

The Bucher Meeting House

Written by Kathy Hackleman

A hymn sing at the Bucher Meeting House in South Lebanon Township near Cornwall will celebrate the historic Meeting House and cemetery with a public event on May 31, 2026. Events, including building and cemetery tours, will begin at 2 p.m. with an old-fashioned hymn sing at 3 p.m.

According to historical documents, the Bucher Meeting House (once known as “Cornwall House”) was constructed in 1871 after Tulpehocken Church of the Brethren members who lived near Cornwall and had been worshipping at private homes decided to build a meeting house. The Bucher Meeting House – a 60-foot by 40-foot wooden frame structure – and a large horse shed were built along what is now Route 419 east of Cornwall in South Lebanon Township for \$2,957.29. It is believed the name came from the Bucher family (Elder George and Anna Bucher and Jacob Bucher Sr.), who lived nearby and often hosted church services in their barns. Among donors to the building project were well-known Cornwall area residents Robert and Anna Coleman, owners of the Cornwall Iron Furnace.

Today, the white frame meeting house looks much as it did in 1871 with straight benches and hanging kerosene lamps in the interior, but the horse shed is gone. There are two front doors – one for the men and one for the women who entered the building separately – and benches still fill the building. The adjacent cemetery, with marked graves dating back to 1842, is located south of the building.

Originally owned by the Tulpehocken congregation, the meeting house and cemetery were under the ownership of the Midway Church of the Brethren (which had also once been a part of the Tulpehocken congregation) from 1902 until 2018. Records show regular Sunday morning worship services were held

there until the late 1800s with evening services continuing for several years. Since the mid-1930s, only special occasion services have been held there. However, when the Midway COB undertook a construction project in 1950, church members regularly worshiped at the Bucher Meeting House until construction on the Lebanon church was completed. For several years, the building served as the site of an annual summer service, and a 100th anniversary celebration was held in 1971.

A few years ago, the Atlantic Northeast District Church of the Brethren took ownership of the meeting house and cemetery after Midway COB left the denomination. A six-member committee made up of three district officers and three at-large members now oversees the property.

The land where the meeting house and cemetery are located was originally part of a farm owned by Mr. and Mrs. Henry Dohner.

As for the cemetery, the earliest dated stone recorded is for Jacob Schmidt (1774-1842), who married into the Dohner family, followed by other Dohner family members. That leads historians to believe the cemetery may have originally been a family cemetery. At this time, only previously reserved cemetery plots can be used.



Congregational Hymn Sing

Welcome

Scripture Reading

Ephesians 5:17-20

Psalms 100

Invocation

Hymn Sing – led by Bob Kettering

Benediction

Maintenance of the Meeting House, grounds and cemetery is overseen by the Atlantic Northeast District with costs covered by the Bucher Meeting House perpetual Care Fund. This fund which provides care of the property is being drawn down for maintenance and repairs. Your tax-deductible contribution will ensure that the Meeting House continues.

Contributions may be sent to:

**Atlantic Northeast District Church of the Brethren
500 E Cedar St
Elizabethtown, PA 17022**



**BUCHER MEEETING
HOUSE**

**376 SCHAEFFER ROAD
(PA-419)
LEBANON, PA 17042**

**PLEASE
ANNOUNCE**

**You are invited to a hymn
sing lead by:
Bob Kettering**

**At the historic Bucher
Meeting House**

**Sunday May 31, 2026 at
3:00 PM**

**376 Schaeffer Rd
(PA-419), Lebanon, PA**

**ANE
500 East Cedar Street
Elizabethtown, PA 17022-2516**