

Sanbo no Tsurigane Bells

Along the stairway from the temple entrance to the main hall is a bell tower with three golden bells. They are known as Sanbo no Tsurigane (“Bells of the Three Treasures”) and represent the so-called three treasures of Buddhism: the Buddha, the dharma, and the sangha. “Buddha” refers to those who have reached enlightenment like Siddhartha Gautama, the historical Buddha; “dharma” represents Buddhist teachings and the natural order of the universe; and “sangha” is the community of followers who practice and spread those beliefs. Each bell in the set is decorated with a kanji character for one of the three treasures.

Many temples have a bell, but an arrangement of three bells is rather uncommon. This design was conceived with the hope that three separate bells with three distinct tones would illustrate the spiritual concept of the three treasures of Buddhism in a relatable way. Visitors are welcome to ring the Sanbo no Tsurigane bells in the order of the treasures, Buddha (佛), dharma (法), and sangha (僧), and hear the reverberations echo across the mountainside.