

Myojoji Temple

Myojoji is the head temple of the Nichiren school of Buddhism in the Hokuriku region, which includes Ishikawa and the surrounding prefectures. The temple is set on sprawling, verdant grounds with a centerpiece five-storied pagoda completed in 1618.

Most of the buildings standing today at Myojoji were constructed in the 1600s, and because the temple has not experienced major fires, they remain as they have for 400 years. The temple structures were built under the patronage of the Maeda family, rulers of the Kaga domain (present-day Ishikawa and around). Toshiie (1537–1599), the first Maeda lord, began the building at Myojoji. His efforts include the temple's oldest remaining structure, the priest's living quarters from 1593. The third lord, Toshitsune (1594–1658), built the majority of the structures, including the main hall and pagoda, in honor of his mother.

Myojoji was founded in 1294 by Nichizo (1269–1342), a disciple of the founder of the Nichiren school, Nichiren (1222–1282). Nichiren Buddhism is noteworthy for its focus on the Buddha-nature of the individual, meaning all people have the potential to attain enlightenment in this lifetime.