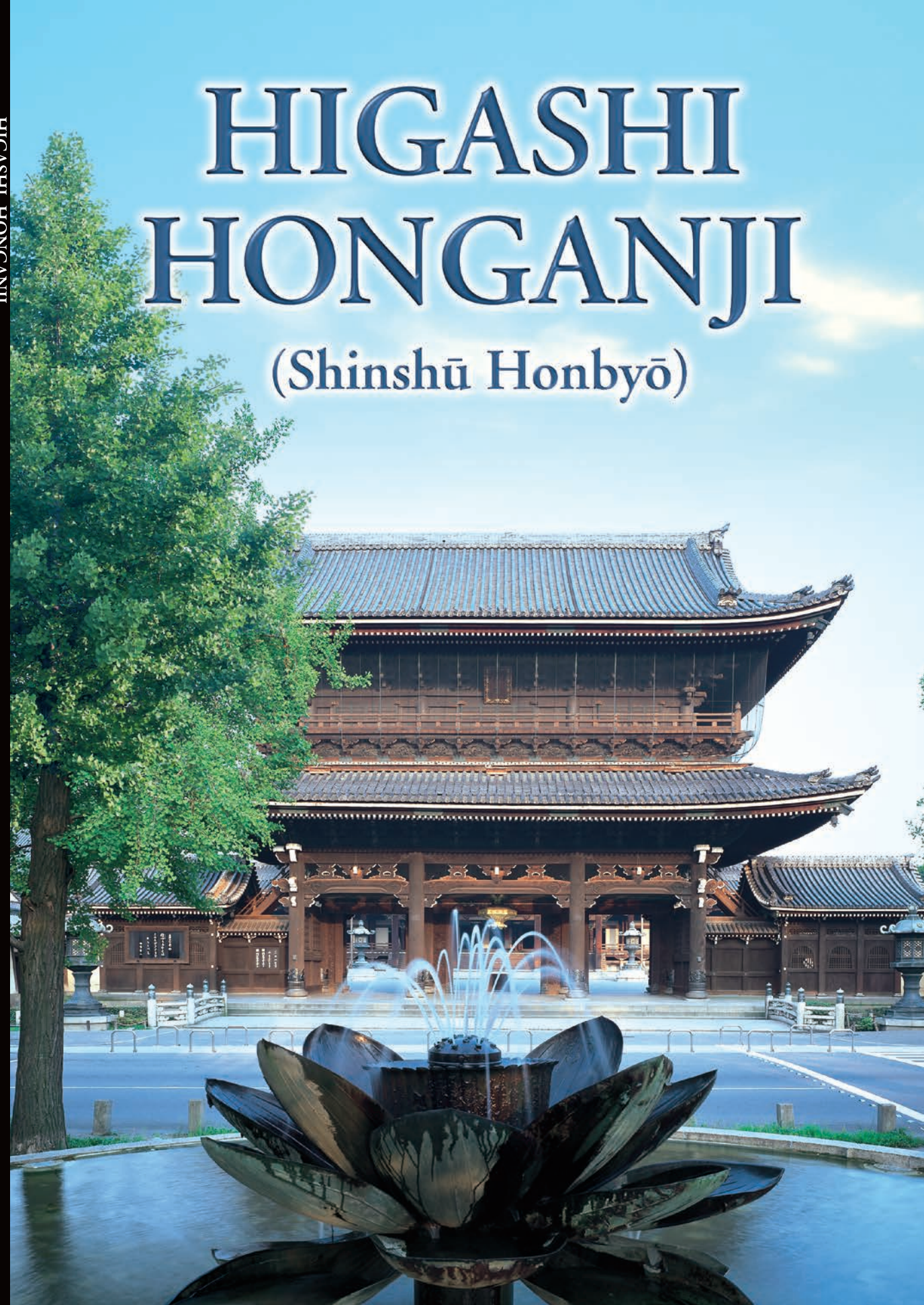


HIGASHI HONGANJI

(Shinshū Honbyō)

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THE FOUNDER'S HALL (GOEI-DŌ)

御影堂



A view of the Founder's Hall from the southeast.

This is the most important place in the temple complex, where the image of the founder Shinran is enshrined. It is the center of worship for the Shinshū Ōtani-ha branch of Shin Buddhism. This hall is located at the center of the precincts and is one of the largest wooden structures in the world, being 76 m (250 ft.) in length, 58 m (190 ft.) in width, 38 m (125 ft.) in height.

Within this hall, on either side of Shinran's image, there are portraits of the previous abbots (*monshu*) and two scrolls, one with ten Chinese characters and the other with nine, extolling the virtues of taking refuge in Amida Buddha.

The most recent construction of this hall began in 1879 with its completion in 1895. The roof tiles, which total about 175,000, were handmade and donated by this denomination's followers in Mikawa (Aichi prefecture).

The image of the founder Shinran on the altar.
Unlike the altar in Amida Hall, this one is relatively simple in design.



There are 90 pillars supporting the structure of this hall. Construction materials were donated by followers from all over Japan.



700 *tatami* mats cover the floor in the *gejin* (the area where followers sit), and together with the *najjin* (the altar area), they total 927.