

“Fancy & Fine”

Formal Faith, Family & Community Events

Special Church Services

I tend to take my look up a notch for these. In traditional churches, I go head-to-toe dressy with a fancy hat, suit and shoes (I might choose to match perfectly—from hat to heel). Some churches are less formal but still include dresses, pantsuits, etc.

Communion Sundays

This is a very sacred and special time in the Black church that occurs once a month. Typically, the attire is church suits or dresses. Colors will vary depending upon the ministry I serve on (choir, welcoming committee, etc.). The pastor’s wife, Deaconesses, Mother’s Board, etc. might wear all white. The deacons, choir and ushers might wear black. The church members will wear church suits and dresses.

Pastor’s Appreciation, Church Anniversary, Usher/Choir Anniversary etc.

Attire varies. If there is a dress code, it will likely be black or white. For the traditional church, members will need several colors to wear for different events throughout the year: a black suit and dress, a white suit and dress—even a pink outfit (in October for Breast Cancer Awareness month) and a red outfit (in February for Heart Healthy Month). Churches with a younger congregation tend to be a little more casual, leaning toward dresses, pantsuits, etc.

Holiday-related Special Services: Easter, Christmas, Thanksgiving, Good Friday and Palm Sunday

In traditional churches, I still wear a fancy suit with a hat. Some churches have gone away from this standard. However, ladies still want their holiday outfit (especially for Easter) which might be an elegant dress or classy separates.

Regular Weekly Church Services

Traditional churches will dress in full church attire. I will wear a suit or dress.

Banquets

A mainstay of the African American church, banquets are hosted to raise money or to just celebrate something or someone. Whether morning, noon or night, I will dress to impress. Dressy attire is the order of the day, even if it’s an a.m. event. At night, it may be a formal or semi-formal event. Formal events call for evening gowns. Semi-formal events call for after-five attire, super-classy dresses or pantsuits.

Weddings

Special occasion dresses for mothers AND grandmothers of the bride or groom should be a cross between church attire and pastel after-five dresses. Guests will wear dresses and suits.

Graduations

High school and college graduations are special in the Black community. Attire varies from dressy, church-like style to a “Blessed & Beautiful” vibe.

Christmas Formal

Women should have some gold, red and silver super dressy gowns and pantsuits for formal galas and dinners.

Fifth Sunday

Some churches such as the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME Church) will wear white on a 5th Sunday for the Missionary Circle; there are 4 of these a year.