

Bio/Intro:

Kmbris Bond grew up in Wenatchee and graduated from Wenatchee HS in 1991. She graduated from Northwest Christian College and the University of Oregon in Speech Communication and Music Ministry. Kmbris married her best friend from Wenatchee Free Methodist Church's youth group in Seattle at First Presbyterian downtown. They moved to Omaha, Nebraska, and Tempe Arizona for Kendal's graduate school and Kmbris worked in banking, aerospace, and petroleum for a couple of Fortune 500 companies. They then landed in Eugene Oregon where Kmbris worked in insurance and loved the open-minded and creative hippie vibe of Track Town USA and where the United Church of Christ saved her from being a statistic of a dismayed young person leaving the church.

She has served on numerous community, regional and church boards. She is certified in Our Whole Lives, a comprehensive sexuality curriculum written in the 90's by the UUA and the United Church of Christ. Most recently Kmbris lived eight years in the Roosevelt District of Seattle where she chaired the board and then was the Exec Director of Ten Thousand Villages, a fair trade non-profit store; where she also met her beloved, Rich Trifeletti. Kmbris is a community organizer, an artist, a gardener, a San Francisco Giants fan, a hiker and explorer.

Words of Wisdom

A Quote from Neil deGrasse Tyson, an American astrophysicist, cosmologist, author, and science communicator.

“Recognize that the very molecules that make up your body, the atoms that construct the molecules, are traceable to the crucibles that were once the centers of high mass stars that exploded their chemically rich guts into the galaxy, enriching pristine gas clouds with the chemistry of life. So that we are all connected to each other biologically, to the earth chemically and to the rest of the universe atomically. That’s kinda cool! That makes me smile and I actually feel quite large at the end of that. It’s not that we are better than the universe, we are part of the universe. We are in the universe and the universe is in us.”

Kmbris' Sermonette

Oh God, Source of Life, surround us in this time and open us to consider what it is we each believe...Amen.

Thank you for this opportunity to share a little about what I believe, today. I was honored to receive a call from Chris inviting me to speak and so began the mental exercise of discerning what it was that I NOW believe...afterall it has changed over my 43 years and it will continue to evolve as new information and experience find me on my life journey.

Today I will be sharing a list of beliefs that I would happily discuss further over coffee!

I believe in church, in the community that is created, where five generations can gather and share stories, beliefs and experiences, and pass it on to the next generation. I personally need a progressive church where these beliefs can be challenged and questioned, where some liturgy and tradition link us to sacred history and the framework is familiar worldwide. I need open-minded, generous of heart, trustworthy friends who share with me, and I with them. I value faith building curriculum, prayer centered meditation, the teachings of Jesus the Christ and the Spirit that has stirred in my life. I believe in RUAH, the breath of God, the Holy Spirit. And the Spirit has surrounded me with Christians, Jews, Muslims, and Wiccans, with Buddhists and Praisers, doubters and believers, with skeptics and realists, and for all, I am thankful. I believe in allowing one another to explore who we each really are, celebrating our journey into our beliefs, identities, pleasures, passions and sitting with one another to discern ones calling and purpose.

I believe that science is the language of our perceived existence. There is no threat to my faith because of science; it helps explain the mystery and magic of this reality. I am amazed and humbled by the vastness in the micro and macro of this existence. The quark and neutron, virus and amoeba, ant and flea, human and ape, Earth and Pluto, the solar system and nebula, black hole and galaxy, the void and unknown. I marvel at the changing tides and seasons, the magic of growing plants and ecosystems that all work together, the plates beneath us that float on the churning magma and the spouts, in our very own state, that blow their top. As the

quote said earlier from Neil deGrasse Tyson, “we are part of this universe, we are in this universe, but perhaps more important than both of those facts is that the universe is in us.”

I believe in choosing hope, love and joy each day. Some days it is really hard and it is easier to wallow in the swamp of the past or the fears of the future but one must choose hope and joy in the Now. It’s a choice, so I choose it. This past year I have had great joy in the process of cleaning things out of my life that didn’t suit me or bring me joy. I believe it is a life giving act to lighten ones load, whether it is surrounding yourself with only things that ‘spark joy’ as outlined in The Life-changing Magic of Tidying Up or paring down dramatically, like the Tiny House movement encourages, to what you really need, choosing those things that bring you joy in your space. It is about choices and we can make new ones every day.

I believe in finding a creative and expressive outlet, to balance out life. For me it is doing art. I like doing it and I like who I am, and how I feel, when I’m doing it. Moving back to Wenatchee I decided to learn oil painting from a professional. There I learn and appreciate the craft of this profession, the steady hand and discerning eye, the mixing of color and blending of the spectrum that occurs over days, weeks and layer upon layer. Additionally, I keep my paint brush moving by instructing at a local art studio, where I create a fun and relaxing atmosphere for people to paint while sipping a glass of wine! Fun indeed!

