

**GRACE
LUTHERAN
CHURCH**

**Live worship online until further notice
See page 5 for how to access**

**Sunday Worship: 9:00 a.m.
Weekday morning Prayers 9:30 a.m.**

The building is closed – reach us at 515-276-6873

5201 Urbandale Avenue
Des Moines, Iowa 50310
515-276-6873
www.gracedm.org

Pastor Michael Schmidt
mike@gracedm.org

Minister for Youth and Family
Ellen Rothweiler
ellen@gracedm.org

Minister for Worship and Music
Emma Stammer
emma@gracedm.org

Organist
Richard Snyder
rich@gracedm.org

Grace Kids' Care Director
Mary Edwards
mary@gracedm.org

Minister for Administration
Denise Friesth
denise@gracedm.org

Minister for Communications
Michelle Voelker
michelle@gracedm.org

Office Assistant for Worship
Jessye Flannery
jessica@gracedm.org

Custodian
Todd Haugen 1-515-520-4450

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What is Next?

To be completely honest, there is a bit of an empty feeling around here at Grace these days. Most years there isn't even a front page article in September. Instead, the newsletter is filled with information about the start of the many things happening with the start of the programmatic year. We usually have a lot of information about Celebration Sunday and the ways that we will celebrate the collective ministry at Grace Lutheran Church. This year, that Celebration is different, but still exists (Please see the information on the Drive-In Service on page 7).

It is true that a lot of things are different these days. But, we are still church and are still in this together. I have been thinking about a Mr. Rogers quote lately:

"When we can resign ourselves to the wishes that will never come true, there can be enormous energies available within us for whatever we *can* do. I know a woman who remembers the time when her wish to have children would not be realized. She remembers the struggle of the final resignation. Enormous energies were available to her, which she used in developing uniquely creative work with young parents."

Truth be told, there are a lot of things that we cannot do right now. It feels like every day we are hearing a new "no." Worship is different. Social gatherings are different. School is different. Shopping is different. There are so many ways that our wishes are kept from coming true.

It is easy to get caught up in all the things that we cannot do, and find ourselves stuck. It is easy for excuses to come into play. It is easy to feel isolated. Even early today, I lamented with a congregation member who has a loved one in the hospital while no visitors are allowed. It is disheartening to be kept from these staples of ministry. I believe all of us lament aspects of this new life we are living in 2020. There is a reason most diets do not work. If you focus on what is not allowed, you will end up craving those things. It is healthier to focus on what you can eat and build new habits.

Instead of focusing on what we cannot do as Grace Lutheran Church, let us focus on what we *can* do. There are many things on this list. We *can* reach out to one another through phone, letter, email, and other means. We *can* all learn together through the All Church VBS that will begin this month. We can continue that time of learning

Continued on page 5

Happy September Birthday

- 1 - Cindy Peeler
- 2 - Michelle Voelker
Heather Nelson
- 3 - Nylya Bartelt
- 5 - Richard Snyder
Kiley Brandsfield
- 6 - Nely Ruiz
- 8 - Ethan Meadows
- 9 - Joie Gronert
Carrie Schall
Alex Mulvihill
- 10 - John Schall
- 11 - Ian Galle
- 13 - John Trickel
Rhonda Jensen
Robert Briggs
- 14 - Katelyn Jessen
- 15 - Richard Voelker
- 17 - Lorna Johns
- 18 - Karen Mann
Rev. Michael Schmidt
- 19 - Sonny Hutton
Sarah Helt
- 20 - Frank McKinney
Michael Vernon
- 21 - Anthony Royster
- 22 - Jeanine Rutter
Aaron Thompson
Finnegan Holst
Kylan Appenzeller
- 23 - Susanne Carney
Angela Ringgenberg
Cory Johansen
- 24 - Michael Meadows
Thomas Rutter
Ella Oberhart
- 25 - Karen Bandy
Ellen Rothweiler
- 26 - Barb Powers
Bruce Mumm
- 27 - Jeanette Best
Jeryl Jansen
Gregory Honnold
Helen Schroeder
William Kallestad
Joshua Curry
- 28 - Ross Peeler
- 29 - LaRue Buihner
Aaron Page
Robbie Rissman



Happy September Anniversary

- 3 - Brent and Val Culp
Todd and Elizabeth Prescott
- 4 - Donald and Gail Peterson
- 5 - Charles and Tammy Denton
Lon and Denise Friesth
- 6 - Aaron and Martha Page
- 13 - Larry and Janice Nordeen
- 17 - Michael and Nicole Vernon
- 24 - Joshua and Sharena Appenzeller
- 27 - Tom and Mary Jo McCleary

*Anniversary
Celebration*



Our sympathies are with:

The family of Gary Nelson

Holiday Office Hours:

Yes yes, we know, the building is always closed right now. But, the church office will definitely be closed on Labor Day, Monday, September 7. (It's kinda fun to write something almost normal in this space!)

