Directions:
Please answer the following three essay questions. The answers for questions one and two should be approximately three pages, double-spaced, with 12 point font and reasonable margins. Neither essay should be longer than three and a half pages. These essays are worth 30 points each.

The answer for question three should be 1-2 pages, double-spaced in length. This essay is worth 10 points.

I encourage you to strengthen your essays with quotes from the text, but use them thoughtfully and carefully. I want to see that you understand the ideas, so be careful to put concepts into your own words and avoid simply stringing quotes together. Make sure to cite what you use from the text, indicating page numbers for direct quotes and paraphrasing. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade.

Pay attention to the language/pronouns that you use for God in the essays.

I encourage you to discuss the exam questions with other students in the course, but when you begin to organize and write the essays, the work should be your own.

1. Why does Elizabeth Johnson think it is important to expand the metaphors used for God in the Christian tradition beyond male metaphors? She explains three strategies that theologians have developed to address the exclusive, literal and patriarchal use of male metaphors. Why does she reject strategy one—that is, talking about the feminine traits or dimensions of God—as a long range option? And why does she prefer strategy three—that is, using male and female metaphors for God equivalently? Do you agree with Johnson that the way male metaphors have been used in the tradition is problematic and, if so, that the use of strategy three is preferable to strategy one? If you do not agree, why not? (Note: you do not need to address strategy two in the essay.)

2. The symbol of God, She Who Is, radically challenges the understanding of God as “He” is presented in classical theism. Describe at least three ways that the Triune God, She Who Is, challenges the understanding of God in classical theism. Does one kind of discourse (way of thinking and speaking) about God seem more appropriate for today, and why?

[In answering this essay, you should think about what God is like and how God acts in the world from the perspective of classical theism, and then from a feminist theological perspective as developed by Johnson. What are the main differences between the two understandings of God, and is one preferable? There are many different ways you can answer this question.]

3. Offer an overall response to She Who Is in a letter format (addressed to me or to Elizabeth Johnson). Questions for thought: What are your thoughts on Johnson’s project? Were there parts of the text that struck you in particular? Why? Are there things you will continue to think about? Do you have ongoing questions about the text or the implications of Johnson’s project? (Note: you do not have to answer all of these questions—they are meant to get you thinking.)