



emand for food parcels has risen eight-fold in its area during the

Hackney Church, which includes St John-at-Hackney, St Luke's Church, Homerton and St Mary's, Leyton, in east London was distributing parcels with enough food to provide 1,000 meals a week at the start of lockdown. This figure has risen to between 8,000 and 9,000 meals a week after the church opened a second food bank at St Mary's.

Revd Tosin Oladipo, Outreach Director at Hackney Church, said the church estimates that it has distributed parcels with supplies for more than 50,000 meals since lockdown. This is around ten times the amount it distributed in the whole of 2019. The food parcels do not include hot meals also provided by church volunteers.

He said: "As a Church our mission is to bring hope to the people of East London and to share the love of Jesus in what we say and do.

"We have seen an increase in the number of people turning up at the food banks because they have lost jobs, people who were on zero hours contracts and people who had been employed in cash in hand jobs, as well as people who have 'no recourse to public funds'. This is in addition to people who were already living precariously close to the food poverty line, including those who are in work."

The church receives referrals from a number of agencies and works in partnership with the 'Love Your Neighbour' Campaign, the Hackney Food Bank, the Trussell Trust – which uses it as a distribution point - and with Waltham Forest Council.

Around 80 volunteers including congregation members work to deliver food parcels to people shielding or unable to leave their homes.



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