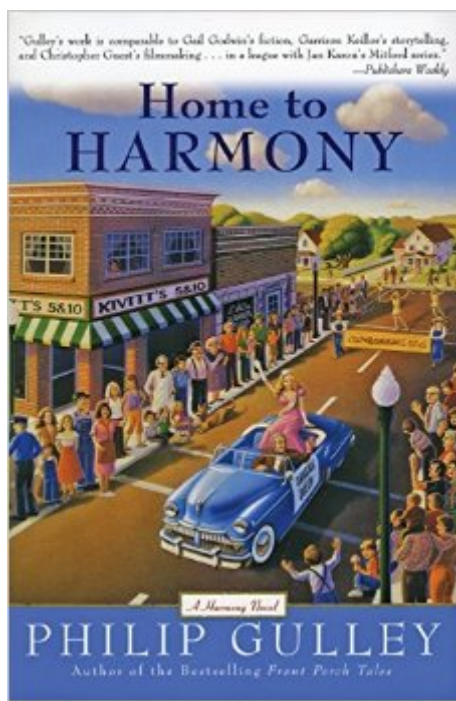


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Home To Harmony



Synopsis

Welcome to Harmony ...In this acclaimed inaugural volume in the Harmony series, master American storyteller Philip Gulley draws us into the charming world of minister Sam Gardner in his first year back in his hometown, capturing the essence of small-town life with humor and wisdom.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a delightful book, not at all what I feared (a knockoff of Mitford - another town I'd love to live in). Philip Gulley's writing style is full of dry wit that makes me laugh out loud and insist that those near me listen to a funny section. Who could resist the Live Free or Die Sunday School class; Frank, the secretary who hangs up on callers he doesn't like; Miss Rudy's flinch when she hears of Jesus healing the ten "leapers"? On a more serious note, grace, sorrow, and redemption are woven through his stories. If you are looking for superbly written stories, this book would be the perfect choice.

Harmony, a small town pastored by Quaker minister, Sam Gardner, is a wonderful place to visit! One can only hope this is the beginning of a series by author Philip Gulley about this little town and its endearing minister. I picked this book up because (1) I have been feeling homesick for a visit to Jan Karon's little town, Mitford, and hoped Harmony might ease that homesickness; and (2) because the back cover compared Mr. Gulley's writing as "part Mark Twain and part Garrison Keillor." Well, on points (1) and (2), I was not let down. Mr. Gulley has a humorous and gentle writing style that is easy on the spirit as he draws you into the hearts and foibles of Minister Sam

Gardner's parishioners. At the end of each chapter, he has a subtle and thought-provoking way of challenging his reader to reflect on (1) God's grace in our lives; (2) recognizing the blessings in our lives that we so often take for granted; and (3) dropping the pretenses that so often separate us from both God and one another. This sounds like heavy stuff -- and yet Mr. Gulley has such a light touch that he doesn't bludgeon us with the lessons he seeks to teach -- but gently leads us into the realization that God is gracious and ever-present. Especially in the everyday ordinariness of our lives. Well done, Mr. Gulley!

I confess to thoughts that this book might be just a little too sweet, but was completely charmed beginning to end. Actually rushed out for another copy to send to Auntie Bea, who will love it too! From the church elder run amok - "if there is a bad idea to be thought" kind of effect, to the contentment, gentleness and grace of small town life, every chapter told a special story with a thought provoking ending. The widower and the Chinese twins, spiritual warfare in a pacifist church, and delivery of a demon bus, Diet Sodas for the wedding anniversary, Ulysses S. Grant 5, Spelling Bee Champ, taking the sex out of secretary, the midnight toilet installation, and the Golden Goose & the lottery winner, all make the ordinary into something truly remarkable. I can't recommend it highly enough - all ages, either gender. This author just hit my favorites list!

Having read Phillip Gulley's "Front Porch Tales," I was eager and intrigued to pick up his first work of fiction, "Home to Harmony." And I'm happy to report that the magic and wonder that made "Front Porch Tales" such an enjoyable read is present here. The story is told from the perspective of Sam Gardner, who grew up in the small town of Harmony and has now returned as the minister of the local Quaker congregation. There's no real plot to the novel, so much as there are anecdotes about the various people and places in town. Gulley's Harmony reminds of the calm, tranquility that first made Garrison Keillor's Lake Wobegon so enduring to listeners and then readers. (Indeed, at times throughout the book I found myself yearning to hear Mr. Gulley's voice telling us these stories). At the end of each chapter, Gulley presents us with the moral of the story or makes a good point. He's never heavy-handed with it and the point he's trying to make fits seamlessly into the stories. If you're looking to slip into a comfortable place that's gentle and calm, I highly recommend a trip to Harmony. The book and the stories are as comfortable as old friends.

Phillip Gulley's Harmony Series is well-written with entertaining situations and plausible resolutions. Be prepared to be offended, however, if you are a religious conservative. The most obnoxious

characters are so-called "fundamentalists." Unlike the other characters who have forgivable foibles, the evangelical Christians are portrayed with no redeeming qualities. As the Harmony book series progresses, the derision increases. Anyone who leans to the right politically is also portrayed as biased, close-minded, and unenlightened. If you share Gulley's religious and political views, you will love these books.

I have read 2 of Phillip Gulley's nonfiction books and thoroughly enjoyed them. I am always looking for books in the style of Jan Karon's Mitford series and "Home to Harmony" did not disappoint me. I found myself laughing outloud one minute and deeply touched the next. Mr. Gulley has a wonderful way of imparting truth in a gentle manner. I was sorry to get to the end of the book and I hope he writes a sequel to this wonderful book.

I had read many good reviews about the Mitford series so I figured I would veer off of my usual reading material and start with something completely different. Along the way I recommend Philip Gulley's Home to Harmony so I read this first. I think that this book is easily in my top 10 reads ever! I was laughing out loud at many points in this book. I found that even though the book might be considered a "light" read, I thought that there are many places where deeper meanings prevail and that there was much more "under the hood" than first appears. So, now I am reading Just Shy of Harmony and have yet to get to, what was my main objective, the Mitford series. I highly recommend Home to Harmony.

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