

The West Trust: Promoting the Universalist Good News

125 years and Counting.....

In 1887, the Universalist Church of Halifax became the guardian of a \$40,000 bequest given by William West, a prominent founder of the congregation.

The bequest was to be held in trust and invested. Any annual income that was earned was to be disbursed by a Board of Trustees, according to the original mandate, "in the promotion in the Dominion of Canada of the religious opinions and doctrines held by the Church known as Universalist, by the publication of books, tracts, or of a religious periodical or by the employment of a missionary or by aiding weak parishes or by building new ones; and by such other methods of church extension as such Trustees shall deem best."

The West Trust has been vital in supporting an active Universalist presence in Halifax. Since the 1950's, it has also played an important role in the growth of additional UU congregations in Atlantic Canada. More recently, small grants have been given to UU congregations as far west as British Columbia.

Today, the promotion of Universalism, now embodied in the UU Principles, may take many other forms beyond religious tracts and missionaries. Each grant application is considered by the Trustees on its own merit within contemporary guidelines; web site work, creative advertising, and special UU events with strong "business plans" and more than one source of funding are samples of projects which have received recent West Trust grants.

Each spring a West Trust grant application form is sent to the leadership of Canadian UU congregations and fellowships through the CUC network. Applications are considered by the West Trustees annually in the fall. A copy of the form can be requested by e-mail from Doug Devine, President West Bequest Trustees at jdouglasdevine@yahoo.ca, or [downloaded here](#).