Normal Office Hours

As we are each still social distancing, in the office at different times and doing some of our work from home, we don't have normal office hours at this point. Someone is often there daily, but we are in and out. **You can always reach staff** by leaving a message at in our voice mail boxes, or by emailing us using the addresses found on the front page of this newsletter.

Notes:

Many thanks to the congregation for prayers and cards. I watched my sister's memorial service on-line.

Ellen Batten

Dear Grace Lutheran Church Member Care,
I just wanted to share with you how delighted I was to receive such a warm note from one of your members. It made my day. Your congregation has been so wonderful to me and our staff at Moore. My health is fantastic and the hope I have for a very difficult but exciting year is steady. Thank you again for your kind words.

"Believe and Let Go." Love, Beth Sloane

Distanced live worship

At the beginning of August I began coming on Sunday morning to be a part of worship as a reader each week. As a new comer to this I was not sure what to expect but knew that whatever was happening here at Grace each morning had taken a lot of hard work and effort to get to where we are now. When I walked in I was surprised to see a group of volunteers gathered around the sound board in the back. It is clear each one plays a key role in making worship happen each week. Sound checks, camera, streaming. I am way out of my depth with all this and some of this group were a matter of weeks ago, but together they have learned and built something wonderful. The comradery they share is also evident, a Christian community gathered around the sound board busily preparing for worship. When there is a technical issue the assembled body calmly troubleshoots and finds the best way to worship that morning.



Up front where the liturgist, organist or pianist and Pastor Mike are distanced it is quiet. Less bustling about than the group in the back. Once the stream begins the roles are reversed. Those in front begin singing and playing and preaching while those in the back grow quiet and focused. Pastor Mike and the liturgist sing facing the wall, which looks strange and kind of silly.

I sit in the middle, waiting my turn, watching the dance around me. I get chills hearing the organ and piano. I feel joy singing the liturgy. I laugh with those in the room when Pastor Mike makes a reference to Mr. Mister in his sermon.

This is the church. It is adapting, and focused, and caring, and doing its best to spread the Good News of Christ.

Amen.

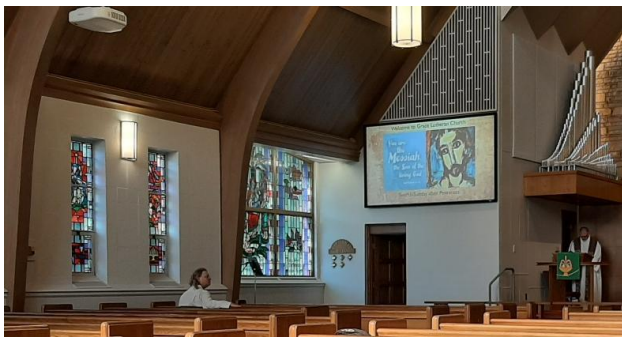
Experienced and written by Ellen Rothweiler, Photos by Ellen Rothweiler and Amy Schmelzer



Jon and Chuck plotting out the camera shots with our new 2 camera set up.



Amy and Jon at the controls, and the two cameras



Left to right: Alex ready for liturgy, Pastor Mike, Rich at the organ.

At the July, 2020 Church Council Meeting:

The Council met utilizing the Zoom teleconferencing application.

The Council received and discussed the financial report. Church income remains solid, with a net income for June of about \$1,700. Daycare finances were close to break-even utilizing proceeds from the PPP loan monies.

Paycheck Protection Plan (PPP) Loan Expenses report: June expenses were \$44,000.

Property Committee reported that the contract for the concrete work for the Little Free Pantry, Little Free Library, and pergola has been signed.

The Council discussed and approved the recommendations of the Health and Safety Taskforce regarding phased return to worship and activities. They are:

Phase 1 (current phase) – The Grace Lutheran Church building remains closed apart from Grace Kids Care, livestream of worship, private baptisms and funerals, and staff use. Masks are required in all public spaces.

