

# At Play

## Playing Games with Beloved Community

*At Play activities and questions are a way to joyfully, playfully, and imaginatively experience the theme.*

### Option A: Beloved Community-Inspired Word Scramble

[The King Center](#) in Atlanta identified five concepts at the foundation of the Beloved Community, and they are **respect, dignity, honesty, kindness, and humility**.<sup>\*</sup> What powerful words! And none easy or simple to live into. So we're going to playfully get these words into our environment so we can spend the month with them, considering how we might invite them more fully into our lives.

For this At Play activity, write each of these words in big, blocky letters on a thicker piece of paper or light cardboard, giving yourself a little more space than usual between each letter. Use a different color marker for each word.

Next, cut out each letter separately. Then, if you have older children, trim the edges around your individual letters so it's not obvious that two pieces go next to one another. Younger children who are early readers may appreciate you leaving the pieces' edges as they are cut; this is a little hint on how to put the letters back together.

Choose a big, flat surface to work on the word scrambles together. For younger kids, offer one word at a time. For older kids, you might dump all the letters out, and let them figure out that same-color letters go together. Make conversation with your child as the words emerge--Why do you think kindness is important? What does humility mean? I recognize the word dignity from our UU principles; have you heard it before? Can you give an example of respect?

With some masking tape loops or the like, tape the words up somewhere everyone in the family can see them for the month.

<sup>\*</sup>Note that we use these same five words as anchors for this month's blessing. You might consider using these two elements together, playing the word scramble game during the day, using the blessing at your mealtime that evening.

## **Option B: Bouncing into the Beloved Community**

For this game, you will need a shoebox or similar box, 8-10 ping pong balls, and a Sharpie marker.

Decorate or cover the shoe box if you like, or keep it simple--undecorated is fine. Cut a large heart roughly in the middle of your shoe box lid so that when you set the shoebox on end, the heart is up-and-down, and in the middle to upper  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the lid (facing you). Above the heart, write "Beloved Community." This is your target.

Next, draw all different faces on the ping pong balls. Maybe you want to portray different emotions. Maybe you want to use Sharpie markers in a rainbow of colors. Or maybe you want to write different names on the balls. These are your people.

Set the shoe box up on its end at the far end of a table. Sitting opposite the box, your task is to bounce the ping pong balls into the open heart. Your goal is to get everyone into the beloved community! Work together as a family, or set up a challenge to see who can do it the fastest.