

## The Pulpit, Lectern, Reredos and Font.

When St Chad's was first built the primary emphasis was on Preaching the Word. For this purpose a huge solid oak three-decker pulpit was placed centrally between the present choir stalls; from the top deck the preacher could not only see into all the pews (then much higher, and with doors on) but could also address those in the gallery almost face to face. For almost all of the first century of its existence, the furniture and fittings in St Chad's were unchanged.

Then in 1888 the Rev. E.S. Carpenter was instituted and four days later opened his ministry with a resounding statement to a meeting that it was his and others' wish that "the pulpit be moved...a lectern (be installed), the Altar be raised and the Chancel extended ... the pews be made lower, doors taken off, and that all... furniture necessary for the reverent celebration of Holy Communion be supplied...". Lest any awkward second thoughts emerged, the old pulpit was immediately dismantled and the oak sold. Thus the Oxford movement reached St Chad's.



The old configuration  
with the  
three-decker pulpit

A new copper and brass open work **pulpit** by Birch, in the Arts and Crafts style with pictorial side-panels was given by Mrs Morris in 1892. It was affectionately known as the coal scuttle; facing the chancel you can see it on the left hand corner. Have a look at the pictures on the side panels.



The impressive new brass eagle **lectern** was given in 1888 in memory of Richard Hughes; it is on the right of the chancel. The bible placed on it is an older version, still perfectly valid of course, but not in current usage.



After the First World War the **Reredos**, carved altar and wainscot were given as a war memorial to the fallen, replacing the old panels of the Ten Commandments, Lord's Prayer and Creed. Designed by Bodley and Hare in light oak initially outlined in gold with a touch of blue, it was repainted in 1951 with gold leaf and cobalt, making it more prominent, thus balancing the David Evans window above. At the same time the sanctuary candlesticks and a processional cross were given and the church and fittings took on its present appearance.



The original **Font** was described as a ‘silver christening basin’ and it stood in the centre of the nave. It was used for the baptism of Shrewsbury’s most famous son, Charles Darwin, on 15 November 1809; it is now securely held elsewhere. But the Trustees wanted a large marble font in which, according to the custom of the time, an infant could be immersed, and in 1843 for the princely sum of £10 they bought from Malpas Church in Cheshire the present fluted grey font, in which Bishop Heber was baptised.

Although described originally as marble, the presence of so many (delightfully visible) fossils makes it more likely to be a crinoidal limestone; the presence of these fossilised lilies being a curious and rather apt counterpoint to Darwin’s baptism in the same location.

Information about other parts of the church is [here](#).