Phase 2 – The Grace Lutheran Church building would open for small groups and meetings of less than a dozen people. There would be a number of safety provisions, and people using the building would sign a contract stating they would follow these rules. This phase could be considered after there is a two-week sustained downward trend in new cases in Polk and Dallas Counties.

Phase 3 – We would begin to have in-person worship with a maximum of 50 people per service. There would be the possibility of multiple services between the sanctuary and Grace Hall. This phase would be up for consideration after an 8 week sustained downward trend in new cases in Polk and Dallas Counties.

Phase 4 – We would go back to one service in the sanctuary with some updated safety protocols. This phase would be considered once there is a widespread vaccine and it is safe to gather.

Note: masks will be required in all public places on the property during each of the four phases until a Covid-19 vaccine is readily available, and that it is understood that there is mobility between phases, i.e. we may have to revert back to a previous phase if conditions worsen, including complete shut-down again.

The Council discussed the draft of the Personnel Policy (Employee Handbook).

General discussion:

- Pastor Mike announced that the Grace Kids Daycare passed its annual DHS inspection with only ONE minor deficiency noted.
- The Congregational Assessment project is underway, with phone calls to be started soon.

**Respectfully submitted,
David F. Gronert
Council Secretary**

Council Action items – August 25, 2020

1. Accepted a proposal to replace the current fire alarm control panel. The current panel has caused some minor glitches in recent months and has served Grace Lutheran Church well for almost 20 years.
2. Accepted a proposal with Happy Medium to add an embedded video link for online worship on the homepage of the congregational website, www.gracedm.org This will increase the accessibility of online worship services.
3. Approved the holding of a “Drive-In Worship Service” on September 13th. More information on this worship service can be found on page 7.
4. Approved 10 of the 17 sections of an updated Personnel Policy for Grace Lutheran Church.

Pastor Mike's front page article continued from page 1

through at home Bible Study facilitated by Zoom and phone gatherings. We *can* still be church. We are not, nor have we ever, been alone in this journey.

If you have ideas on what we can do, please reach out to me or one of the other staff members. We would love to hear your ideas and look forward to our work together.

Brothers and Sisters, things are not as we would like them to be in the world. I truly long for the opportunity to gather with you and look forward to gathering in a Drive-In Worship Service on September 13th. I look forward to the work we will do together in the All Church VBS. I am eager to hear your ideas and direct our energies into new ministry endeavors.

Peace,
Pastor Mike

Finance Report – July Results

Financial results for July YTD are as follows:

- Pledged Offerings – Actual \$232,100, Budget \$243,958
- Other Income – Actual \$13,218, Budget \$17,125
- Expenses – Actual \$253,812, Budget \$267,604
- Net activity – Actual \$(8,494), Budget (\$6,521)



Actual net activity was unfavorable to budget primarily due a decline in offerings. Pledged and unpledged offering are both below budget. Continued giving during these uncertain times is appreciated. Maintenance and utility activity was under budget due to lack of occupancy. Contributions to the Capital Campaign (\$54,530) are not included in the above results.

Accessing Online Worship

We will continue to adapt worship to best be a place where we become centered in our faith. We are making changes to the readings and the Prayers of the People to, hopefully, better be present you in this time of growing need.

Written materials and Announcements can be found in the Resources section of the website. Click on the word Resources at the top right of any page of the website and go from there! Or, follow this link <https://gracedm.org/resources/> For those who are not using social media, computers, or smart phones, please call the office and we will happily mail you a copy of the worship materials to use at home.

Worship will broadcast live at 9:00 a.m. through Facebook and our website.

Worship will broadcast live on Sunday at 9:00 a.m. on Facebook Live and there will also be links for Facebook Live and a test of another streaming platform on the website. These links will be posted in the “Recent News” section on the www.gracedm.org homepage.

Or if it is easier, the links are: <https://iframe.dacast.com/b/174906/c/562575>
https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=3121772711203792&id=626637384050683

Weekday Morning Prayer on Facebook Pastor Mike will go live weekday mornings at 9:30 a.m. If you are not on Facebook, you can still access the videos at this link:
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Religious-Organization/626637384050683/>

Sunday Morning Zoom Virtual Coffee Hour begins at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings. Links can be found in the Thursday afternoon enews and in the file section of the Abiding Grace Facebook group. (Who plans to show up with fried food on a stick instead of a donut?)

