

By [Sara Hall](#) on February 13th, 2014

## [Charity Spotlight: Young Men Help Renovate Lighthouse Ministries](#)



Lighthouse Pastor Phil Eyskens talks to the boys from the National League of Young Men, Newport Mesa chapter, after they helped renovate the building.

— All photos by Sara Hall

It's amazing what a deep clean, few coats of paint and some new carpet can do. For a local church and outreach program, it can help change lives. And that's just what a group of young men did over the weekend.

The National League of Young Men, Newport Mesa chapter, spent most of Saturday renovating the Lighthouse Church and Outreach Ministries in Costa Mesa. About 40 teens and 20 parents participated.

“The boys were very excited to help and to dive in and do some work,” said Chris Alessi, mother of an NLYM member and vice president of philanthropy for the chapter.

The group tore up old carpet, painted the perimeter and interior walls, worked on landscape, fixed the wardrobe room and more.

Donors included Home Depot, Cabinets Plus, and Commercial Carpet & Flooring Services, Inc. The group also raised money to buy a new washer and dryer.

“I can’t believe it,” said Pastor Phil Eyskens. “This is overwhelming.”

The Lighthouse serves about 1,000 meals every week and houses up to 25 people.

“(The live-in residents) want to get their lives back in order,” Alessi said, and the Lighthouse helps “get them back on their feet.”

It’s a blessing, said Alan T., a three-month resident at the Lighthouse who was overseeing the work.

The work was badly needed, he added.

“It’s kind of like a rejuvenation,” for the Lighthouse, he said. “It’s a whole new start.”

The majority of the people the Lighthouse minister to are homeless, Eyskens said.

“For them to come to a facility that’s clean and bright,” will make quite a difference, Eyskens said. “When they see that people on the outside are supporting them and supporting this ministry... I can’t do anything but be encouraged.”

“To know that someone cares,” is significant, Eyskens said.

Sophomores Jake Whelan, 15, from Newport Harbor, and Reid Rolfes, 16, from Corona del Mar high schools, were among the young men helping out.

Both boys enjoyed the hard work and the hands-on community service experience. It’s nice to know that the people who really need the help will benefit, Rolfes added.

“It always feels good when you do something good for others,” Whelan added.

A small group of NLYM boys had served meals at the Lighthouse in fall 2013, Alessi said. They walked around and noticed a number of things in disrepair

“We wanted to make a bigger day project of it and see what we could do,” she said.

It’s a very deserving program, Alessi said.

“It’s an amazing program that they have here,” she said. “It gives people the opportunity to change their lives.”

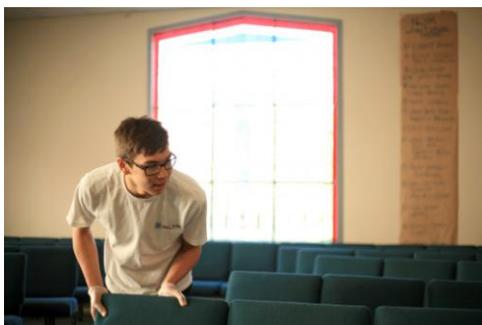
For more information, visit [nationalleagueofyoungmen.org](http://nationalleagueofyoungmen.org) and [cmlighthousechurch.com](http://cmlighthousechurch.com)



Dain Woods, 15, a sophomore at Corona del Mar High School, paints the foyer at the church as part of the group’s renovation project.



Hunter Wetton, 17, a junior at Corona del Mar High School, paints the ceiling of the foyer to the church.



Jake Whelan, 15, a sophomore at Newport Harbor High School, arranges chairs in the congregational hall after the young men removed the carpet and cleaned the room. New carpet will be installed by professionals soon.



Chris Alessi, NLYM Newport Mesa Chapter's vice president of philanthropy for the year, shows Lighthouse Pastor Phil Eyskens the progress on the renovation on Saturday.



Cole Martin, 17, a junior at Corona del Mar High School, helps carry extra bibles to a storage room at the church on Saturday.



Austin Cottrell, 16, a sophomore at Corona del Mar High School, paints a room as part of the NLYM Newport Mesa chapter's renovation of Lighthouse Church.