The Trustees of Eliam Church in the year 1817, to whom on the 20th day of August, a deed was given for one acre of land more or less together with free use of water from a spring nearby to be used on days of worship. This deed was given in trust for the sum of $10.00 and was signed by Archibald Burton and his wife Elizabeth. The Trustees were Peter Oliver, McCarty Oliver, David Clark and David Hudson.

This land lies about one mile from the present site. In a cemetery on this plot are buried some of the ancestors of members of this Church who kept it active from its earliest date to the present time. The Church building was one time used as a school house and nearby a small log cabin was built in which was held Justice Court.

There is no record of its Pastors or members but we know grandparents and great-grandparents worshipped here in enduring faith of the early pioneers.

There were slaves who joined and worshipped with their owners, their seats being in the back of the church with a gate the height of the benches separating them from aisle. As was the custom, all men and boys large enough to stay with their fathers sat on the left hand side of the door while the women, girls and children sat on the right.

In 1861 when the war was fought between the north and the south many of the men answered to the military call and went forth to battle, some never to return while others came back to establish homes of their own and rear children to whom the future of Eliam Church was intrusted. Since no invading army passed through this section, the church stood unharmed through out the war.

These are all the facts we know of Eliam until 1881.

Beginning in the year 1881 when those who attended church walked or rode horseback, there is no record of pastors of an earlier date.

A.G. Worley, who came from North Carolina in 1857 to live in Albert County, is the first one named. The membership at this time numbered sixty-eight. In 1883 he was followed by H.E. Ellis and we find forty-one new names were added to the church roll. A greater interest was being manifested in the church now. The reconstruction following the war was over and conditions were better.

Next came B.L. Timmons, H.S. Bradley, W.Dunbar, Eli Smith and L.P. Winter. This brings us to 1890. One hundred and nineteen additions have been made in these ten years. Among them we recognize the names of grandparents and great-grandparents of many of the members of the present date. One family tracing down to the fifth generation; these being the great, great
grandchildren of Mrs. Elizabeth Dye.

B.P. Allen came in 1890, he having been followed by L.M. Lyle, L.G. Johnston, W.H. Colley, J.F. Tyson and seventy-five additions to the church were made in these five years. No record has been made of deaths or withdrawals so we do not know what the total enrollment is but this is a count of new additions.

Previous to the building of a parsonage in Middleton this was known as the Bethlehem Circuit.

In 1896 W.F. Cooley served one year. Next came J.D. Stone, W.H. Cooper, A.D. Echols. First Pastor of the new century, and G.W. Harr. These names are remembered by some who are still active members today. Seventy-five or more members have been received into the Church. We do not, when the first Sunday School was organized but it is recorded that there was one at Eliam and in the minutes given at Church Conference the names of those arranging a program for Children’s Day are given.

By this time need was felt for a larger building. The present one was often filled at regular service on Sunday. Not so many came to service on Saturday but nevertheless there was preaching at eleven o’clock on Saturday preceding the regular appointment on Sunday. This faithfully filled by the Pastor even though on one occasion no one was present but one steward, the sermon having been delivered just as it would have been done if many more had been present.

Usually the pastor spent Saturday Afternoons visiting in the homes of the community and Saturday night was spent in a home near the church for the roads were not good and no pastor wanted to be late for his Sunday morning Service. The salary paid was small and meat, chickens, eggs, butter, and other things that would help to lessen the cost of living were given when the preacher made a visit into the homes of his members.

By 1903, the names of sixteen pastors have been given and a brief record of Eliam’s History. A.A.T. Tilly was the seventeenth. A new era is dawning—the younger members are showing enthusiasm and backed by those who are older and a pastor who was willing to aid in every way he could. The decision was made to remodel the Church. It probably was not unanimous but those who saw the need of it were willing to work for and though sometimes personal business had to be pushed aside, the amounts collected and the contract to have the church remodeled was given, and a building large enough to accommodate even those who attended at revival services, was completed. Mr. Tilly served as pastor of the church for three years, adding twenty-two members. Then in 1903 and 1904 H.C. Emory received the same number.

J.R. Lewis, F.W. McLeskey, B.H. Green, J.W. Stipe, J.S. A bercombe and J.W. Brinsfield came in the order named enrolling twelve, and then came a young preacher by the name of W.T. Watkins. Many changes took place during his ministry here. The building was moved from the original site to the present one. World War One was being fought and many of the young men of the community were called to military service.
We do not know how many of Elam’s members went but we know many volunteered to help conquer the foe in other lands, hoping to make a safer, better world.

J.B. Gresham, A.E. Silvey, W.P. Mills and O.E. Smith served through the period following the end of the war, helping the community to overcome the indifference or shock which had developed here as well as almost everywhere and again the Church was filled with people interested in God’s work. Fifty-nine members had united with the Church since 1915.

In 1925 J.A. Griffies was pastor and 1926 G.C. Ramsey was given his first conference appointment to this Circuit. While he was here a storm demolished the Baptist Church, and the members of that church accepted the offer to use Elam as a house of worship until they could build a new one. Rev. J.C. West and Mr. Ramsey conducted a joint revival and members from both denominations enjoyed these services of Christian fellowship.

L.G. Cowart preached four years and added twenty-two members. A.T. Hinds in 1932 and 1933 organized the Epworth League, creating a sincere interest in the community. This League was active in winter as well as summer until many boys left for another war.

A.W. Woodruff, H.A. McNeil, J.W. Corrigan, and A.D. Whitmore followed which brings us up to 1941 with fifty-one new additions.

Jesse Warwick had the charge in 1942 and 1943. Boys were now being drafted for World War Two. Our service flag has twenty stars. A Thanksgiving program in honor of them was observed.

J.S. Strickland served three and one half years due to the change in date for meeting of General Conference. Since the last number given, thirty-four more have joined at Elam. M.L. Bartley followed Mr. Strickland.

The present Sunday School has a large enrollment and since 1932 has been active. We also have a Womans’ Society of Christian Service. Rev. L.J. Coe is the present pastor. He has been with us since 1948.

Our Church had become so aged and worn that a move was begun to tear down the old structure and build a new one. The work began in March 1950 at the present the entire upper story is near completion. The basement will be used for Sunday School. We have a nice auditorium with hardwood floors etc. for which we are duly proud and thankful for new Elam.