Youth and FAMILY Ministry – Active Grace

Contact ellen@gracedm.org

All Church VBS this Fall! “On Earth as in Heaven”

YOU are invited to be a part of Vacation Bible School this Fall! Who do I mean when I say “YOU”? You all! All of Grace Lutheran Church, all ages and stages, young families, not so young families. Those who live alone and those who live with others. Retired or working three jobs from home! All of you!

We are using curriculum from ELCA World Hunger called “On Earth as In Heaven”. We will be studying The Lord’s Prayer with bible stories, stories of different countries and global goals. Instead of five days of VBS we will have five weeks, each week with a different theme, story and focus that you can learn at home.



Our VBS team has been working hard to make this VBS something that everyone can participate in at their own level. We know that schedules are less structured and that not everyone knows what each day will hold so we want to offer easy ways to build onto a most basic level of participation. We also know that not everyone has access to the internet or wants more screen time in their life, so we have made that an option to enhance learning not a requirement to participate.

I am going to explain participation in All Church VBS as building a pizza.

Journal= cheese pizza

The most basic level of participation will be the journal. Each household will be mailed a journal to use each week. The journal will offer information about the theme and Bible story each week and questions to help you reflect. The hope is that our whole church will use this journal to learn more about The Lord’s Prayer together.

Journal +

Sunday worship and theme introduction- add one topping

Each Sunday in worship the theme and bible story will be introduced. There will be a Zoom meeting after so Ellen can answer questions and to provide an opportunity to interact and do journal activities with others.

Rotation videos- add one topping

There will be three “rotations” each week; Music, Craft and Cooking. Volunteers and staff will record themselves leading these rotations and then post these videos on the Facebook Abiding Grace group page.

Skit and story links- add one topping

ELCA World Hunger has recorded videos for the skit and story rotations. Those links will be shared via Weekly VBS e-mail and in the E-news.

Service component- add one topping

We will have a service opportunity to accompany each theme. Information about this can be found in the VBS overview and in the weekly VBS e-mail and E-news.

If you have plain cheese or supreme, all pizza is good and all pizza feeds you just as any level of participation in All Church VBS will feed you and build the community of Christ. Maybe some weeks

“On Earth as in Heaven” continued on page 7

On Earth as in Heaven, continued from page 6

you have more time than others, that is fine! We are truly planning for people to participate as much or as little as they can, choose what works for you each week.

We will celebrate All Church VBS with **drive-in worship on Sunday, September 13, Celebration Sunday**. Details on the streaming and rules for this worship service can be found elsewhere in this newsletter, but **you will need to make a reservation to attend** as we have 49 spots in the parking lot with social distancing guidelines in place. We will introduce VBS, the theme for the first week and have 40 craft kits available for those who want to participate in the craft rotation each week. (you are never too old to do crafts). To reserve a spot for drive-in worship e-mail me/Ellen at ellen@gracedm.org

We are so very excited to connect with you and learn more about The Lord's Prayer, our world and each other. We hope you are able to find some time each week of All Church VBS to nurture your faith and connect with your faith community.

For questions and to reserve your spot or drive-in worship on September 13, contact Minister for Youth and Family Ellen Rothweiler at ellen@gracedm.org.

DRIVE IN SERVICE

Celebration Sunday Drive-In Worship Service Sunday, September 13th at 9:00 a.m.

Celebration Sunday may be different than last year, but there is still a lot to CELEBRATE as we head into another programmatic year. Come join us in worship in the parking lot, or at home. We will offer worship in the parking lot (Drive-In style) and livestream the same service on Facebook and the website.

The space is limited to 49 cars. Please reserve your space with Ellen, either by email, ellen@gracedm.org, or by phone. If there is no answer, please leave a voicemail.

What you need to know:

- Those attending the Drive-In service will need to remain in cars, with windows rolled up.
- The service will broadcast over an FM transmitter to your car stereo.
- You will need access to worship materials, either printed or on a device. These can be found in the Resources section at www.gracedm.org if you are not signed up for the emails.
- The building/restrooms will remain closed.
- Bring something to eat and drink with you as we will share in Holy Communion.

Giving Electronically to Grace Lutheran Church

We are grateful for the faithfulness of the people of Grace Lutheran Church and the continued financial support. Checks are received via the USPS at church and deposited regularly. We also receive contributions electronically using Push Pay, a safe and secure online donation platform. As with any payments and contributions that you make electronically, please make sure you are on the website for the intended organization.

