Presenting an Infant to the Congregation

At Chapel on the Hill United Church of Christ in Seminole, Florida, the congregation takes special care in presenting an infant for baptism. The infant, parents and other family members, president of the congregation, chair of the Board of Deacons, and the pastoral staff join together at the front of the sanctuary. After asking the name of the child, the pastor takes the child into his or her arms and walks throughout the sanctuary. The pastor shows the child while singing the song, “Isn’t He (or She) Beautiful.” After a verse or two, the entire congregation joins in singing.

After returning to the front, the pastor guides the congregation and family through the baptism service found in The New Century Hymnal. Following the baptism, the congregation then sings together the second verse of “Because He Lives,” which speaks of “how sweet it is to hold a newborn baby” and “but greater still the calm assurance this child can face uncertain days because [Christ] lives.” During that time, the pastor places the infant into the arms of the president of the congregation. After a minute or so, he or she then passes the infant into the arms of the chair of the Board of Deacons. After another minute, the infant is returned to the arms of the parents. The pastor describes this time as a “joyous highlight in all our worship.”

The congregational song “Pour Out Your Spirit,” found in the Sing Prayer, Sing Praise! songbook, would be another excellent selection for the presentation.