Danish Church Records Series:

Feast Days

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WHAT IS A FEAST DAY?

The official definition of a feast day is "a day, especially a church holiday, for feasting and rejoicing."[1] In Danish church records, many priests would record events according to feast days. For example, instead of recording a marriage as '6 April 1800' in the church records, the priest would have written 'Palmesøndag 1800 (Palm Sunday 1800).' Feast days can be found in Danish church records clear up to the 20th century, but they are most commonly seen in records before 1814. In order to do proper Danish research, it is important to know how to "translate" feast days into recognizable dates.

MOVEABLE VS. FIXED

There are two different types of feast days – moveable and fixed. Fixed feast days always fall on the same day every year. Christmas is a great example of a fixed feast day. It is always held on the 25th of December. Moveable feast days are not held on the same day as the year before – the date "moves." An example of a moveable feast day is Easter. Easter is always "observed on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the vernal equinox."[2] The following is a list of feast days you will need to become most familiar with:

Moveable Feast Day	Danish Name	Latin Name	Time of Year
Shrovetide	Fastelavn	Quinquagesima/Esto mihi	February
Palm Sunday	Palmesøndag	Palmarum	March-April
Easter	Påske	Pascha	March-April
Trinity	Treenighed	Trinitatis	May-June
Advent	Advent	Adventus	November-December

Fixed Feast Day	Danish Name	Latin Name	Time of Year
New Year's Day	Nytårsdag	Circumcisio domini	1 January
Epiphany	Helligtrekongersdag	Epiphania	6 January
All Saints Day	Alle Helgensdag	Omnium Santorum	1 November
Saint Morten's Day	Sankt Morten	Morten Bisp	11 November
Christmas Day	Jul or Juledag	Nativitas/Natio Christi	15 December

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[1] Dictionary.com; http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/feast%20day?s=t.
[2] Dictionary.com; http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/Easter?s=t.

KEY WORDS

Along with the name of the feast day, there are some key words used. Become familiar with the words in the table to the right in order to better understand the context of the feast day:

FEAST DAY CALENDAR

In order to 'translate' or 'calculate' a feast day you need to use a feast day calendar. For Danish research, the best feast day calendar to use is found on the FamilySearch Wiki. To use this calendar, follow these steps:

Key Word	Translation
Dominica (Dom.)	Sunday
Søndag	Sunday
Ferie	Holiday (Holy day/Feast day)
Post (p.)	After
Efter	After
Før	Before
Samme Dag (S. D.)	The same day [as above]
Ditto	Same as above
i	In
Den (D.)	The
Dia	Day

1. Begin by going to the website https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Denmark. This should bring you to the FamilySearch Wiki Denmark page.

2. Scroll down the page to the "Research Tools" section. Under this section you will see many links. You will want the links that say "Feast Day Calendar (Moveable)" and "Feast Days (Fixed and Moveable)." Although you can use either link, click on the 'fixed and moveable' link.

Research Tools

- County List
- Copenhagen
- Dictionary
- District List
- English guide to accessing the digitized Danish records ⧉
- Feast Day Calendar (Moveable)
- Feast Days (Fixed and Moveable)
- Gazetteers (Finding Place Names)
- Nordic Given Names List
- Handwriting Examples
- Handwriting Guide
- Maps ⧉ – counties(amts) > herreds>local communities
- Military Levy Numbers (Lægdnummer)
- Military Levying Roll Abbreviations (Army)

- Parish List
- Parish Register Headings
  - Denmark General
  - Southern Denmark (Danish language)
  - Southern Denmark (German language)
- Record Selection Table
- Strategies for Danish Research
- Timeline of Events in your Ancestors Life
- Typing Æ, Ø, and Å
- Websites
- Word Lists: Danish, German, and Latin
- Vejledning til FamilySearch ⧉

Fixed and Moveable Feast Days for:

Edit This Page

Denmark

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Many times in the Danish Church Records, a minister recorded the date of an event by the name of the Fixed or Moveable Feast Day which is based on the liturgical year (the church year) rather than the Julian or Gregorian date that we would recognize. To convert a Fixed Feast Day that you see in a record to a Julian or Gregorian date, choose the letter (for an alphabetical search) or the month (for a chronological search) for the feast day you are interested in. To convert a Moveable Feast day, see the Moveable Feast Day Calendar for: Denmark.

Tips:

- The Danish Governmet used the Julian calendar up until February 18, 1700.They began using the Gregorian calendar in Denmark on March 1, 1700 (a difference of 11 days).

Fixed and Moveable Feast Days (Alphabetical by the first letter)

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
Q	R	S	T	U	V, W	X, Y, Z	Æ
Ø	Å						

Fixed and Moveable Feast Days (in Chronological Order)

January	February	March	April	May	June
July	August	September	October	November	December

3. On the 'Fixed and Moveable' page there are three sections.

1) The first is an introduction and a link to the moveable feast days.

2) Second is are links to the feast days in alphabetical order.

3) The third section is a link to the feast days by month.

You can use any of these three links to find the feast day you need.

4. Click on the 'Moveable Feast Day Calendar' link in the first section. This link will bring you to a page of years from 1501 to 1900. Click on the year you need.

Moveable Feast Day Calendar for:

Denmark

Many times in the Danish Church Records, a minister recorded the date of an event by the name of the Fixed or Moveable Feast Date which is based on the liturgical year (the church year) rather than the Julian or Gregorian date that we would recognize. To convert a Moveable Feast Day that you see in a record to a Julian or Gregorian date, choose the year that you are working in from the table below.

