

Jogyodo, the Circumambulation Hall of Motsuji Temple

The Jogyodo, or Circumambulation Hall, stands to the east of the Kondo Enryuji Hall. The original Circumambulation Hall burned in 1597, and was rebuilt at its current location in 1732.

The hall enshrines an image of Amida, the primary Buddha of Pure Land Buddhism, as well as a statue of Matarajin, a guardian of the Tendai Buddhist sect. According to legend, Matarajin appeared to Jikaku Daishi as he sailed home to Japan from China. The image of Matarajin enshrined in the Circumambulation Hall dates to the Muromachi period (1336–1573) and is displayed to the public only once every thirty-three years.

A spring festival dedicated to Matarajin is held each year from January 14th through the 20th. The festival features longevity dances called *Ennen no Mai*, a ritual performed at the Circumambulation Hall in praise of the guardian deities of the temple, which has been performed at Motsuji Temple for more than eight hundred years. Due to their historical, cultural, and religious significance, the *Ennen no Mai* dances have been designated a National Important Intangible Folk Culture Asset.