

## The Story of Stoborough Baptist Church

In 2007 Emmanuel Baptist Church Swanage called Stephen Coles to be Lay Pastor with responsibility for its Church plant in Stoborough. As the congregation grew so did the role of the Pastor and a decision was taken to employ Stephen full time in 2010 as the church looked towards separating the two congregations.

In January 2012 Stoborough Baptist church was born. A Home Mission grant enabled Stephen to stay in post. Having a full time minister has enabled Stephen to mobilise others in the congregation as we have looked towards fulfilling the plans that God has for our area.

Stoborough is a small village just outside Wareham in Dorset. We



draw our congregation from a number of villages in the area and part of our mission is to provide a style of worship which is accessible to all ages.

During the last 12 months we have been praying about our role in this area. God led us to re-launch the village playgroup in October 2014 and we now have 100 children registered. A large number of church members are mobilised to make the playgroup happen each week. We are also launching a "Blessing Fund", which will work alongside the

food bank to provide emergency financial help to families in need. Both the playgroup and Blessing fund have representation from other churches in the Wareham area as part of the leadership as we play a leading role in Wareham's Church family.

As a congregation we are currently being led by Stephen to undertake a Mission Audit. We have had the help of a re:focus team and are currently involved in undertaking questionnaires amongst the congregation and local community to increase the effectiveness of our outreach.



Under Stephen's leadership we are a growing family, both numerically and spiritually. We held our latest baptism service in June and are excited to see the prodigals returning to Jesus. We are extremely grateful for the help that we currently receive from the Home Mission Fund and as our congregation grows we look forward to being able to support ourselves financially. We have greatly blessed by our link with Weymouth Baptist Church who conducted our Grant Application interview and have led a church weekend for us.