Moravian Lovefeast Buns

1 cup warm water
2 packages yeast
1 t salt
6 T sugar
1 t mace
2 T dry milk powder
4 C flour
2 eggs, beaten
1/2 C butter, melted

Sprinkle the yeast into the water in a large bowl. Add the salt, sugar, and dry milk, then half of the flour. Blend. Stir in the eggs, the cooled butter and the mace; beat. Stir in the additional flour to make a soft dough.

Knead for five minutes. Let rise until doubled, about 1 to 1 1/2 hours. Punch down and let rise again in the bowl if you have time, an additional 30 to 45 minutes. Punch down and let rest 5 minutes. Shape dough into buns and lay out on lightly-greased baking sheets. Take sharp scissors, knife or razor blade and cut an M into the tops. Let rise until doubled.

Bake at 350° for 15 to 20 minutes or until golden-brown. This recipe makes approximately 16 to 20 buns, depending on how large you shape them.

These buns are traditionally served at Moravian lovefeast services, accompanied by Moravian coffee (and, at Christmas Lovefeast services, with a beeswax candle).

—Catharine Sisk