

## **Myoshoji Temple**

Myoshoji is a small Nichiren Buddhist temple that stands along the Ginzan River walking path overlooking the Ginzancho settlement. It was founded here in 1514 and attracted worshipers particularly from among the merchants of Iwami Ginzan, many of whom were drawn to the Nichiren school's teachings that encourage the pursuit of spiritual and material rewards in this world as well as in the next. The popularity of Myoshoji endured for hundreds of years, as evidenced by its large mountainside cemetery where the graves date from the 1500s to the twentieth century. Both the temple and its graveyard suffered severe damage in a 1943 flood and series of landslides that devastated the surroundings, but they were later rebuilt. The small, modern cemetery in front of the temple building holds only a fraction of the graves, most of which are hidden underneath trees and bushes on the hillside.