I believe in healthy sexuality. As a teen it became clear to me that our culture didn’t talk about sex in a healthy way, it didn’t admit the realities of sex, or of sexuality. I heard mixed messages about sex being bad, dirty, dangerous and evil sooo you should save it for the one you love!??

I was delighted to come across the Our Whole Lives curriculum that offers a healthy, age-appropriate dialog about the vast topic of sexuality including sensuality, intimacy, sexual identity, sexual health and reproduction, and sexualization, as it pertains to our society through media and power. We are sexual beings from basket to casket and we should embrace that reality.

I believe in the inherent worth of each individual, the possibility of change and redirection in ones life, and I believe in the abolishment of the death penalty. Sister Helen Prejean is one of my heroes. Her work as a Catholic nun is told in the

book, movie and play, Dead Man Walking. Susan Sarandon plays Sister Prejean and accepts an offer to be a pen pal to a man on death row and then becomes a key role in the cultural paradigm shift around capital punishment; forging the way of compassion, reconciliation, forgiveness, healing and hope that our nation and judicial system so desperately need.

I believe in growing healthy primary relationships. I believe in saying, “I love you!”

I am passionate about relationships and their dynamics. I appreciate the book by Gary Chapman, The Five Love Languages. Chapman outlines these languages as Words of Affirmation, Quality time, Physical Touch, Acts of Service, and Receiving Gifts. What a gift to yourself and those in your family, to know how you like to be loved, and how each hears and feels love.

So, here are some additional things I believe, today...in no particular order...

I believe that people should have access to clean water, a shelter to call home, a primary care physician for basic care, and healthy food.

I believe in cuddling a pet, a purring cat that welcomes you home or cuddles you when you are sick. I believe in granddogs, grandcats, grandfish and spaying and neutering.

I believe in caring for your body, relaxing and rest. I love a day at the Korean spa with warm rooms, body scrubs, and Mugwort rinses. I believe in finding the place that allows you to fully be pampered once in awhile, to rest, to flop over and stop.

I believe in hard work and using your talents, using your mind and in civic duty and service. I also believe that we can find ways to encourage and respect what people can offer and not simply demand people to conform to certain ways of giving and working.

I believe that each person should spend some time volunteering for a cause that they wouldn't ordinarily choose, and get some perspective. If it means traveling to a developing country and looking hunger, need and simple hope in the eyes, OR walking into Planned Parenthood and learning the realities around who actually

seeks abortions and who actually contracts the most sexually transmitted infections.

I believe in knowing how to hammer, saw, and find a stud in the wall.

I believe in learning how to do your own laundry, how to cook, sew, drive, possess a passport. How to register to vote, grow a crop, clean a fish, milk a cow and deliver a baby.

I believe in knowing how to follow a budget, ask for an autograph, represent oneself in an interview, how to shine your shoes, tie a tie and braid hair.

I believe it wise to appreciate music, attempt to do music, listen to it, play it, sing it, something. It is a universal language, like the smile.

I believe that one of the most true and real parts of life is death. I believe in caring for and sitting with a dying friend, praying, singing or reading a story, being present...smelling death, seeing death, feeling death.

I believe in learning new things, skills, and exploring new talents. I believe in learning from other's mistakes and not 're-creating the wheel.'

I believe in re-use and antiquing and learning to barter in a different currency in a different culture.

I believe in reading a book a month or maybe just one in a year, but reading! Because the last study I saw about how very little our culture reads after they leave school horrifies me, so let's ALL read and open your minds!

I believe in sarcasm, and a tastefully placed curse word to make a point, and I believe in unsweetened tea.

I believe in teaching history and learning from our past. I believe in women receiving equal pay for equal work, in the breaking of glass ceilings, in human dignity, in ending child labor and modern day slavery. I believe in facing white privilege and having discussions about how to change our world and ending racism, or recognizing it in today's world, and knowing what to do about it, or how to respond to it.

I believe in the mystery of Santa, the Easter Bunny and the tooth fairy. I believe in building family traditions, whether oyster stew on Christmas Eve, lamb on Easter or parsley and haroset at your Seder.

So there's a list. There are many other things that I believe, or will believe, but for today, THIS I believe.

Other sources or thoughts:

Greg Flint, a pastor of my congregation in Eugene, would often pronounce at the dedication service of the new members "We the congregation welcome you and we know we will be changed as a church by your presence". I loved this because it is so true, they incorporate into the fold but, bringing their faith, resource, talents and full selves... not assimilated like the Borg on Star Trek, becoming one mind. The church is changed by each of our involvement and sharing of our gifts.

