



The Rev. Archer Coppedge is projected to lead the Big Stone Gap District, effective in June.

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Two Morristown District churches gather for a cross-cultural Holy Week revival in "District Roundup."

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It's been four long years since the last General Conference. *The Call* begins coverage of the mega UMC meeting, which kicks off April 23 in Texas.

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The Call



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HOLSTON CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

www.holston.org

Dancing for General Conference Stone Dam team will step for Texas

By Annette Spence

One year ago, this dance team from Chuckey, Tenn., was devastated when they weren't chosen to represent their district in the talent festival at Resurrection.

On April 23, these seven young women from Stone Dam United Methodist Church will dance on a stage in Fort Worth, Texas, for more than 1,000 international leaders of The United Methodist Church.

"Steps of Grace" – a dance team created after Resurrection 2006 left a motivating impression – has been selected to appear in the opening ceremony for the denomination's major meeting, along with other dance groups from across the country.

The teenagers met recently with *The Call* to

talk about their journey. They also talked about their excitement in praising God, sharing their gifts, and in some cases, discovering gifts they didn't know they had.

When asked if they knew what General Conference is, the girls were unhesitant in answering:

"It's a meeting of the important people in

The United Methodist Church," said Cortni.

"It's like Resurrection for old people," said Ashley.

"It's where they decide all the stuff for the church for the next few years," said Raelynn.

The youth said they are honored yet nervous to represent Holston Conference in Texas, with only two years of dancing experience under their belts, most in front of their own congregation. Stone Dam has an average worship attendance of 88.

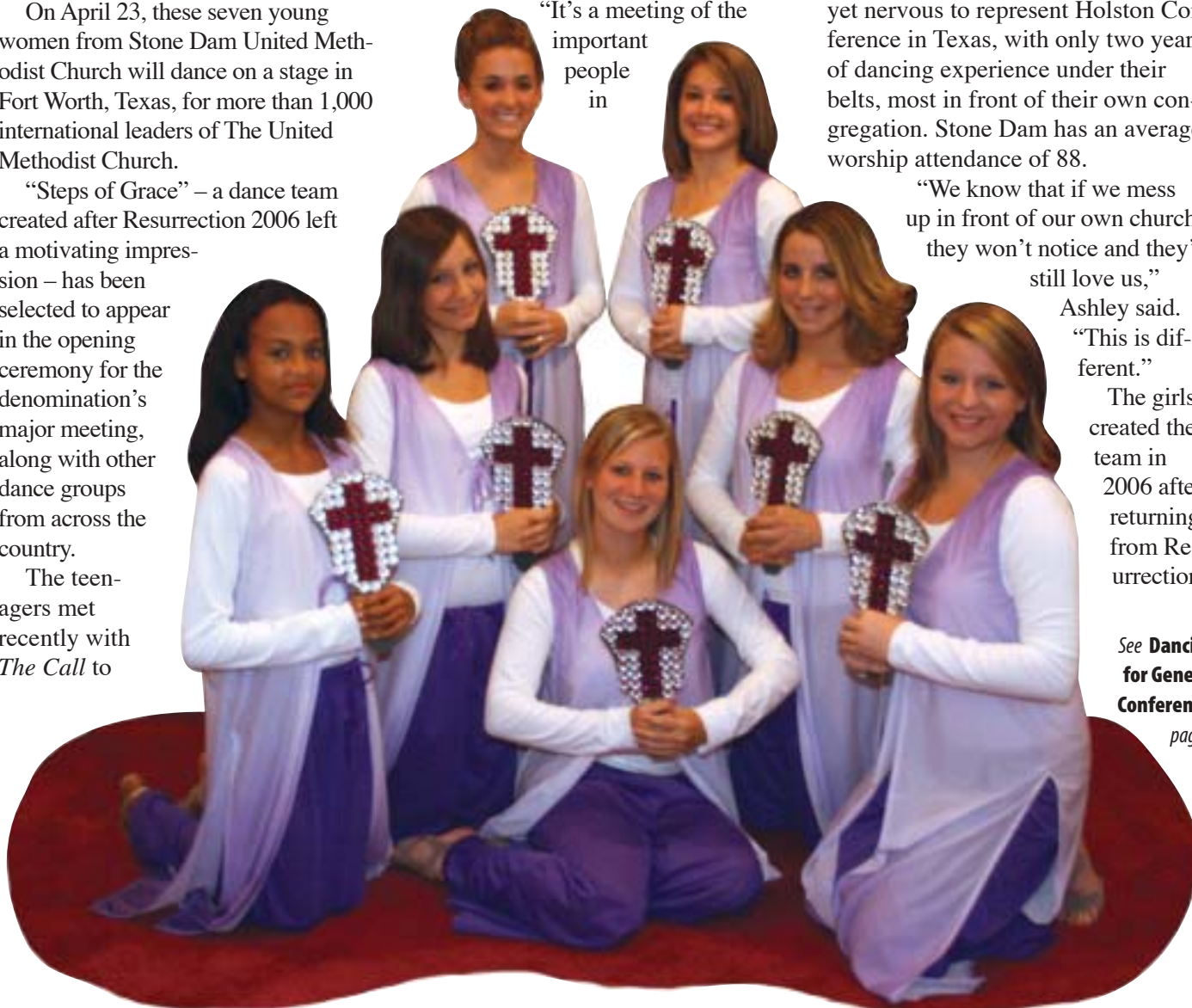
"We know that if we mess up in front of our own church, they won't notice and they'll still love us,"

Ashley said.

"This is different."

The girls created the team in 2006 after returning from Resurrection,

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"Steps of Grace," from Johnson City District's Stone Dam UMC, includes (clockwise from left) Natasha, Terra, Cortni, Abby, Katie, Raelynn, and Ashley.

Vacation Bible School offering will build school in Liberia

The brochure reads, "Please hand me another brick for the school at Zwedru!" and soon, children's ministry workers and missions leaders will be asked to do just that.

This summer, Holston Conference will unite children attending Vacation Bible School in a mission effort to help build a school for their brothers and sisters in Zwedru, Liberia.

A brochure explaining the VBS offering will soon be postal-mailed to children's ministry workers and mission leaders from the conference office in Alcoa, Tenn. The brochure is also available for download at missions.holston.org.

Bishop John Innis of Liberia requested the aid from Holston Conference, according to Bishop James Swanson's office.

"Don't give up on Liberia. Peace has come to our land ... The need for village schools is the most urgent need for Liberia. It is the churches which are providing quality education for the children of Liberia today," Innis said.

The new school's estimated cost, using locally made sun-dried bricks, is \$60,000, according to Swanson's office. Land for the new school has already been purchased with funds from Holston's Change for Children offerings.

Bishop Swanson has been invited to preach at the Liberia Annual Conference in February 2009.

For more information, call the Connectional Ministries office toll-free at (866) 690-4080 or e-mail connectionalministries@holston.org. ■

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