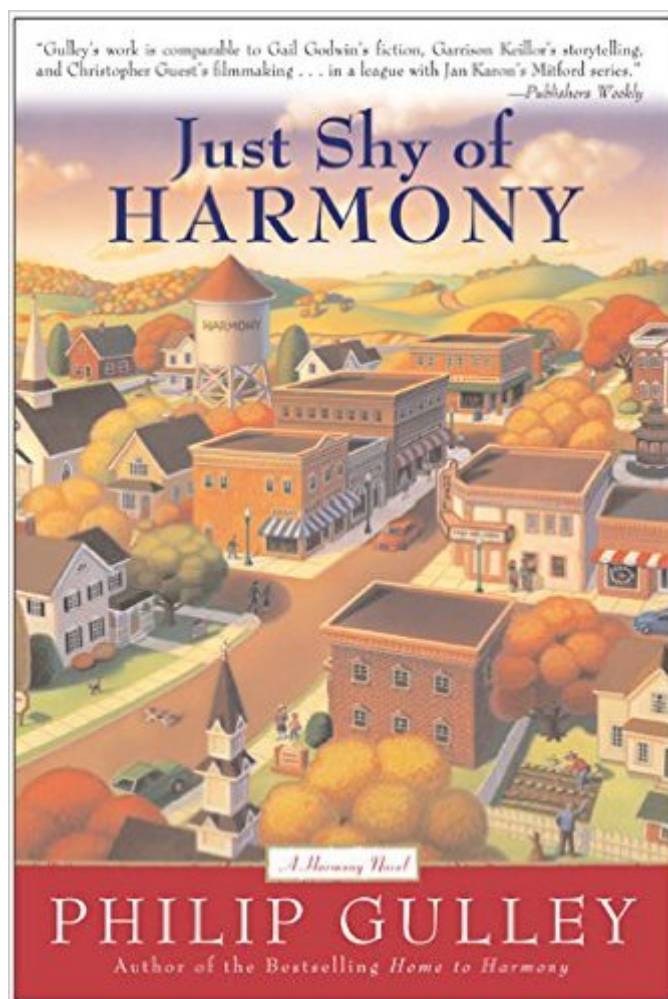


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Just Shy Of Harmony



Synopsis

Come Home to Harmony ...Thousands of readers have fallen in love with Harmony, the small town with the kindly spirit whose endearing and eccentric residents are like old friends. Join them for Sam Gardner's second year as pastor of his quirky flock.

Book Information

Paperback: 256 pages

Publisher: HarperOne; Reprint edition (March 16, 2004)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 006072708X

ISBN-13: 978-0060727086

Product Dimensions: 5.3 x 0.6 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 13.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (77 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #451,406 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #60 inÂ Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Christian Denominations & Sects > Protestantism > Quaker #12118 inÂ Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Literature & Fiction #13379 inÂ Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Religious & Inspirational

Customer Reviews

Mr. Gulley takes an irregular route to the very heart of things, complete with a test of faith. The reader returns to Harmony where once again the author shines up the mediocre and the mundane and turns it into a miracle. A very sympathetic look into the discouragement of leading a church of willy nilly believers, with one or both feet in the past and blinders on their eyes. The reader will learn why goal setting and a gymnasium aren't necessarily a good thing for a church, and how a run-away wife and mother can pull people together. The accidental lottery winners and scripture eggs and yes - gossip - keep things interesting, when life isn't always harmonious. Believe it or not, there is something for everyone here in this story of a Quaker minister challenging faith and depression. The well intentioned, as well as the goofier members of this congregation, are kindly and humorously set out in caricatures that leave you laughing or shaking your head (and I'm betting you'll recognize some of these folks). The Friendly Women taking on the liberal press and hijacking the hospital kitchen was simply a touch of genius. The gentle people of Harmony occasionally practice the fine art of indifference, but joy and faith, steadiness and kindness carry through. A thought provoking and profound ending that challenges the reader to come up with their own

explanation. Might giving thanks be more important than seeking the truth? Don't miss Gulley's other warm, wonderful and charming books: Home to Harmony, Front Porch Tales and For Everything There A Season ... divided into easy to digest chapters for all ages.

