

Joanji Temple

Joanji Temple was originally named Daifukuji Temple. Daifukuji was the family temple of the Kuki family, and was one of the foremost temples in the region during their rule of Toba. It was renamed Joanji Temple in 1607, when it was remodeled by Kuki Moritaka (1573–1632), the son of Kuki Yoshitaka. Moritaka installed several objects around the temple grounds to preserve his father's legacy, including a large stone lantern that was built in 1618.

Although Moritaka succeeded his father, they had different family crests—the result of fighting on different sides at the decisive Battle of Sekigahara in 1600. Yoshitaka supported the loyalists of his former lord, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and Moritaka joined the forces of Tokugawa Ieyasu. Ieyasu was victorious, and though Moritaka successfully petitioned Ieyasu for his father's life, Kuki Yoshitaka committed seppuku (ritual suicide by disembowelment) before news of his pardon reached him. The two crests are featured on a commemorative plaque on the temple grounds.

The blade that Yoshitaka used for the suicide ritual is stored at Joanji, along with other important historical items, including Yoshitaka's portrait and a hanging scroll detailing his accomplishments. The Kuki family mausoleum is located behind the temple, though Yoshitaka's remains are interred on the island of Toshijima.