Another great tool for calculating a moveable feast day is the book *Calender for Aarene fra 601 til 2200 efter Christi Fødsel* by R. W. Bauer. The following link is a guide for how to use the book: Bauers Calender

Tips:

- The Danish Government used the Julian calendar up until February 18, 1700.They began using the Gregorian calendar in Denmark on March 1, 1700 (a difference of 11 days). Do not use this conversion table for Swedish or Finnish research between 1700 and 1753.
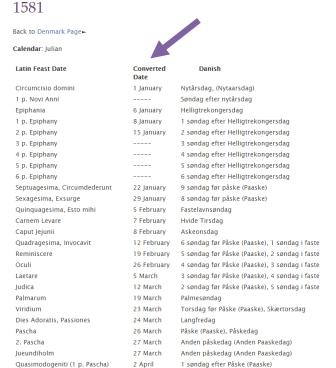
1501 1502 1503 1504 1505 1506 1507 1508 1509 1510 1511 1512 1513 1514 1515 1516 1517 1518
1519 1520 1521 1522 1523 1524 1525 1526 1527 1528 1529 1530 1531 1532 1533 1534 1535 1536
1537 1538 1539 1540 1541 1542 1543 1544 1545 1546 1547 1548 1549 1550 1551 1552 1553 1554
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1573 1574 1575 1576 1577 1578 1579 1580 1581 1582 1583 1584 1585 1586 1587 1588 1589 1590
1591 1592 1593 1594 1595 1596 1597 1598 1599 1600

1601 1602 1603 1604 1605 1606 1607 1608 1609 1610 1611 1612 1613 1614 1615 1616 1617 1618
1619 1620 1621 1622 1623 1624 1625 1626 1627 1628 1629 1630 1631 1632 1633 1634 1635 1636
1637 1638 1639 1640 1641 1642 1643 1644 1645 1646 1647 1648 1649 1650 1651 1652 1653 1654

Denmark: Moveable Feast Days in 1581

Calendar: Julian

Latin Feast Date	Converted Date	Danish
Circumcisio domini	1 January	Nytårsdag, (Nytaarsdag)
1 p. Novi Anni	-----	Søndag efter nytårsdag
Epiphania	6 January	Helligtrekongersdag
1 p. Epiphany	8 January	1 søndag efter Helligtrekongersdag
2 p. Epiphany	15 January	2 søndag efter Helligtrekongersdag
3 p. Epiphany	-----	3 søndag efter Helligtrekongersdag
4 p. Epiphany	-----	4 søndag efter Helligtrekongersdag
5 p. Epiphany	-----	5 søndag efter Helligtrekongersdag
6 p. Epiphany	-----	6 søndag efter Helligtrekongersdag
Septuagesima, Circumdederunt	22 January	9 søndag før påske (Paaske)
Sexagesima, Exsurge	29 January	8 søndag før påske (Paaske)
Quinquagesima, Esto mihi	5 February	Fastelavnssøndag
Carnem Levare	7 February	Hvide Tirsdag
Caput Jejunii	8 February	Askeonsdag
Quadragesima, Invocavit	12 February	6 søndag før Påske (Paaske), 1 søndag i faste
Reminiscere	19 February	5 søndag før Påske (Paaske), 2 søndag i faste
Oculi	26 February	4 søndag før Påske (Paaske), 3 søndag i faste
Laetare	5 March	3 søndag før Påske (Paaske), 4 søndag i faste
Judica	12 March	2 søndag før Påske (Paaske), 5 søndag i faste
Palmarum	19 March	Palmesøndag
Viridium	23 March	Torsdag før Påske (Paaske), Skærtorsdag
Dies Adoratis, Passiones	24 March	Langfredag
Pascha	26 March	Påske (Paaske), Påskedag
2. Pascha	27 March	Anden påskedag (Anden Paaskedag)
Jueundiholm	27 March	Anden påskedag (Anden Paaskedag)
Quasimodogeniti (1 p. Pascha)	2 April	1 søndag efter Påske (Paaske)

5. You should arrive at a page full of feast days and their calculation. Find your feast day on the list and look for the calculated date in the middle column.

6. If your feast day is a fixed date, or you are unsure if it is fixed or not, use the second and third sections in step 3 to determine the date. Click on either the alphabetical letter or the month. This will give you a list that you can scroll through to find your calculated date.

Denmark: Fixed and Moveable Feast Days (chronological order) for January

Circumcisio	1 January
Eben Weichtag	1 January
Ewenwichtag	1 January
Ewigtag	1 January
Jesu Omskaerelse	1 January

Denmark: Fixed and Moveable Feast Days beginning with A

Aaron et Julius	1 July
Abdon	30 July
Abon et Sennen	30 July
Abel	2 January
Abigan	5 December
Abraham	20 December
Abraham Isaac Jacob	6 October
Absalon	30 October
Absalon	2 September
Absolutiones Dies	see Viridum
Acatius c. mart.	8 May
Acatius p. mart.	27 November
Achatius et martyr.	22 June
Achilicus	12 May
Achtentag, St.	5 February

3

Practice:

1. Kristi Himmelfartsdag 1787: _____

2. Anden Juledag 1512: _____

3. 6 p. Trinitatis 1690: _____

4. Sankt Hans Dag 1815: _____