In this wonderful sequel to Home to Harmony, Sam is beginning his second year as pastor of Harmony Friends Meeting. This sequel, as the first book, follows a year in Harmony. Dale Hinshaw is still getting on Sam's (and everyone else's) nerves and has a new idea for witnessing - scripture eggs. Deena Morrison, owner of Legal Grounds, returns and plays a bigger part as does Wayne Fleming. I enjoyed this book even more than the original. Instead of the vignettes of small-town life that the original had, the sequel follows a more traditional storyline and I found that the characters came even more to life for me in this fashion!

Last weekend I spent a wonderful year in Harmony reacquainting myself with the good citizens of this simple Indiana town. This is the second book in a series about the small town of Harmony, Indiana. Brought to life by a master storyteller, the common folks of Harmony will make you laugh, cry, pull your hair out in disgust, and leave you with a warm feeling. Phil Gulley will lead you down a path of character assassination and, just as you have passed judgment, facts are revealed to reverse your feelings 180 degrees. A subtle lesson in prejudging others results in a paradigm shift that leaves you rooting for the underdog. I can't wait for the next book in the Harmony series to find out what Dale, Sam, Jessie, Deena, Fern, and all the other great folks of Harmony will be up to.

This book was excellent. A lot more serious than the first, but definitely with its lighter moments, like with the Scripture Egg project. I'm sure that many people can relate to the characters in this book, who are so believable. I can relate to Sam's struggles with his belief in God, as I'm sure that many have experienced the crisis of faith. I was touched by Asa's and Jessie's generosity with the lottery money and how the town pulled together over Sally's illness. I can't wait to read the next book in the series. And the author himself is such a nice guy. I have friends who used to go to his church, and he responded quickly to an e-mail where I complimented him on his first Harmony book.

Though I really liked the first book, the shift from first person to third person really changed the entire feel of the book. I liked Sam's perspective, his reminiscing, and his thoughts. When he struggles with depression, (who can blame him with leadership like he tolerates in his church!) I could understand. As a missionary's wife, I know ministry can be very stressful- especially when one

is not willing to confront sin, and is not seeking to go deeper in their relationship with the Lord. I don't know of any church who allows just anyone from the congregation to stand behind the pulpit and preach. Especially those who are obviously full of pride, and have bad relationships with most everyone in the congregation. Sam should have taken some time off, but not let his congregation suffer for it. Having a temporary replacement pastor who can truly guide the flock is a much more realistic idea. This book had some funny parts, and yes people deal with hardship all the time, but there is not a lot of true spiritual advice, as following the Bible, in this book. The relationship between Deena and Wayne was not viewed as problematic even though he was still married. (His wife seemingly abandoned him.) He should never have pursued a relationship with someone else. Those things bothered me, as well as the jump in verb tenses. Editing is needed in future editions of this e-book.

This is the first book I've found that hits close to the best in the Mitford series. It's different than the Mitford series, tho. It's more concise and succinct. Every page shines with laughter and true faith. I enjoyed it more than the first "Home to Harmony". The author is more polished and he is just hilarious, has created characters that we love getting to know, and, if you've ever been active in church you can spot most of your fellow parishioners among them. Thank you, Mr. Gulley, for such a warm and entertaining experience from cover to cover.

My whole family (teenager included) just finished reading this delightful book. We all found ourselves laughing over the scripture egg project, and the folks of Harmony. Maybe we saw ourselves in some of the people. Even though parts of it were serious, it brought you to the place of reflecting about your own spirituality and yet brought humor into the story at the same time. I have read all of his books, and found this one as delightful as the others. Thanks Phil!

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