surface, each could use some deep cleaning a little more often. I realized that as members of the Church, we are the same. Each of us needs the power of the Atonement to help us in giving our spirits a deep cleaning. I learned how precious our Church buildings are, because they truly are houses of the Lord." **NE**