RELATIONSHIPS?

I believe that people are usually doing the best they can given resources and circumstances in life. They are usually good intentioned and at the core, they are gifts from God. This includes parents.

My parents were in seminary in Richmond VA when they conceived me and named me Kmbri when I was born in Sacramento CA. They took the K from Ken my dad and M from Mero my mom and Bri from the Hebrew word meaning covenant. So, I'm a promise between my mother and father. It's been a true promise, that even through divorce and thousands of miles they have continued to love me and believe in my potential. Though I have struggled at times with having such limited face to face time with my biological father, I have learned to take the good in the situation...he is the only biological dad I get, so it's a choice. Sometimes it feels like it just simply takes too much effort to keep a relationship going this far away, it would be easier to just let it go, cut our losses, but we continue to commit to it. Thank God for that.

*I have also been struggling with the whole 'bucket list' or things to do before I die list. I like the idea of discerning where I'd like to go, or what to do, but it always seems to be a struggle with balancing living in the here and now and being present and mindful, as Tich Nat Han preaches, and the prioritizing of these huge resource items. A couple years ago I came across the book, *The Desire Map*, and it has given me a new approach. It addresses this from a feeling perspective, that we each have core desired feelings and once you figure out what those are for you, then you make decisions based on those. We look at our bucket list and discern what the core feeling is that we are seeking to get from that experience. There are ways of meeting that goal in the short term that give the sought after feeling without flying*

around the world in hopes of fulfilling that desire. By getting a clearer picture of my own desired feelings, I have made changes in my life for daily fulfillment rather than budgeting and waiting for what may or may not meet that desire. With clear desire, I can say yes to the right opportunities. Desires can be filled when the package isn't as you thought. Relationship with Rich? Moving home?

Along this same theme, I read an article about self-esteem and confidence. Do I like who I am while I'm doing this? Different from Do I like doing this? What am I doing when I like who I am?

Working in insurance, I liked the money, helping people with their health care concerns and finding their way through the system amidst treatment struggles. I liked parts of what I was doing and the successes I had and promotions, but I didn't like how I felt or who I was becoming while doing it, how my own health was jeopardized.

Or when working in Phoenix at a major petroleum company on the trade floor and looking out on the courtyard from a birds eye view and seeing overweight women smoking and reading romance novels on their break. Was this where I was headed?

Following ones call is key, whether it is auditioning on The Voice and being a found prodigy...I love these shows where the humble and talented person steps onto the stage and performs a dynamic talent and is lavishly praised by the masses for their god-given talent. I cry each time as I think we all have a place in our soul that craves that acceptance and validation.

BTW, By the way, we can offer that praise and validation each day to those we come in contact with who we notice them sharing their god-given talent.

I believe in the Church of Baseball

Annie Savoy: *[narrating]* I believe in the Church of Baseball. I've tried all the major religions, and most of the minor ones. I've worshipped Buddha, Allah, Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, trees, mushrooms, and Isadora Duncan. I know things. For instance, there are 108 beads in a Catholic rosary and there are 108 stitches in a baseball. When I learned that, I gave Jesus a chance. But it just didn't work out

between us. The Lord laid too much guilt on me. I prefer metaphysics to theology. You see, there's no guilt in baseball, and it's never boring. I've tried 'em all, I really have, and the only church that truly feeds the soul, day in, day out, is the Church of Baseball.

“The problem, often not discovered until late in life, is that when you look for things in life like love, meaning, motivation, it implies they are sitting behind a tree or under a rock. The most successful people in life recognize, that in life they create their own love, they manufacture their own meaning, they generate their own motivation. For me, I am driven by two main philosophies, know more today about the world than I knew yesterday. And lessen the suffering of others. You'd be surprised how far that gets you.”

— Neil deGrasse Tyson

“The knowledge that the atoms that comprise life on earth - the atoms that make up the human body, are traceable to the crucibles that cooked light elements into heavy elements in their core under extreme temperatures and pressures. These stars- the high mass ones among them- went unstable in their later years- they collapsed and then exploded- scattering their enriched guts across the galaxy- guts made of carbon, nitrogen, oxygen, and all the fundamental ingredients of life itself. These ingredients become part of gas clouds that condense, collapse, form the next generation of solar systems- stars with orbiting planets. And those planets now have the ingredients for life itself. So that when I look up at the night sky, and I know that yes we are part of this universe, we are in this universe, but perhaps more important than both of those facts is that the universe is in us. When I reflect on that fact, I look up- many people feel small, cause their small and the universe is big. But I feel big because my atoms came from those stars.”

— Neil deGrasse Tyson