

Founder's Hall

Enshrined here is Shinran (1173–1262), the founder of Jodo Shinshu (True Pure Land) Buddhism. This hall is the largest and most important building within Higashi Honganji, the head temple of the Otani branch of Jodo Shinshu.

The primary object of worship in the hall is a wooden statue of Shinran that he is believed to have carved himself. The image is kept in a reliquary whose doors are unlocked and opened every morning by one of his descendants, as has been the tradition for centuries.

The hall was constructed between 1880 and 1895 after the former building burned down. It is 76 meters long, 58 meters wide, and 38 meters tall, making it one of the largest wooden structures in the world, with room for up to 3,000 people to congregate. The double-layered hip-and-gable roof makes the building appear to have two stories, but the lower roof is decorative.