Did you know that there is a Grace Lutheran Church in Des Moines, Washington?

Yes, the church is Grace Lutheran Church.

Yes, the church is in the town Des Moines.

But....the church is in the state of Washington!!

(There is a Des Moines, WA!!)

"Giving" continued on page 9



Direct Support Professionals Week

Do you know someone who is a caregiver to a loved one? It is a role that is both demanding and meaningful. During September's National Direct Support Professionals Week, we celebrate all the ways in which professional caregivers help children and adults achieve their goals and build meaningful lives, especially during the extra challenges surrounding COVID-19 this year.

One way LSI empowers Iowans is through our Services for People with Disabilities. From 24-hour support to occasional respite care, the LSI team lifts up Iowans with disabilities as they find the confidence and independence they need to thrive. In recent months, our DSPs have been dedicated to the people we are privileged to serve, adding extra safety measures to continue supporting individuals in our 24-hour facilities and providing new activities to keep everyone entertained and busy when leaving the house was not safely an option.

This high-quality care is possible because of you – thank you for lifting up your Iowa neighbors in times of crisis! If you would like to learn more about how you can support crucial programming like LSI's Services for People with Disabilities, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI director of philanthropy and church relations, at 563-676-2065 or Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org.

Our Mission: Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at www.LSIowa.org and www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa.

We are Still Here: LSI's Services for People with Disabilities

LSI Team Leader Ada works at Harmony House in Muscatine, a 24/7 care facility provided through LSI's Services for People with Disabilities. The home provides consistent care to five Iowans with intensive disabilities and medical conditions. Ada and her team assist residents with most parts of their day, from movement around the home and hygiene routines to medications and meals.

Because of COVID-19, the residents at Harmony House have not been able to safely see their families or participate in the volunteering or work they love, as some are able to do. But Ada and her team are there to offer a familiar face and structure when everything else feels uncertain. On days when clients feel scared or unsure, Ada and her team provide support and comfort.

Throughout the pandemic, Ada and her team have worked long hours to ensure they follow additional safety precautions, protecting both themselves and the clients they serve.

"We are an essential part of their daily life, regardless of whatever storm lies in front of us. My work is needed for my clients to survive," Ada says. "But they are essential to me and the other staff. They are the reason we do what we do."

DMARC Requested Donations: Cash

DMARC is able to purchase more per dollar in bulk than we can in person, and is both easier and safer for many at this time. Checks may be mailed to the address below, and food donations may be dropped off at the DMARC Food Pantry Network Warehouse, located at 1435 Mulberry Street in downtown Des Moines.

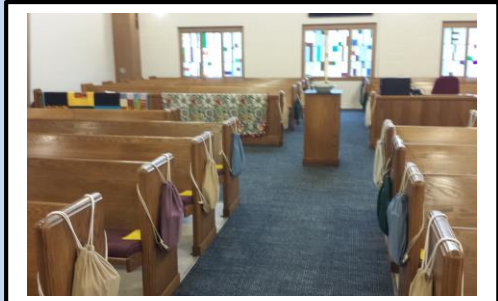
Lutheran World Relief needs help now, more than ever

Current reports from LWR list devastating ways people are more in need around the world. Covid-19 is hitting all of the countries, ravaging already struggling economies, adding yet another health threat to the people in the poorest communities in the world. Consider these situations:

Kenya- in crowded slums, health centers are loaded with sick people because of the pandemic. Now, pregnant women are afraid to go for prenatal care, and mothers won't take their children in for measles vaccinations. Treatment for malaria, HIV, and malnutrition is taking a necessary back seat. LWR is helping by setting up outdoor clinics in schools and churches in the area to provide safer access to this necessary care.

Colombia- People in poorest areas have no way to comply with requirements to wash hands. Hand washing stations are being installed in these areas to reduce the spread of the virus.

Lebanon- The August 4th explosion in the port of Beirut killed 160 people, injured 5000, and destroyed or damaged multitudes of homes and businesses, making more than 300,000 people homeless. More than half of the population of Lebanon was already unemployed and their economy had collapsed to the point that even those who did have money saved in the banks were unable to access it. Now an important food shipping port is disabled. In the explosion, three shipping containers of LWR kits and quilts were destroyed, contaminated with ammonium nitrate (fertilizer dust). This aid worth \$630,000 had been intended for 24,000+ Syrian refugees living in Lebanon. Immediately, LWR began providing food parcels and vouchers to residents in the poorest residential area next to the port. There is a lot of work to do.



