

Best-Seller 'Heaven Is for Real' Transitions to Big Screen

Production has begun in Canada for the movie adaptation of Todd Burpo's runaway best-selling book, *Heaven Is for Real* (Thomas Nelson), UPI reports. The film is scheduled for theatrical release around Easter 2014.

Filming started last week in Winnipeg, Manitoba, on the family feature—starring Greg Kinnear as Todd Burpo, a small-town pastor in Nebraska, TriStar Pictures says.

Published in November 2010, Burpo's account of his young son Colton's near-death experience of heaven has sold more than 8 million copies in the past two years. Translated into more than 30 languages, *Heaven Is for Real* has spent more than two years on the *New York Times* paperback nonfiction best-seller list, including 17 consecutive weeks at No. 1.

Kelly Reilly (*Sherlock Holmes*) is portraying Burpo's wife, Sonja, and first-time actor Connor Corum plays Colton, while Thomas Haden Church (*Sideways*) has the role of family friend Jay Olson. Kinnear's acting credits include *The Last Song* and *As Good as It Gets*, which garnered him an Oscar nomination for his supporting role.

Randall Wallace—who wrote the Academy Award-winning film *Braveheart* and directed *Secretariat*—is directing *Heaven Is for Real*, which will be produced by Joe Roth (*Oz the Great and Powerful* and *Alice in Wonderland*) and T.D. Jakes, pastor at the Potter's House in Dallas, best-selling author and co-producer of the movie *Jumping the Broom*. Wallace also wrote *The Touch*, a novel from Tyndale House Publishers.

Heaven Is for Real's "true story and message of hope through

the eyes of a child has already brought comfort and inspiration to millions,” says Matt Baugher, senior vice president and publisher of Thomas Nelson’s recently resurrected imprint W Publishing Group. “The film will do the same.”

Heaven Is for Real is being overseen at Sony Pictures’ TriStar division, led by DeVon Franklin, author of *Produced by Faith: Enjoy Real Success Without Losing Your True Self* (Howard Books).