

Hondo (Main Hall)

The main hall of Otagi Nenbutsuji is a well-preserved example of Kamakura-period (1185–1333) architecture and is a nationally designated Important Cultural Property. The building was moved to its current location on the mountainside in 1922 and underwent major restorations in the 1980s. Its coffered ceiling is a characteristic design of the Kamakura period and has a raised area near the center to emphasize the importance and sanctity of the space above the altar. The temple's principal object of worship was originally placed directly under the raised ceiling, but the altar was later moved back to make room for services that require walking in circles in the inner sanctuary while chanting sutras.

The principal object of worship is Yakuyoke Senju Kannon ("Thousand-Armed Kannon That Wards Off Evil"), the bodhisattva of compassion believed to offer protection from misfortune. The many arms of Kannon and the tools they hold symbolize the bodhisattva reaching out to help those in need. The statue was carved around the time when the hall was originally constructed. Over the centuries, it lost some of its limbs, but was later repaired by Nishimura Kocho. Other notable statues in the hall include the bodhisattva Hiun Kannon, the guardian of air travel, and the bodhisattva Karitei, the protector of motherhood and children.