

Born in 1978 in Memphis, TN, Blake Owen has always had a passion for the arts and was always encouraged by his mother to follow that passion. Active in the Little Theater of Crittenden County during his youth, Blake was also an All-State euphonium player while a member of the West Memphis High School Blue Devil Band. With outstanding influences in school from the likes of outstanding long-time educators like Steve Warner and Cathy Williams, Blake knew that his passion was in music education and the arts. He received a scholarship from the Little Theater and numerous music and academic scholarships to help pay for college tuition.

One of Blake's greatest achievements during his formative high school years – Blake was diagnosed with stage 4 Hodgkin Lymphoma at the age of 17 and became a patient at the world-renowned St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis. His entire senior year was awash with chemotherapy and radiation treatments, along with as many as 28 biopsies and surgeries during high school - before and after his diagnosis. Miraculously Blake was officially in remission by the summer before his freshman year of college. Blake is still active on the St. Jude campus and returns regularly as a part of their St. Jude LIFE Study which is led by his oncologist and paves the path for understanding as doctors and scientists study the long-term effects of cancer treatment.

The first member of his family to attend and graduate from college, Blake attended Arkansas State University in Jonesboro and received his Bachelor's of Music Education degree in December of 2001. After teaching briefly at Wynne Junior High School, he transferred to Wonder Junior High School in West Memphis, before finding his home and niche as a band director in Marion in 2005. He went on to receive his Masters of Curriculum and Administrative Leadership from ASU in 2009, and took the helm as assistant principal at Marion Middle School in 2011.

While at ASU Blake met his wife Straley, who was also a member of the music program at Arkansas State University. Upon his graduation they were engaged and married a year later in December of 2002. The couple settled in Marion and they've never looked back. They have three children – Miller who is 12 and a student at Marion Middle School, and twins Mollie Ruth and Samuel Blake who are in kindergarten at Avondale Elementary School.

The Owen family has been members at Marion United Methodist Church since 2009 and Blake is the Music Director there.