Some past LWR offerings at Grace

This fall, our LWR team is leading a fundraising effort to send a donation directly to LWR. We are also making kits, masks and quilts to send in October. Watch for more information about these projects.

Please consider helping in one of these ways:

- Donate directly on the LWR.org website
- Send a donation to the church office or use the online donation system, put Lutheran World Relief on the comment line
- Members of Thrivent can direct Thrivent Dollars to Lutheran World Relief
- Pray for the work of Lutheran World Relief and for our neighbors in need around the world.
- If you like to sew or tie, contact Helen Ringgenberg, or Kathy Piltingsrud for projects you can do at home. (Call the office, or check the Church Directory App for numbers).

Giving, continued from page 7

So, to give electronically to Grace Lutheran Church in Des Moines, IOWA you have a couple options: Download the Push Pay App or you can go to our church website as follows.

www.gracedm.org

Click on the GIVE link on the upper right.

Scroll down and click on the DONATE NOW red button.

(You will see our logo and Grace Lutheran Church at the upper left corner to verify you are on the correct site!)

Enter amount of contribution; select "Give One Time" or "Set-up Recurring"; choose fund; memo (optional)

Click NEXT

Enter your mobile phone number and click "SEND CODE" (If you do not have a mobile phone or don't want to use that method for verification, click on the "NEED HELP?" (This will give you options to "give as a guest without creating an account" or "give with an email for verification")

Enter SECURITY CODE

Click CONFIRM

Again, thank you for supporting your church!

We're sharing more recipes received for the New Grace Lutheran Cookbook!

Keep emailing them to Emma at emma@gracedm.org, OR mail to the church at 5201 Urbandale Ave, Des Moines 50310.

Honey Chocolate Chip Cookies

Don Swanson

So who am I? I am Don Swanson, son of Cliff and Helen Swanson. Our family joined Grace Lutheran around 1956. I was confirmed at Grace. Helen passed away in 1978. Dad married Verda in 1980. My wife Bonnie and I moved our membership from Holy Trinity Lutheran in Ankeny to Grace about 10 or 12 years ago.

1 cup of butter or shortening
1-1/2 cups honey
3 eggs
3-3/4 cups flour
1-1/2 teaspoon salt
1-1/2 teaspoon soda
2.5 cups chocolate chips
1-1/2 cups nuts
3 teaspoons vanilla

That is all I have on the recipe card. NO instructions outside of that! When my dad's sister and mother were first making this they were using a wood fired cook stove to bake them. Absolutely no temperature regulation, so I can only imagine that every cookie sheet that went into the oven cooked for a different time and the time was only judged by the look of the cookie. So over the years I have managed to put a time and temperature on the baking process based on personal experience. So here is what I would add to the recipe as instructions.

Cream honey and shortening, add eggs. Add dry ingredients. Stir the chocolate chips and nuts into the mixture. I personally don't add the salt and only on occasion add nuts. Bake at 350 degrees for approximately 7 minutes. Let the look of the cookie and your baking experience be your guide to judge when the cookie is ready to come out of the oven.

Spritz

Don Swanson

This one originated in Sweden with Cliff Swanson's Mother then his sister translated into English.

1-1/2 cups butter
1 cup sugar
4 egg yolks
3-3/4 cups flour
Flavorings

Sift flour and sugar in a mound on board and add egg yolks and flavoring and butter. Knead until a soft dough is formed. The mixture will be very crumbly at first but keep on kneading and all will end well. Put through cookie press.

That is all that is on the recipe card from Cliff Swanson's sister. Here is what I will add to guide anyone who wishes to try this recipe:

Make certain butter is at room temperature. The flavorings I typically use is 1 teaspoon of almond flavoring, 1 teaspoon of butter flavoring, and 1 teaspoon of vanilla. My mom, Helen Swanson, told me growing up never make this recipe with margarine. I did once and never again. As the original recipe stated, the mixture starts out crumbly, but keep after it. Eventually a smooth dough ball will form. The dough is firm or stiff but that makes it work best through the cookie press. Use a star die in the cookie press. Spritz are typically baked in a circle, you should attach the two ends to help keep the cookie in a circle. Bake at 400 degrees for approximately 7 minutes. Watch cookie as they bake. Once the tips of the dough start to brown they are done. These cookies are fragile so take care when taking them off the cookie sheet.